

Sevier County Tennessee

Personnel Policies and Procedures

July 1, 2022

Index

INTRODUCTION	1
<u>SECTION I – RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, APPOINTMENT AND SEPARATION</u>	
1.0 Purpose	2
2.0 Filling a Vacant Position	2
3.0 Recruitment	2
4.0 Employment Application Form	2
5.0 Job-Related Examinations	3
6.0 Justifications for Selection	4
7.0 Rejection of Applicants	4
8.0 Promotions	4
9.0 Transfers	5
10.0 Voluntary Demotions	5
11.0 Rehiring Former Employees	6
12.0 Appointment Types	6
13.0 Initial Period of Employment	6
14.0 Voluntary Resignations	7
15.0 Reduction in Force	7
<u>SECTION II – CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PLANS</u>	
1.0 Classification Plan	8
2.0 Compensation Plan	9
3.0 Overtime	13
4.0 Emergency Response Policy	14
5.0 Workweek	15
6.0 Compensatory Time	15
7.0 Time Records	17
8.0 Immigration Papers	17
<u>SECTION III – GENERAL CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT</u>	
1.0 Workplace Violence Prevention Policy	18
2.0 Workplace Searches Policy	20
3.0 Workers Compensation	21
4.0 References for Former Employees	22
5.0 Non-Discrimination Policies	22
6.0 Abusive Conduct Prevention Policy	23
<u>SECTION IV – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS</u>	
1.0 Annual Leave	27
2.0 Sick Leave	29
3.0 Bereavement Leave	33
4.0 Voting Leave	33
5.0 Military Leave	33

6.0	Jury Duty Leave	33
7.0	Leave Without Pay (Medical)	34
7.1	Leave Without Pay (Non-Medical)	35
8.0	Leave of Absence Pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act	35
9.0	Holidays	39
10.0	Leave Records	40

SECTION V – INSURANCE, HEALTH, AND SAFETY BENEFITS

1.0	Working Conditions	41
2.0	Benefits	41

SECTION VI – EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

1.0	Purpose	43
2.0	General Standards of Conduct	43
3.0	Use of Technology Resources	43
4.0	Social Media Policy	45
5.0	Employee Online Privacy Act of 2014	46
6.0	Use of Information Obtained on the Job	47
7.0	Outside Employment	47
8.0	Political Activity	48
9.0	Safety	48
10.0	Harassment Policy	49
11.0	Smoke-free Workplace Policy	51
12.0	Employee Appearance	51
13.0	Pets	51

SECTION VII – DISCIPLINARY ACTION

1.0	Policy	52
2.0	Reasons for Discipline	52
3.0	Definitions of Disciplinary Actions	53
4.0	Procedure for Disciplinary Actions	54

SECTION VIII – ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

1.0	Purpose	55
2.0	General Rules	56
3.0	Applicant Testing	58
4.0	Employee Testing	59

SECTION IX – MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

1.0	Personnel Files	67
2.0	Physical and Psychological Examinations	67
3.0	Pay Day	67
4.0	Meal Periods	67
5.0	Absence Due to Inclement Weather	68
6.0	Administrative Closing of Courthouse	68
7.0	Termination Pay	68

8.0	Disciplinary Action	68
9.0	Housekeeping	68
10.0	Telephone Usage	68
11.0	Employee Courtesy	69
12.0	Attendance Policy	70
13.0	Solicitation – Distribution	70
14.0	Vehicle Use Guidelines	70
15.0	Prohibition of Weapons in County Buildings	75
16.0	Destruction of and tampering with Governmental records	75
17.0	Severability	75

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 77

Introduction

Sevier County Government developed the Sevier County Personnel Policies and Procedures to provide the employees and volunteers of Sevier County with a copy of the personnel policies, practices and procedures, general conditions of employment, and employee benefits. The Sevier County Board of Commissioners adopted these policies and procedures under Tennessee Code Annotated 5-23-101 et seq. This document includes a summary of the personnel policies and procedures regarding county employees, pay practices, general provisions of employment, employee benefits, and expected standards of employee conduct.

This personnel policies and procedures manual is not an exclusive statement of all the terms and conditions of employment. The policies, benefits, practices, and procedures covered herein are subject to change without advance notice. The Sevier County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to make final decisions regarding the interpretation of each policy, benefit, practice, and procedure covered herein. Before any policy shall bind Sevier County, benefit, practice, or procedure not explicitly addressed in this handbook, the policy, benefit, practice or procedure must be approved by a written resolution of the Sevier County Board of Commissioners.

No policy, benefit, practice, or procedure contained herein creates an employment contract for any period. All Sevier County, Tennessee employees will be considered employees at will. Sevier County Government may terminate any employee for failure to perform their duties satisfactorily or simply at the will of Sevier County, Tennessee. Sevier County Government won't terminate employees in a discriminatory or illegal manner.

These policies, benefits, practices, and procedures do not apply to employees of the Sevier County Department of Education or to any of the employees of any county official who has adopted their personnel policy according to Tennessee Code Annotated 5-23-101 et seq. Public safety departments may require additions to this handbook.

The effective date of this revised Personnel Policies and Procedures, or Employee Handbook for Sevier County, Tennessee, is July 1, 2022. To the extent that the previous Sevier County Employee Handbook was amended, the policies, benefits, practices, and procedures contained herein shall apply prospectively only from the effective date of this employee handbook.

Under applicable state and federal laws and regulations and by resolution of the Sevier County Commission, these policies and procedures are established to guide all administrative personnel actions. The Sevier County Commission does not recognize any statements contrary to this manual, and those statements should not be relied upon by the employee.

These personnel policies and procedures may be revised or amended through a written request to any elected official and/or department head and subsequent approval by the Sevier County Commission. By accepting employment, employees agree to conform to any changes, deletions, or additions to these policies and procedures during their employment and continued employment.

SECTION I RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, APPOINTMENT, AND SEPARATION

1.0 PURPOSE

These policies and procedures aim to facilitate the recruitment, selection, and appointment of the most qualified applicants and ensure equal employment opportunities for all.

2.0 FILLING A VACANT POSITION

When a position becomes vacant, the Dept. Head/Elected Official shall submit an Employee Requisition form to Human Resources.

3.0 RECRUITMENT

In consultation with Human Resources, the Department Head /Elected Official shall determine whether recruitment will be conducted in-house only or both externally and in-house. The source of applicants and length of the posting period will be based on the availability of a qualified applicant pool to meet the position's requirements. The staffing needs of the department and/or office for filling the vacancy will also be considered.

Vacancies shall be posted for a minimum of five (5) days unless the classification is continuously posted, was last posted within sixty (60) days, or the County Mayor or their designee waives this rule when sufficient reasons warrant such a change.

Individuals shall be recruited from a geographic area as wide as necessary to obtain qualified applicants for available positions. A posting announcement for each vacancy shall be distributed throughout the appropriate recruiting area and posted on official bulletin boards. Advertisements may also be published in various media to bring notices of vacancies to as many qualified persons as possible. The consideration of applicants shall not be made until the posting period has expired and applicants have completed the selection and applications procedure.

4.0 EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION FORM

Applicants must complete an Employment Application Form supplied for that purpose by Sevier County. Employment applications are available during regular office hours in the County Mayor's administrative offices. Applicants must complete all spaces on the employment application. Any applicant who knowingly makes any false statement in the Employment Application may forfeit the right to employment with Sevier County.

Applications and resumes are accepted only during the specified posting period. The posting announcement states the application deadline for each vacancy.

All applications received during this time will be compiled into an applicant pool for the vacancy. Applications received after the stated deadline shall not be eligible for consideration in filling the current vacancy.

Human Resources will keep applications for those not chosen for six (6) months. To be considered for another vacancy, the applicant must personally request that their application be considered. Human Resources will maintain the Employment Application in the employee's personnel file when that individual is hired.

5.0 JOB-RELATED EXAMINATIONS

All examinations shall be consistent with the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures, which the EEOC adopted, the U.S. Civil Service Commission, and the U.S. Departments of Labor and Justice. Such examinations shall be job-related and reliably predict the applicant's ability to perform the job duties they seek.

Examination Parts: The examination shall consist of one or more of the following parts:

1. Written Test: This exam shall include a written demonstration designed to show the degree of knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the classification duties successfully.
2. Oral Interview: This exam shall include a personal interview to show the degree of knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the classification duties successfully.
3. Physical Test: This post-offer examination by a physician consists of an evaluation of the applicant's medical history and physical condition to determine if the person can perform the essential functions of the assigned classification with or without accommodation. Certain positions may require the applicant to have a serology and chest examination. All information gathered is subject to HIPAA and GINA laws.
4. Motor Vehicle Records Check - All applicants selected for appointment to a position that requires the operation of agency-owned vehicles shall be required to possess a valid Tennessee Driver's License or a Commercial Driver's License, if necessary. They must also have the ability to be insured at standard liability rates.
5. Other: Any type of examination other than those listed above might be deemed appropriate by the Elected Official or Department Head.

6.0 JUSTIFICATION FOR SELECTION

The hiring authority or designated supervisor shall interview applicants following established guidelines. Questions shall seek information about the applicant's experience, education, training, abilities, and accomplishments related to the position they are seeking.

The interviewer shall not ask questions about age, sex, race, national origin, political affiliation, physical and mental disabilities, religious beliefs, marital status, children, or other matters unrelated to the job. Recruitment efforts resume if no one is selected due to the interview process.

7.0 REJECTION OF APPLICANTS

Applicants may become ineligible for employment as a result of any of the following:

- Statement by the applicant that they are no longer interested in working for Sevier County;
- Failure to submit a complete application packet by the deadline stated on the job vacancy posting announcement;
- Failure to pass any component of a job-related examination;
- Failure to report to a required medical appointment, interview, etc.;
- Failure to pass a background check;
- A negative reference check from previous employers;
- Providing false information on the application form, resume, etc.;
- Having a confirmed positive drug screen will result in disqualification for employment for one (1) year from the date of the drug test; and/or
- Refusing to submit to a drug test, refusing to sign the required consent forms, or failing to report for a drug test is considered the equivalent of receiving a confirmed positive drug test result.

8.0 PROMOTIONS

It shall be the policy of Sevier County to provide promotional opportunities to qualified employees whenever possible. Employees are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities by qualifying themselves for advancement by obtaining additional education and training, performing at a high level, having an excellent attendance history, and showing an interest in acquiring more responsible work.

Human Resources may post job vacancies above entry-level positions to allow employees to apply. Internal postings will be on the courthouse's official Sevier County bulletin board. The Department Head or Elected Official might elect not to re-post the classification if it was posted within the last 60 days and there is an adequate applicant pool.

Applications from both inside and outside Sevier County Government may be accepted at the same time. If employees are equally or better qualified than the outside applicants, then employees will be given a hiring preference. However, it is the responsibility of the Sevier

County Government to fill openings with the best-qualified people available. If an outside candidate is the most qualified person for the job, they will be offered the position.

Eligibility for Promotion: Employees must meet the following requirements to be eligible to compete for a promotion:

- Must have completed their initial period of employment satisfactorily;
- Must not have received disciplinary action within the last twelve months;
- And must meet the minimum requirements as defined in the job description.

Selection Process: The selection process will be administered according to the provisions of Section I: Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Separation of this manual.

Equally Qualified Candidates: When all other job-related factors are considered equal for two or more candidates, then years of service will be the determining factor.

9.0 TRANSFERS

Employees may be transferred from one position to another without a significant change in their classification. Transfers may be initiated by the employee or Sevier County. Sevier County-initiated transfers may be necessary because of a workforce reduction, a change in operating procedures, or special production needs. Employees who refuse a county-initiated transfer may be laid off.

Eligibility for Employee-initiated Transfers: Employees must meet the following requirements to be eligible to request a transfer:

- Must have completed their initial period of employment satisfactorily;
- Must not have received disciplinary action within the last twelve months;
- Must have a sound and valid reason for requesting a transfer;
- And must not have transferred at their request within the past twelve (12) months.

Selection Process: The selection process will be administered according to the provisions of Section I: Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Separation of this manual. The hiring authority is not required to accept an employee who has applied for a transfer if, for some reason, they feel the employee is not a good match for the current vacancy.

10.0 VOLUNTARY DEMOTIONS

An employee may voluntarily request a demotion. The employee's request shall be in writing to the Department Head or Elected Official. Employees may also apply for vacant positions at a lower skill level than their current classification. When selected for a voluntary demotion, the provisions of Section II: Classification and Compensation Plan of this manual will determine the employee's pay.

11.0 REHIRING FORMER EMPLOYEES

If the former employee's performance met expectations and they left voluntarily with notice or through no fault of their own, they may be considered for rehire. Prior county service will not be considered in the accrual of benefits.

12.0 APPOINTMENT TYPES

All employees working for Sevier County are employed at will. Nothing in these policies and procedures shall imply any type of employment contract. The following definitions describe the types of employment at Sevier County.

Regular - employed for an indefinite period as reflected in personnel records.

Temporary - employed for a specific period (such as seasonal, until job completion, or to fill in for a sick or injured employee) as reflected by personnel records. A temporary appointment shall not exceed 12 months. Exceptions are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Full-time – regularly scheduled to work a minimum of 30 hours weekly, as reflected by personnel records.

Part-time – regularly scheduled to work fewer than 30 hours weekly, as reflected by personnel records.

Student – employed to work for the county due to an internship and/or practicum required to complete undergraduate and/or graduate credits. Student employees may be paid or unpaid depending upon the assignment's nature and the funds' availability.

13.0 INITIAL PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT

All employees receiving an initial appointment to a regular, full-time position shall be required to complete satisfactorily a ninety (90) day initial period of employment before receiving regular, full-time status. The initial period of employment is an adjustment and trial period for the new employee. The supervisor will observe the employee's attitude, work performance, job compatibility, and other job-related criteria. It is recommended that the supervisor complete a job-related performance evaluation no less than two weeks before the end of the employee's initial period of employment. The supervisor may review the assessment with the employee. After reviewing with the employee, the supervisor shall submit their recommendation to retain or dismiss the employee to the Department Head or Elected Official. A supervisor may submit to the Department Head or Elected Official a performance evaluation and recommendation to dismiss an employee at any time before the completion of the initial period of employment if such action is warranted.

14.0 VOLUNTARY RESIGNATIONS

Employees who desire to terminate their employment shall submit a signed, written resignation at least two weeks in advance. Employees may request their Department Head or Elected Official to approve the withdrawal of a tendered resignation up until the end of the employee's last day worked. However, once a voluntary resignation has been tendered, the Department Head or Elected Official is not obligated to permit the employee to rescind the resignation.

15.0 REDUCTION IN FORCE

Layoffs occur when it is deemed necessary because of a shortage of funds or work, abolition of a position, or other organizational changes, or for related reasons which are outside the employee's control and which do not reflect discredit upon the service of the employee.

Procedure - Layoffs shall be made within classes of positions in affected departments. An objective review shall determine the order of layoffs.

Once a layoff has been deemed necessary, the County Mayor or their designee shall prepare an order of layoff list according to the previously documented criteria. The Department Head or Elected Official of the affected department shall be responsible for notifying the employees to be laid off. Temporary and part-time employees in the affected classes shall be laid off before regular employees. At least two weeks' notice or two weeks' pay instead of notice shall be given except for persons employed for a specific time.

Demotion - An employee may be demoted when the employee would otherwise be laid off.

Recall – At their request, employees separated through no fault of their own may be placed on a recall list for one year for reinstatement when a vacancy occurs in the class in the department from which the recall was made.

SECTION II

CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PLANS

1.0 CLASSIFICATION PLAN

Purpose

The Sevier County Classification and Compensation Plan shall provide a complete inventory of all official positions, an accurate description of each classification, and an appropriate compensation schedule.

Authority

The County Mayor or their designee is responsible for developing, maintaining, and monitoring the classification plan.

Composition of the Classification Plan

The classification plan shall consist of:

- Position Titles – Position titles used shall be descriptive of the nature of each position and overall class. Class titles are to be used on all official county government records. However, other titles may be used as working titles in the course of departmental routines to indicate authority, status in the department, or administrative rank.
- Position Descriptions, Specifications, and Requirements – Written position descriptions and specifications for each position and class shall be maintained and updated regularly. This shall include minimum education requirements for each position. The descriptions and specifications should describe the work performed and not necessarily include all duties performed. Descriptions and specifications are to be interpreted in their entirety and with others in the classification plan. Particular examples or phrases are not to be isolated and treated as a full definition of the position or class.
- Organization – The classification plan shall be organized into departments, offices, divisions, and any other organizational grouping deemed necessary by the County Mayor or their designee.
- Salary Grade – Positions shall be grouped into grades based on the market rate of each position while also taking into consideration the structure of the plan based on the nature of work, knowledge and ability requirements of the position; supervision exercised and scope of responsibility; score and effect of decisions and actions; problem-solving and complexity of issues; extent of guidelines; application of authority; purpose and nature of work; physical or sensory demands or hazards; and others.

Maintenance of the Classification Plan

The County Mayor, under the authority of the Sevier County Board of Commissioners, is charged with the maintenance of the classification plan. Maintenance shall include, but not be limited to, periodic review and revision of classification specifications and classification listing. This includes:

- New Classifications – The County Mayor or their designee may determine a new classification is needed. The Sevier County Intergovernmental Committee must approve new classifications.
- Revised Classifications – The County Mayor or their designee may determine a change in existing classifications is needed. Modifications may be made to the classifications; however, Sevier County Commission must approve any budgetary effects.
- Abolition of Classification – The County Mayor or their designee may determine that certain classes or positions need to be abolished.
- Creation of New Position – An Official or Department Head may request a new position be created. The official or department head will submit an Employee Requisition Form and Position Description Questionnaire to the County Mayor or their designee. A thorough job analysis will be conducted, documenting the nature of the new position. The position can be assigned to an existing classification. If the position does not match a current classification, a new classification can be created via the process above.
- Reclassification of a Position – The basis for reclassification must be a gradual accretion of duties, not a sudden change occasioned by a re-organization or the assignment of entirely new tasks and responsibilities. Employees who believe their position is not classified correctly must submit a Request for Reclassification for a review with their respective Official or Department Head. If the Official or Department Head finds merit in the request and agrees that the position should be considered for reclassification, that Official or Department Head shall then submit the Request for Reclassification to the County Mayor or their designee. The Official or Department Head may submit a Request for Reclassification without an employee initiating the process. The County Mayor or their designee shall thoroughly analyze the position and determine whether reclassification is warranted.

2.0 COMPENSATION PLAN

Purpose

The purpose of the compensation plan is to enable an organization to recruit and retain competent employees. The primary goals of the compensation plan are as follows:

- Provide internally equitable compensation based on the classification plan;
- Provide compensation consistent with pay in the surrounding market area;
- Allow for flexibility and adjustments in response to changing economic and employment conditions in the local job market.

Authority

The County Mayor or their designee is responsible for developing, maintaining, and monitoring the compensation plan

Composition of the Compensation Plan

The compensation plan shall consist of:

- Salary Grade – Each salary grade shall be assigned a minimum hourly rate with a 50% spread between the minimum and maximum pay. Salary grades will have a 10% vertical spread between grades.
- Quartiles – The salary grade shall be divided into four (4) quartiles between the minimum and maximum pay.

Maintenance of the Compensation Plan

The County Mayor, by the authority of the Sevier County Board of Commissioners, is charged with the maintenance of the compensation plan. The County Mayor or their designee shall monitor factors relevant to sound compensation practices, such as changes in the cost of living, labor market conditions, recruitment problems, turnover, and related factors. In addition, a salary and/or benefits survey shall be completed periodically to ensure the compensation plan remains competitive.

- During periodic reviews, the County Mayor or designee may supersede the Administration of the Compensation Plan guidelines to implement needed compensation plan and/or classification plan changes.

Administration of the Compensation Plan

The compensation plan is intended to furnish administrative flexibility in recognizing individual differences among positions allocated to the same class, provide incentives, and reward employees for meritorious service. The following provisions govern the administration of the compensation plan:

- Starting Rate of Pay – The minimum compensation of the pay range for each classification shall be the entry rate of pay. Based on advanced education beyond the position's minimum requirements or extensive experience before beginning work with the county, an employee may be offered a rate higher than the entry level.
 - New Employee Education Credit – Employees hired can be compensated above the minimum entry rate of up to 6.25% for advanced education degrees beyond the minimum requirements of their position.
 - The degree must be from an accredited college or university. The County Mayor or designee determines proper accreditation agencies.
 - As per the classification plan, the County Mayor shall maintain a list of all positions with their minimum education requirements. The County Mayor shall also maintain a list of all advanced degree(s) that would warrant an increase up to 6.25% above the minimum for the respective positions.
 - New employees must present proof of degree to the County or designee to receive the additional salary benefit.
 - The degree must be in a related field or benefit their position. The respective Official or Department Head shall determine if this requirement is met.
 - New Employee Experience Credit – Employees hired can be compensated above the minimum entry rate of up to 6.25% for a prior experience beyond the minimum requirements for their position.

- The respective Official or Department Head shall determine what prior experience meets this allowance.
- Maximum Rate of Pay – An employee’s pay rate must be within the salary range for their classification. No employee shall receive a pay increase that exceeds the maximum pay rate established for their respective class.
- End of Initial Period of Employment - Employees who complete the initial period of employment will be placed on a regular, full-time status and are entitled to all available benefits.
- Annual Cost of Living Increases - Regular, full-time employees may receive a yearly increase based on changes in the cost of living. When it is determined that the cost of living has increased in any one year, an across-the-board increase may be given. Employees at the maximum of their salary range will be given a one-time, lump-sum bonus equal to the percentage increase. All cost-of-living increases are subject to the Sevier County Commission’s approval and the availability of funds.
- Holiday Pay – Regular, full-time employees may receive holiday benefits. Refer to Section 4.9 for details.
- Pay Adjustments in Promotions, Reclassifications, Transfers, and Demotions:
 - Promotion: When an employee is promoted to a position at a higher skill level, a pay increase will be granted at that time. The increase will be determined by the employee’s current salary in the salary range for the new position. If the employee’s salary is below the minimum of the new range, the increase will be 10% or to the minimum of the new range, whichever is greater. If the employee’s current salary is in the lower half of the new range, the increase will be 7%. If the employee’s current salary is in the upper half of the new range, the increase will be 5%.
 - The minimum a range will be increased to the proper percentage level based on an employee’s education qualifications exceeding the minimum required for the position.
 - Reclassification: When an employee is reclassified to a class in a higher skill level, the employee’s salary will be increased by 5% or to the minimum of the new range, whichever is greater.
 - Transfer: When an employee transfers to a position in the same class, their salary will remain the same unless the employee qualifies for an education credit.
 - Demotion: When an employee is demoted for cause or as a voluntary request, their salary shall be set at a rate within the new range per the Official or Department Head. The Official or Department Head will set the pay rate at an appropriate level within the range for the lower class that is equal to or less than the employee’s current salary.
- Current Employees Completing Advanced Higher Education Degrees - Current Employees who complete a degree from an accredited college or university (the County Mayor or designee determines proper accreditation agencies) can receive the same percentage of credit as a new employee based on the same guidelines in this policy and per the comprehensive list given the following conditions:

- The current employee completes a degree from an accredited college or university.
 - The degree is above the minimum education requirements for that position.
 - For example, if the position requires a Bachelor's degree, the employee would get credit for a completed Master's Degree.
 - The employee has not yet completed a degree on the same education level
 - For example, an employee cannot receive additional credit for completing a second Bachelor's Degree.
 - The degree must be in a related field or have a benefit to their position. The respective Official or Department Head shall determine if this requirement is met.
 - This policy aims to ensure a current employee receives similar credit for a completed degree as they would if they were newly hired.
 - Employees must report the completion of eligible degrees via their respective Department Head or Elected Official to the County Mayor or designee by June 1 of a respective year to receive the incentive during the next fiscal year.
 - This will ensure the proper funding is included in the upcoming budget.
 - Depending on when a particular pay period begins during the fiscal year, the incentive could start after July 1.
- Certificate, Classification, or Designation Credit - Current Employees and officials may be eligible for an additional salary stipend or hourly amount for obtaining predetermined certificates, classifications, or designations (CCD) related to one's position.
- The County Mayor or designee administers the CCD program.
 - The County Mayor or designee shall keep a comprehensive list of qualified certificates, classifications, or designations for each position. The County Mayor or designee will work with each department and office to determine what, if any, of these will be considered for an additional stipend or hourly amount. The following are suggested attributes for deciding which, if any, CCDs should be considered. The CCD should be:
 - Position related
 - Academic or trade intensive
 - Multi-month program

- The budget process will determine the stipend amount or an additional hourly amount.
 - A stipend/amount is not guaranteed.
- The employee or official must maintain their CCD and be in good standing to receive a stipend.
- The employee or official must maintain eligibility (required continuing education, classes, etc.) to receive the stipend.

3.0 OVERTIME

The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (FLSA), as amended, is a federal statute of general application that establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, child labor, and equal-pay requirements. Sevier County's Overtime Policy provisions comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The FLSA prescribes forty (40) hours as the number of hours employees who are not exempted from the overtime-pay requirement must work during any workweek without extra overtime compensation. The general overtime rate of pay cannot be less than one and one-half times the employee's regular rate, and the employee must receive the overtime rate for all hours worked more than forty hours during any workweek.

Employees Exempt from Overtime-pay Provisions - Section 13(a)(1) of the FLSA exempts from its wage-and-hour provisions any employee employed in a bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity (including any employee employed in the capacity of academic administrative personnel or teach in elementary or secondary schools), or in the capacity of outside salesman. The term "exempt" means exempt from the requirement to pay overtime. "Non-exempt" employees must be paid overtime. Each job classification will be evaluated, and each classification will be identified as "exempt" or "non-exempt" according to the definitions in the FLSA. The class specification will state the FLSA status as either "Exempt" or "Non-exempt" for each classification. Only employees in non-exempt classifications are eligible for overtime pay. See Section 4, Emergency Response Policy for exceptions.

Authorized Overtime - Non-exempt employees shall not work more than 40 hours during any workweek unless the overtime work is authorized by a supervisor and approved by the department head or elected official. Overtime pay is authorized for non-exempt employees for time worked more than 40 hours during the seven (7) day workweek at a rate not less than one and one-half times their regular pay rates.

Time off for holidays, annual leave, sick leave, jury duty, or other leave shall not be considered time worked when calculating overtime.

The appropriate supervisory staff must authorize all overtime before the assignment of overtime. All authorized overtime must be within budgetary limitations. Supervisors, department heads, and elected officials must manage their human resources to minimize the necessity of overtime. If long-term overtime exists, management should analyze the staffing level to determine if additional staff should be hired rather than assigning overtime work. In the absence of a

sufficient number of volunteers, supervisors may require any employee to work overtime if they deem it necessary to meet the demands of the work. Employees shall not work overtime without first receiving the approval of their supervisor. Any employee who works overtime without obtaining advance approval of the supervisor as required may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. For law enforcement and emergency response, per FLSA, overtime is defined as work over 171 hours in the twenty-eight (28) day work period or 86 hours in the fourteen (14) day work period.

4.0 EMERGENCY RESPONSE POLICY

When a Department Head or Supervisor determines that an emergency concerning the operation of their department arises, specific provisions will be in effect:

- Return to Work from Home
 - When a non-exempt employee is on-call, and an emergency requires the employee to return to the worksite from home without prior notice, the employee's compensation shall be determined from when the employee arrives on the worksite and ends when the employee leaves the worksite. If the employee must stop for parts, supplies, and/or equipment on their way to the worksite, the total work time shall include that time. The same provision applies to employees stopping to drop off parts, supplies, and/or equipment after completion at the worksite.
- Minimum Hours
 - When an emergency requires the employee to work two (2) hours or less, the employee will be paid for two (2) hours. Employees are guaranteed a minimum of two (2) hours of additional compensation for the inconvenience of returning to work. If the employee works more than two (2) hours, the employee will be compensated for the number of hours worked.
- Normal Overtime Rules
 - Under these provisions, standard overtime rules will be in effect, including substituting pay for Compensatory Time.

When the Sevier County Mayor issues a Declaration of a State of Emergency during times of disaster or civil unrest, specific payroll provisions are implemented:

- Employees working directly in response to the stated reason in the Declaration of a State of Emergency will be compensated via payment instead of Compensatory Time for time worked over their respective overtime threshold.
 - This time begins when the employee arrives at the set response location and ends when the employee leaves said response location (Emergency Operation Center, worksite, etc.).
- As approved by the County Mayor, exempt employees working directly in response to the stated reason in the Declaration of a State of Emergency may be compensated via payment or compensatory time (at an overtime rate) for time worked over forty (40) hours.

5.0 WORKWEEK

Payroll periods for all departments and offices begin at midnight on Monday and end at midnight the following Sunday evening.

- Law enforcement and fire personnel shall have a twenty-eight-day work period per the 7 (k) exemptions provided under FLSA. The Sheriff's Department begins and ends its payroll period when shift change occurs at 6:00 AM on Monday instead of midnight.
- Ambulance Service will begin and end their payroll period when shift change occurs at 8:00 AM on Monday instead of midnight.

6.0 COMPENSATORY TIME

Sevier County, under 29 CFR S553.3, has established a Compensatory Time policy for eligible employees. Compensatory Time off is "paid" instead of monetary overtime compensation.

Eligibility

Compensatory Time may be given to those employees who work overtime as outlined in the Overtime Section of the Sevier County Employee Handbook. Exempt employees are not eligible to receive compensatory time as defined under this policy. See Section 4, Emergency Response Policy for exceptions.

- Officials may grant an exempt employee other leave at their discretion upon carefully considering the amount and nature of extra hours worked in particular circumstances. This time has no monetary value, nor shall it be compensated, and is deemed different from Compensatory Time as defined in this policy. The official must approve of the employee using this time and may deny its use at their discretion. If an employee does not use this time as defined above before the end of employment, this time is not compensated.

Framework

Sevier County employees, when working overtime, shall default to Compensatory Time for compensation. Each office and department shall write individual policies for their respective office/department stating how employees are compensated for overtime. Any office or department paying overtime in cash must have a signed memorandum with the County Mayor defining the terms when cash compensation for overtime is appropriate.

Rate

Compensatory Time received by an employee instead of cash will be at the rate of 1.5 hours for each hour worked over the applicable overtime threshold (40 hours worked per week or the 7(k) threshold of 212 hours (fire) or 171 hours (law enforcement) worked in a 28-day period).

There will be limited situations where Compensatory Time would be received at the rate of one (1) hour for each hour worked. This would include cases where employees worked extended hours on their regular shift during a week with holiday time, bereavement leave, etc. Situations where an employee took compensatory time, annual leave, and/or sick leave during their workweek and worked extended hours on a regular shift would simply reduce the leave/time taken (in the order listed above).

Accrual

Law enforcement, fire protection, and emergency response personnel and employees engaged in eligible seasonal activities may accrue up to 480 hours of comp time; all other employees may accrue up to 240 hours.

○ If the employee reaches the maximum accrual level, any overtime worked must be compensated via pay at the proper rate until they decrease their accrual under their respective maximum accrual (see Use of Compensatory Time for further details).

The employee has up to twelve (12) months to use the respective accrued Compensatory Time.

○ For Offices and Departments that have employees accrue varied amounts of Compensatory Time throughout the year and/or the management of the twelve (12) month use rule may be difficult, those offices and departments (with approval by the respective elected official) may set more restrictive regulations and/or threshold dates to ensure management of Compensatory Time.

- For example, the Sheriff may set a rule that employees within the Sheriff's Office can only accrue up to 100 hours of Compensatory Time at a given time. Or, the Sheriff could adopt a rule that states as of June 30, they may only carry over 100 hours of Compensatory Time with all other time over 100 hours compensated at the appropriate rate.

- Any rules that compensate Compensatory Time before the stated maximum hours in the above section (480 or 240 hours) must adhere to the required signed memorandum with the County Mayor defining the terms of that policy.

○ After the twelve (12) month deadline expires, the employee will be compensated for the expired time via pay at the regular rate per hour when the employee receives such payment (see Use of Compensatory Time for further details).

- Unless other rules are set via the process above.

Use of Compensatory Time

An employee will be permitted to use accrued Compensatory Time as long as the employee notifies their supervisor/official in ample time and such request does not "unduly disrupt" the operations of the department/office.

When an employee uses Compensatory Time during a workweek, the amount of Compensatory Time necessary to pay the employee the maximum work hours allowed before overtime (or as otherwise noted below) is all that will be charged against the employee's accrued Compensatory Time. Compensatory Time is never to be used to pay more than this amount.

○ This amount is forty (40) hours per work period for most employees.

- For ambulance employees who work 24-hour shifts, this amount will be either forty-eight (48) or seventy-two (72) hours, depending on either two (2) or three (3) shifts per workweek.
- For law enforcement and fire protection under the 7(k) exemption, this amount is 212 hours (fire) or 171 hours (law enforcement).
- Some departments may have shifts that regularly require over 40 hours per week. The scheduled shift hours will determine the threshold as approved by the Mayor.

Given an employee can only accrue up to 240 or 480 hours of Compensatory Time, a department head/official must make a management effort to ensure employees do not consistently maintain the maximum accrual rate to create a consistent pay situation for overtime.

Given an employee has twelve (12) months to use accrued time (or other rules as set forth via policy), an employee must make an effort to schedule leave off within the given time. The employee and department head/official have a duty to ensure Compensatory Time that is accrued is used before the expiration of such time.

Termination of Employment

If the employee's employment is terminated (by either the employee or employer), any accrued Compensatory Time is paid at a rate of compensation of not less than the average regular rate received during the last few years of the employee's employment or the final rate received by such employee, whichever is higher.

7.0 TIME RECORDS

Employees must record their hours on the forms provided for this purpose. Exempt and nonexempt employees must fill in this form each pay period, sign it, and forward it to their supervisor for review and processing. Please ensure that your actual hours worked and leave time taken are accurate. Falsifying these records is a crime under T.C.A. 39-16-504. The County Mayor's Office maintains time records.

8.0 IMMIGRATION PAPERS

Upon initial employment, all employees must attest that they are lawfully eligible to work in the United States. Employees are further required to supply the Human Resources Department copies of documents proving this eligibility.

SECTION III

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

1.0 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY

Sevier County is committed to providing a safe, healthy, secure work environment. The presence of weapons, violence, threats of violence, and other disruptive behavior in the workplace is inconsistent with this commitment and will not be tolerated. While Sevier County does not intend to intrude into the private lives of its present or potential employees, Sevier County expects all employees to report to work without possessing weapons and perform their jobs without violence toward any other individual. Accordingly, this policy establishes Sevier County's zero tolerance for violence and sets forth a plan to resolve such incidents if necessary. This policy applies to anyone in Sevier County Government, including but not limited to all employees, contractors, volunteers, interns, temporary personnel, board members, and visitors, except law enforcement personnel.

Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against employees, visitors, guests, or other individuals on Sevier County property will not be tolerated. Any person who makes threats, exhibits threatening behavior, or engages in violent acts on Sevier County property shall be removed from the premises as quickly as safety permits and remain off Sevier County premises pending the outcome of an investigation. Violation of this policy shall be considered misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination and/or appropriate legal action if the violator is an employee. Violation of this policy by non-employees may result in suspension and/or termination of any business relationship, appropriate legal action, or other disciplinary response deemed appropriate.

Definitions:

Threat: The expression of intent to cause physical or mental harm. An expression constitutes a threat without regard to whether the party communicating the threat has the present ability to carry it out and without regard to whether the expression is contingent, conditional, or future.

Physical attack: Unwanted or hostile physical contact such as hitting, fighting, pushing, shoving, or throwing objects.

Weapon: Includes an explosive device or its parts or an explosive weapon principally designed, made, or adapted for delivering or shooting an explosive weapon. A firearm including a machine gun, a short-barrel rifle or shotgun, or a handgun (also includes knuckles or any other implement for the infliction of bodily injury, serious bodily injury, or death which has no common lawful purpose.)

The Work Site: Includes all property owned or occupied by Sevier County (including company job sites) or in a company vehicle.

Possession: Shall include, but is not limited to, the presence of a weapon on the employee or in vehicles, lunch boxes, lockers, tool kits, bags, purses, cabinets, offices, etc.

Property damage: Intentional damage to property which includes property owned by Sevier County, employees, visitors, or vendors.

General Examples of Workplace Violence:

1. All threats or acts of violence on Sevier County property, regardless of the relationship between the agency and the parties involved in the incident.
2. All threats or acts of violence not occurring on Sevier County property but involving someone acting as a representative of Sevier County.
3. All threats or acts of violence not occurring on Sevier County property but involving a Sevier County employee if the behavior affects the legitimate interests of the county government.
4. Any threats or acts resulting in the conviction of an employee or agent of Sevier County or an individual performing services on Sevier County's behalf on a contractual or temporary basis, under any criminal code provision relating to threats or acts of violence that adversely affect the legitimate interests and goals of the county government.

Specific Examples of Workplace Violence:

1. Hitting or shoving an individual.
2. Threatening to harm an individual, family members, friends, or associates.
3. Damaging another person's property.
4. The intentional destruction or threat of destruction of property owned, operated, or controlled by Sevier County Government.
5. Making harassing or threatening telephone calls.
6. Sending harassing or threatening letters, other forms of written communication, or electronic messages.

Intimidating or attempting to coerce an employee to do wrongful acts that would affect the business interests of Sevier County.

Harassing surveillance, also known as "stalking," the willful, malicious, and repeated following of another person or making a credible threat with intent to

place the other person in reasonable fear of personal safety.

Unauthorized possession or inappropriate use of firearms, weapons, or any other dangerous devices on Sevier County property.

Reporting Violations of the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy:

1. Threats or assaults that require immediate attention by law enforcement should be reported to the police by dialing 911.
2. All employees (including independent contractors or their employees) and other persons on Sevier County's property are responsible for notifying Sevier County's Department Heads or Elected Officials of any threats that they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received. Even without an actual threat, employees should report any behavior they have seen as threatening or violent when that behavior is job-related or might be carried out on Sevier County property. Employees are responsible for making this report regardless of the relationship between the individual who initiated the threat or threatening behavior and the person or persons who were threatened or were the focus of threatening behavior. Employees who feel they have been a victim of any act violating this policy should immediately report the circumstances to their supervisor. If the immediate supervisor is unavailable, the employee should notify the threat to a supervisor in their chain of command, Department Head, or Elected Official.

Management's Response to Reports of Workplace Violence - Each supervisor shall promptly refer any such incidents to their Department Head or Elected Official, who shall initiate an appropriate response following Sevier County's Personnel Policies and Procedures. The County Mayor or their designee shall investigate the complaint. After the investigation, additional administrative and/or criminal action may be taken against any individual violating this policy. An employee who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

2.0 WORKPLACE SEARCHES POLICY

All offices, desks, computers, files, voice mailboxes, lockers, and so forth provided by Sevier County are considered property of Sevier County. They are issued for employees during their employment with Sevier County. Inspections or searches may be conducted of Sevier County property at any time at the discretion of the Elected Officials and/or Department Heads.

If Sevier County has probable cause to believe that any employee or customer is possessing, selling, or using illegal drugs, weapons, or stolen property on Sevier County's premises, they reserve the right to notify proper law enforcement authorities and initiate appropriate searches.

After proper inspection or searches, employees who are found to have stolen property, weapons, or illegal drugs will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

3.0 WORKERS COMPENSATION

All employees shall immediately report injuries occurring on the job to their direct supervisor. If the immediate supervisor is unavailable, the employee shall report the injury immediately to the next supervisor in the chain of command. If nobody in the chain of command is available, the employee shall call the Insurance & Accounting Technician and/or Human Resources Director located in the Mayor's administrative offices immediately to report the injury. An employee who fails to report an on-the-job injury immediately shall be subject to disciplinary action. All employees involved in a work-related accident and/or injured on the job must complete a post-accident drug screen within four (4) hours of the accident and/or injury. The employee must be transported by their immediate supervisor or someone in their direct chain of command.

Employees with serious injuries requiring immediate medical attention shall be treated as soon as possible at the nearest hospital. The supervisor shall immediately notify the County Mayor's office when an on-the-job injury is reported. The supervisor shall ensure that the employee reports to the County Mayor's office immediately following the injury. The County Mayor's office will arrange for appropriate medical care, schedule a drug and alcohol test, and coordinate the completion of required forms. After each injury, supervisors must complete an Accident Investigation form and a First Report of Work Injury form and submit them to the County Mayor's office. An employee must select a physician from a third-party administrator's list of approved Worker's Compensation physicians, which the Sevier County Mayor's office will provide. Sevier County is obligated to pay for an employee's treatment when provided by one of the physicians on a third-party administrator's list. Employees must provide the County Mayor's office with the doctor's report following each visit for treatment. It is the employee's responsibility to keep the County Mayor's office updated regarding their recovery status. The County Mayor's office will coordinate all claims information with Sevier County's workers' compensation insurance provider.

Injuries After Normal Business Hours - If an employee has an on-the-job injury after regular business hours that requires medical attention, the supervisor should take the employee to the Emergency Department at LeConte Medical Center. After the initial evaluation, the employee should be referred back to one of the physicians listed on the approved panel of physicians for Sevier County employees for all follow-up treatment. Sevier County's policy requires that all employees have a post-accident alcohol and drug test when involved in an accident involving personal injury and/or property damage. Drug and alcohol tests will be done as directed by the HR Dept. The supervisor shall tell the hospital staff that the employee must have a breath alcohol test and urine drug test. The Emergency Department staff will then arrange for these tests. The supervisor shall also tell the hospital staff that the employee's injuries have been reported as work-related and that a claim will be filed with Sevier County's workers' compensation insurance. The supervisor shall ensure the employee does not provide the hospital with their personal health insurance information. The supervisor shall notify the County Mayor's office of this injury at the start of the next business day and shall complete all required paperwork at that time.

Workers Compensation Payments for Lost Work Time - An employee is not entitled to receive worker's compensation payments for lost work time unless he/she is disabled for seven (7) calendar days. To continue his/her pay during the first seven days of absence, an employee may utilize accumulated sick and/or annual leave. If an employee is out more than seven (7) calendar days but less than fourteen (14) calendar days, worker's compensation pays for calendar days 8 to 13. If the employee is out 14 calendar days or more, then worker's compensation goes back to day one of lost time and begins paying from day one. An employee may not collect both worker's compensation payments and accrued leave payments.

Denial of Workers Compensation Benefits – Sevier County has a Workplace Violence Prevention Policy prohibiting threats and physical acts of violence. If an employee is injured while participating in a fight or after instigating a fight, entitlement to worker's compensation benefits may be impacted. Sevier County is also designated as a Drug-Free Workplace under Tennessee State law. If an employee receives a positive urine drug test or breath alcohol test following an on-the-job injury, entitlement to worker's compensation benefits may be denied. If an employee does not immediately notify Sevier County of an on-the-job injury, the injury may be deemed not compensable under the worker's compensation program.

Failure to Report Accidents and Injuries - Employees and/or supervisors who fail to immediately notify the County Mayor's office of an on-the-job injury shall be subject to disciplinary action and/or may be denied benefits.

4.0 REFERENCES FOR FORMER EMPLOYEES

When contacted as a reference source regarding past employees and their employment, it shall be the policy of Sevier County Government to provide only the name of the employee, their dates of employment, and if they are eligible for rehire. No other aspect of the employee's work history is authorized for release.

5.0 NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICIES

Non-discrimination – Equal Employment Opportunities: It is the policy of Sevier County to provide equal employment opportunities to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran, or status in any other 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. Sevier County's policy is to make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship. Employees or applicants with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the immediate supervisor, Elected Official, or Department Head. Employees can raise concerns and make complaints without fear of reprisal and assurance of protection from harassment or retaliation. Anyone engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Sevier County does not discriminate in its hiring practice on the basis of race,

color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran, or status in any group protected by law.

6.0 ABUSIVE CONDUCT PREVENTION POLICY **(Under Public Chapter 997, the Healthy Workplace Act 29 – state requirement)**

Statement of Commitment, Values, and Purpose

Sevier County Government is firmly committed to a workplace free from abusive conduct, as defined herein. Sevier County Government strives to provide the highest quality of services in an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, openness, safety, and equality. All employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. All complaints of negative and/or inappropriate behaviors in the workplace will be taken seriously and followed through to resolution. Employees who file complaints will not suffer negative consequences for reporting others for inappropriate behavior.

This policy applies to all full-time and part-time employees of Sevier County Government. It does not apply to independent contractors, but other contract employees are covered. This policy applies to any sponsored program, event, or activity, including, but not limited to, sponsored recreation programs and activities and the performance of officers and employees in their employment-related duties. This policy includes electronic communications by any employee.

Definition of Abusive Conduct

Abusive conduct includes acts or omissions that would cause a reasonable person, based on the severity, nature, and frequency of the conduct, to believe that an employee was subject to an abusive work environment, which can include but is not limited to:

- Repeated verbal abuse in the workplace, including derogatory remarks, insults, and epithets
- Verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a threatening, intimidating, or humiliating nature in the workplace; or
- The sabotage or undermining of an employee's work performance in the workplace.

A single act generally will not constitute abusive conduct unless such conduct is determined to be severe and egregious.

Abusive conduct **does not** include:

- Disciplinary procedures following adopted policies of Sevier County Government
- Routine coaching and counseling, including feedback about and correction of work performance
- Reasonable work assignments, including shift, post, and overtime assignments
- Individual differences in styles of personal expression
- Passionate, loud expression with no intent to harm others
- Differences of opinion on work-related concerns
- The non-abusive exercise of managerial prerogative

Employer Responsibility

COMMENT: *This section specifies the employer's responsibilities, including supervisor expectations, and that employees will be informed of the abusive conduct policy.*

Supervisors and others in positions of authority have a particular responsibility to ensure that healthy and appropriate behaviors are exhibited and that complaints to the contrary are addressed promptly. Supervisors will:

- Provide a working environment as safe as possible by having preventive measures in place and by dealing with threatening or potentially violent situations;
- Provide good examples by treating others with courtesy and respect;
- Ensure that all employees have access to and are aware of the abusive conduct prevention policy and explain the procedures to be followed if a complaint of inappropriate behavior at work is made;
- Be vigilant for signs of inappropriate behaviors at work through observation and information seeking, and take corrective action(s) to resolve the behavior before it escalates;
- Respond promptly, sensitively, and confidentially to all situations where abusive behavior is observed or alleged to have occurred.

Employee Responsibility (including witnesses)

COMMENT: *This section states general expectations for employees, including people who witness incidents of abusive conduct.*

Employees shall treat all other employees with dignity and respect. No employee shall engage in threatening, violent, intimidating, or other abusive conduct or behaviors. Employees are expected to assume personal responsibility to promote fairness and equity in the workplace and report any incidents of abusive conduct per this policy.

Employees should co-operate with preventative measures introduced by supervisors and recognize that a finding of unacceptable behaviors at work will be dealt with through appropriate disciplinary measures.

Retaliation

COMMENT: *This section defines retaliation and indicates that it will not be tolerated.*

Retaliation is a violation of this policy. Retaliation is *any* act of reprisal, interference, restraint, penalty, discrimination, intimidation, or harassment against individuals exercising their rights under this policy.

Training for Supervisors and Employees

COMMENT: *This section encourages all supervisors and employees to participate in training and provides general guidelines for training content.*

All Supervisors and employees are encouraged to undergo training on abusive conduct prevention conduct as directed by Sevier County Government. Training should identify factors

contributing to a respectful workplace, familiarize participants with responsibilities under this policy, and provide steps to address an abusive conduct incident.

Complaint Process

COMMENT: The following subsections address the process for filing complaints, the procedures for investigation, and the resulting actions for the various parties involved. This section needs to mirror existing disciplinary processes to avoid confusion.

Reporting

Employees: Any employee who feels they are subject to abusive conduct is encouraged to report the matter orally or in writing to a supervisor, including their supervisor, manager, appointing authority, elected official, or the Human Resources Director. Employees should not feel obligated to report their complaints to their immediate supervisor before bringing the matter to the attention of one of the representatives identified above.

Any employee seeking to file a complaint should ensure the complaint consists of precise details of each incident of abusive conduct, including dates, times, locations, and witnesses. Formal complaints should be documented in writing but are not required to be in writing.

Witnesses: An employee who witnesses or is made aware of behavior that may satisfy the definition of abusive conduct (as defined herein) should report any and all incidents as set forth herein.

Supervisors: Supervisors must timely report known incidents involving workplace abuse, intimidation, or violence to the Human Resources Director. Supervisors and appointing authorities must take reasonable steps to protect the complainant, including, but not limited to, the separation of the employees involved.

The person complained against will be notified that an allegation has been made against them. They will be informed of the investigative procedure.

Investigation

Investigations of abusive conduct shall be conducted as soon as practicable and following the policies and practices of Sevier County Government. The objective of the investigation is to ascertain whether the behaviors complained of occurred and, therefore, will include interviewing the complainant, accused, and witnesses with direct knowledge of the alleged behaviors. All interviews will be appropriately documented. The investigation will be conducted thoroughly, objectively, sensitively, and with respect for all parties. The investigator will provide a copy of the investigative report to the appointing authority for further action. All affected parties will be informed of the investigation's outcome.

Corrective Action

In a finding of abusive conduct, the employer will take immediate and appropriate corrective action. Remedies may be determined by weighing the severity and frequency of the incidences of abusive conduct under existing disciplinary policies of the Sevier County Government.

Any employee who engages in conduct that violates this policy or encourages such conduct by others will be subject to corrective action. Such corrective action may include but is not limited to participation in counseling, training, and disciplinary action up to and including termination or changes in job duties or location.

Supervisory personnel who allow abusive conduct to continue or fail to take appropriate action upon learning of such behavior will be subject to corrective action. Such corrective action may include but is not limited to participation in counseling, training, and disciplinary action up to and including termination or changes in job duties or location.

While the Sevier County Government encourages all employees to raise any concern(s) under this policy and procedure, the Sevier County Government recognizes that intentional or malicious false allegations can seriously affect innocent people. Individuals falsely accusing another of violations of this policy will be disciplined following the disciplinary policy of the Sevier County Government.

Employees exhibiting continuing emotional and/or physical effects from the incident(s) in question should be informed of established employee assistance programs or other available resources.

When abusive conduct has been confirmed, the employer will keep the situation under review and may take additional corrective actions if necessary. Preventive measures may also be taken to reduce the reoccurrence of similar behavior(s) or action(s).

Confidentiality

COMMENT: This section expresses intent to maintain confidentiality but notes that, because of the Tennessee Open Records Act, government entities cannot guarantee that complaints will be kept entirely confidential.

To the extent permitted by law, the Sevier County Government will maintain the confidentiality of each party involved in the abusive conduct investigation, complaint, or charge, provided it does not interfere with the ability to investigate the allegations or take corrective action. However, state law may prevent the employer from maintaining the confidentiality of public records. Therefore, Sevier County Government cannot guarantee confidentiality.

SECTION IV

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

1.0 ANNUAL LEAVE

Annual Leave is one way the county shows its appreciation to employees for their contributions to the administration of the county government. Eligible employees will accrue per the table below:

8 Hour and 10 Hour Shift	Year 1-5	Year 6-10	Year 11-20	Year 21 +
Hours Accrued Per Month	8 hrs./month	10 hrs./month	12 hrs./month	16 hrs./month
12 Hour Shift	Year 1-5	Year 6-10	Year 11-20	Year 21 +
Hours Accrued Per Month	10 hrs./month	12 hrs./month	14 hrs./month	18 hrs./month
16 Hour and 24 Hour Shift	Year 1-5	Year 6-10	Year 11-20	Year 21 +
Hours Accrued Per Month	12 hrs./month	14 hrs./month	18 hrs./month	24 hrs./month

Eligibility

Employees are eligible for Annual Leave if they meet the following requirements:

- Employees must be on regular, full-time status for at least fifteen (15) days of a particular month and be employed by the county on the last day of that month. Employees in their initial period of employment are eligible for Annual Leave if they meet the preceding requirements.
 - Employees on leave without pay (short or long-term disability, worker's compensation, FMLA, etc.) for more than 15 days of the month are not eligible to accrue until the employee returns to regular status.

Monthly Accrual

Employees eligible for annual leave will accrue annual leave hours per month per the table above. Annual leave is accrued at the end of the month. Employees may begin accrual once hired. Service time begins on January 1 of each year. Each accrual step is achieved on January 1 following a particular service milestone.

- For example, an employee completing their 10th year (starting their 11th year) in August 2020 will continue accruing 10 hours per month until December 2020 and begin the Year 11-20 accrual step and accrue 12 hours per month on January 1, 2021.

Carryover

Employees can carry over to the next calendar year up to 96 unused annual hours. Hours over the 96 unused amount will be lost.

- For example, an employee on Year 1-5 accrual begins with 80 accumulated hours. The employee accrues 8 hours per month and takes no annual leave during the year. On December 31, the employee accrued 176 hours (80 prior hours + 96 hours), is allowed to carry over 96 hours to the next year and loses 80 hours. During the following year, the employee accrues another 96 hours and uses 40 hours throughout the year. On December 31, the employee has 152 hours (96 hours + 96 accrued hours – 40 used hours). The employee is permitted to carry over 96 hours to the next year and loses the other 56 hours.

Value of Accrued Time

Employees whose employment ends (regardless of cause) within one year of their full-time hire date will not be eligible to be compensated for any accrued annual hours.

After one year, an employee whose employment has ended can be compensated for unused annual hours at their regular rate per hour up to 96 accrued hours, per the separation of employment policy and termination policy (Section 4, 1.0, Section 9, 7.0). All hours over the total permitted accrual hours will be rolled into the employee's sick bank to be used toward TCRS retirement credit.

Use of Annual Time

Employees may use annual leave only at times approved in advance via policy as set by their respective Department Head or Elected Official. Employees accrue annual leave on the last day of the month and may use accumulated leave at the beginning of the following month.

The respective Department Head or Official can deny requests for reasons that would place the office or department in hardship.

- No employee may give or loan annual leave to another employee.
- Annual Leave may be taken in minimum 15-minute increments.
- When an employee takes annual leave during a work week, the amount of annual leave necessary to pay the employee the maximum work hours allowed before overtime (or as otherwise noted below) will be charged against the employee's accrued Annual Leave. Annual Leave is never to be used to pay more than this amount.
- This amount is forty (40) hours per work period for most employees.
 - For ambulance employees who work 24-hour shifts, this amount will be either forty-eight (48) or seventy-two (72) hours, depending on either two (2) or three (3) shifts per work week.
 - For law enforcement and fire protection under the 7(k) exemption, this amount is 212 hours (fire) or 171/86 hours (law enforcement).
 - Some departments may have shifts that regularly require over 40 hours per week. The scheduled shift hours will determine the threshold as approved by the Mayor.
- When a combination of Sick Leave, Annual Leave, and Compensatory Time are used within the same payroll period and overall hours exceed the parameters above, hours will be deducted from Compensatory Time first, then Annual Leave, then finally Sick Leave.
 - Annual Leave is not considered time worked when calculating overtime.

Separation of Employment

During a submitted notice period for employment separation, an employee may not use sick time without a doctor's note or annual time.

An employee who does not submit and fulfill at least a two-week notice for employment separation or is discharged from employment will not be eligible to receive payment for any annual leave.

A terminated employee will not be paid for any accrued annual leave. In the event of death, the amount owed to the employee, including up to 96 annual hours, shall be paid to their estate or the surviving spouse as may be required by law.

2.0 SICK LEAVE

Sick Leave is considered a benefit to eligible county employees, not a right. Eligible employees would accrue per the table below:

8-HOUR AND 10-HOUR SHIFT EMPLOYEES

	Term
Hours Accrued Per Month	8 hrs./month
Hours Per Year	96
Shifts for 8/10 Hour Shift	12/9.6 Shifts

12-HOUR SHIFT EMPLOYEES

	Term
Hours Accrued Per Month	10 hrs./month
Hours Per Year	120
Shifts for 12-Hour Shift	10 Shifts

16-HOUR AND 24-HOUR SHIFT EMPLOYEES

	Term
Hours Accrued Per Month	12 hrs./month
Hours Per Year	144
Shifts for 16/24 Hour Shift	9/6 Shifts

Eligibility

Employees are eligible for Sick Leave if they meet the following requirements:

- Employees must be on regular, full-time status for at least fifteen (15) days of a particular month and be employed by the county on the last day of that month. Employees in their initial period of employment are eligible for Annual Leave if they meet the preceding requirements.
- Employees on leave without pay (short and long-term disability, worker's compensation, FMLA, etc.) for more than 15 days of the month are not eligible to accrue until the employee returns to regular status.

Monthly Accrual

Employees eligible for sick leave will accrue sick leave hours per month per the table above.

Carryover

Employees can carry over to the next calendar year an unlimited amount of sick leave.

Use of Sick Leave

- An employee may use Sick Leave for absence due to their illness or injury or the illness or injury of their spouse, children, or parents.
- Sick Leave may also be used for appointments with a licensed doctor, dentist, or other recognized practitioners.
- Sick Leave is not to be abused and will be granted with pay only when the employee:
 - Calls their supervisor and gives proper notice.

- An employee must notify the appropriate designee as defined by policy adopted by a Department Head or Elected Official by the beginning of the employee's work shift, or in the case of an emergency, as early as possible on the first day of their sick leave absence.
- Tells their supervisor the general nature and expected duration of illness.
- Provides a physician statement, if requested by the Department Head or Elected Official.
 - The physician statement must include the employee's name, the treating physician's name, and dates when the employee could not work.
 - Upon returning to work, the physician statement must contain the date the employee is released back to work, whether they are released for their regular work/duty, with or without restriction. If no restrictions are listed, it will be presumed that the employee is released to their regular work duties with no restrictions.
 - Having no restrictions listed only applies when the employee has a minor illness and is not acceptable for personal or work-related injuries.
 - Any absence may require a physician statement if a Department Head or Elected Official requests it.
 - Any absence of three (3) consecutive shifts will require a physician statement.
- Keeps the supervisor informed, daily if necessary, of the status of the illness.

Employees returning to work after a non-occupational accident or a leave of absence due to illness may be required to undergo a medical examination by a physician designated by the county to determine fitness for duty.

Using Sick Leave under false pretense is a severe violation of Sevier County policy and is grounds for discipline, including dismissal.

- An employee will not work a job/position outside of their county position while they are on paid sick leave.
 - Employees who attend an appointment at the Sevier County Wellness Center do not have to use Sick Leave for their absence at the appointment. Any time outside of the appointment requires the use of Sick Leave.
 - Sick Leave can be taken in 15-minute increments.
 - No employee shall be paid for accumulated Sick Leave; there is no monetary value to Sick Leave.
 - When an employee takes Sick Leave during a work week, the amount of Sick Leave necessary to pay the employee the maximum work hours allowed before overtime (or as otherwise noted below) is all that will be charged against the employee's accrued Sick Leave. Sick Leave is never to be used to pay over this amount.
- Most employees have forty (40) hours per work period.
 - For ambulance employees who work 24-hour shifts, this amount will be either forty-eight (48) or seventy-two (72) hours, depending on either two (2) or three (3) shifts per work week.
 - For law enforcement and fire protection under the 7(k) exemption, this amount is 212 hours (fire) or 171/86 hours (law enforcement).

- Some departments may have shifts that regularly require over 40 hours per week. The scheduled shift hours will determine the threshold as approved by the Mayor.
 - When a combination of Sick Leave, Annual Leave, and Compensatory Time are used within the same payroll period and overall hours exceed the parameters above, hours will be deducted from Compensatory Time first, then Annual Leave, then finally Sick Leave.
 - Sick Leave is not considered time worked when calculating overtime.

TCRS

When an employee retires, any unused sick leave may be used for additional TCRS credit according to rules and regulations as governed by TCRS and Sevier County. Per TCRS, an employee may receive an additional month's credit for each twenty (20) days of unused sick leave. Days are defined by taking the unused sick leave and dividing by the rate of accrual:

- 8-Hour Accrual – Unused Hours divided by 8
- 10-Hour Accrual – Unused Hours divided by 10
- 12-Hour Accrual – Unused Hours divided by 12
- Examples:
 - A retiring employee has worked positions within the county that have always been at 8 hours per shift. Therefore, the employee accrued 8 hours per month for sick throughout their employment. The employee has 808 unused sick hours as of the date of retirement. The employee has 101 days ($808/8$) for TCRS retirement, which equals five months and one day.
 - An employee retiring has worked positions within the county that have various hours per shift. The employee has 2,010 unused sick hours as of the date of retirement. Of the 2,010 hours, 1,200 are credited while employed in a position that was a 24-hour shift (the employee accrued 12 hours per month during that time), and 810 are credited as an employee in a position that was a 10-hour shift. The employee has 201.25 days ($1,200/12$ and $810/8$) for TCRS retirement, which equates to 10.07 months. A ratio will be used if time is difficult to determine between the accruals. See below for an example of calculating a ratio.

Employees that accrued hours under any plan before January 1, 2020, will follow the same accrual rules as set above, except for accruals of more than 12 hours per month. If the employee accrued more than 12 hours per month, those hours would be divided by 12.

- Examples:
 - An employee retiring on December 1, 2019, worked in a position that accrued 24 hours per month. The employee has unused sick leave of 4,800 at the time of retirement. The employee has 400 days ($4,800/12$) to be used toward TCRS retirement, which equates to 20 months.
 - An employee retiring on December 31, 2025, worked in a position that accrued 24 hours per month before January 1, 2020, and 12 hours per month afterward. The employee had a total of 6,000 hours as of retirement, with 5,400 hours as of December 31, 2019. The employee has 500 days to be used toward TCRS retirement, which equates to 25 months of service.

- Calculation: Take the total unused sick hours before January 1, 2020, and divide by 12 ($5,400 / 12 = 450$). Next, take the unused sick leave hours at the time of retirement minus the unused sick leave hours as of January 1, 2020, to establish the hours credited to the new plan. Then, divide by 12 ($6,000 - 5,400 = 600 / 12 = 50$). This equates to 500 days divided by 20 equals 25 months.

For employees who have accrued Sick Leave hours under multiple accrual amounts, an effort will be made to match unused Sick Leave hours to the correct accrual. However, a ratio will determine hours for employees whose hours are difficult to match.

○ Example:

- An employee has accrued unused hours of 5,600 while accruing hours at multiple rates as of the retirement date; however, attributing the unused hours to a particular shift accrual is difficult. The employee worked in a 24-hour shift position that accrued 24 hours per month for 20 years (240 months) and then transitioned to 12 hours per month accrual for five years (60 months). The total unused sick leave at the time of retirement is 5,600. The employee has 466.68 days to be used toward TCRS retirement, equating to 23.34 months.
 - Calculation: Take maximum amount of time accrued -- 20 years x 24 hours per month = 5,760 plus 5 years x 12 hours per month = 720 added together 6,480 – to establish ratio of 89% credited to 24-hour accrual (5,760 is 89% of 6,480) and 11% credited to 12-hour accrual (720 is 11% of 6,480). Therefore, 89% of the unused Sick Leave amount of 5,600 is credited to 24-hour accrual and calculated as $5,600 \times 89\% = 4,984 / 12 = 415.34$; and 11% of the unused Sick Leave amount of 5,600 is credited to 12-hour accrual and calculated as $5,600 \times 11\% = 616 / 12 = 51.34$. Add 415.34 and 51.34 together for the total accrued days of 466.68 or 23.34 months.

3.0 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Bereavement leave of up to 24 work hours for scheduled workdays may be granted in case of death in the employee's immediate family. This leave is intended to prepare for and attend a funeral and/or attend to any other immediate post-death matters. Immediate family shall be defined as spouse, parent, children, brothers or sisters, grandparent, grandchild, step-relatives of the preceding, in-laws of the preceding, aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews of the employee. The Department Head or Elected Official will decide the number of approved bereavement leave hours based on the criteria above. An employee who claims bereavement leave may, at the discretion of his Elected Official or Department Head, be required to furnish confirmation of the death which may include an obituary notice or funeral home announcement.

4.0 VOTING LEAVE

Any person entitled to vote in an election in this state may be absent from work to vote while the election polls are open for up to three (3) hours. The Elected Official or Department Head may specify when the employee may be absent, and the number of approved leave hours. The

employee will receive regular compensation during this period, and leave time will not be affected. Voting time shall not be counted as working time for overtime computation. If the employee's work period begins three (3) or more hours after the opening of the polls or ends three (3) or more hours before the closing of the polls, then the Elected Official or Department Head does not have to allow additional time off from work.

5.0 MILITARY LEAVE

Full-time employees who are members of any federal or state military reserve component will be granted military training leave for such time as they are in the military service on-field training for periods not to exceed twenty (20) working days per calendar year. This time may not be used for weekend drills unless the employee is scheduled to work on weekends. Such requested leave shall be supported with copies of the armed service orders. When the employee is on military training leave, the employee will receive full pay and benefits to which he or she would otherwise be entitled. Military Leave shall be granted under TCA 8-33-101 to 8-33-109. Should the full-time employee enter the military on an active duty basis, they must present their orders to their supervisor as soon as they receive them. The full-time employee will be granted a leave of absence to serve a tour of duty. The employee will receive their regular compensation from Sevier County minus the compensation received from the military while on active duty status. Consistent with Tennessee Code Annotated, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act of 1994 (38 U.S.C. 4301 – 4333 - USERRA) does not allow the accumulation of annual or sick leave while a covered employee is on active-duty military leave. USERRA does provide for the continuation of health insurance benefits for the employee and dependents. An employee performing military service in an active duty status may elect such coverage for up to eighteen (18) months and will be required to pay not more than 102 percent of the full premium under the plan. However, if the employee's military service is less than 31 days, the employee will not be required to pay more than the employee's share.

Under USERRA, an employee returning from active duty service must notify Sevier County of their intent to return to work within a specific time, depending on the time the employee was in service. The position into which a returning employee is reinstated is also based on the length of military service. An employee assigned to active duty status should contact the Human Resources Director for additional information regarding return to work notifications and reinstatement requirements.

6.0 JURY DUTY LEAVE

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 for jury duty, the employee shall show the summons to their supervisor on the next day they are working.
- (b) The employee will be granted a leave of absence when they are 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 working hours after serving less than three hours, the employee must report back to the Elected Official or Department Head. If the employee is relieved of being a witness during working hours, the employee must report to the Elected Official or Department Head.
- (d) If an employee summoned for jury duty is working a night shift or is working during hours preceding those in which court is usually held, such employee shall also be excused from his/her employment for the shift immediately preceding the first day of service on any lawsuit. After the first day of service, when such employee's responsibility for jury duty exceeds three (3) hours, then such employee shall be excused from his/her 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 must submit all compensation received for serving as a juror to the County.
- (g) The above provisions concerning compensation for the 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.
- (h) Please see the Finance Department for jury duty outside Sevier County.

7.0 LEAVE WITHOUT PAY (MEDICAL)

A Leave without Pay may be granted to regular full-time employees (see sick leave) experiencing serious medical issues who have exhausted all entitled leave at the recommendation of their Department Head/Elected Official and approval by the County Mayor. Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) benefits will be initiated at the beginning of this leave of absence or at the beginning of the fourth month to run concurrently with the leave of absence without pay. Employees on a leave of absence without pay must report their return to work status at least weekly to their immediate supervisor. Failure to do so could result in termination of their employment. During this leave of absence, employees will be responsible for paying their portion of applicable employee benefits (i.e., health insurance, dental insurance, etc.) no later than the 15th of each month. Failure to pay their share promptly may result in the termination of their leave of absence without pay status and possibly their continued employment. Other accumulated fringe benefits such as seniority, retirement, service credits, sick pay, vacation pay, holiday pay, etc., shall not accrue during any unpaid Leave without Pay. If the employee needs additional leave without pay, a "reasonable accommodation" may be made depending upon the circumstances involved, and the employee has a reasonable expectation of returning to work.

7.1 LEAVE WITHOUT PAY (NON-MEDICAL)

Regular, full-time employees who have exhausted all other situation-eligible leave may take leave without pay if approved by their Elected Official or Department Head and County Mayor.

8.0 LEAVE OF ABSENCE UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Generally, a Family and Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA) is an official authorization to be absent from work without pay for a specified period. Eligible employees may be entitled to job-protected family or medical leaves of absence if they are unable to come to work due to qualifying family or medical reasons as described under the following Family–Medical Leave Policy, which shall be administered under all applicable state and federal laws:

- 1) Employees are eligible if they have been actively employed for at least 12 months and have been employed for at least 1250 hours of service (an average of 25 hours per week) during the 12 months immediately preceding the commencement of leave. Salary continuation under any leave period shall depend on the employee’s qualifying for disability pay under our Disability Policy. FMLA leave provided for under this policy shall run concurrently with any Tennessee maternity leave entitlements.
- 2) Under the circumstances set forth below, each eligible employee shall have up to 12 weeks during any one-year period. Under this policy, the 12 – month period utilized is a “rolling” 12 – month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave.
- 3) Family and Medical Leave will be granted to eligible employees for one or more of the following reasons:
 - a) For the birth of a son or daughter and to care for the newborn child;
 - b) For placement with the employee of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care;
 - c) To care for the employee’s spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition; and
 - d) Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee’s job.
- 4) For this policy, the following definitions apply for an employee qualifying to take FMLA leave:
 - a) Spouse means a husband or wife as defined or recognized under State law for purposes of marriage in the state where the employee resides, including common law marriage in states where it is recognized;

- b) Parent means the biological parent or an individual who stands or stood *in loco parentis* to an employee when the employee was a son or daughter, as defined in (c) below. This term does not include parents “in-law”;
 - c) Son or daughter means a biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing *in loco parentis*, who is either under age 18 or age 18 or older and “incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.
 - d) Persons who are “*in loco parentis*” include those with day-to-day responsibilities to care for and financially support a child or, in the case of an employee, who had such responsibility for the employee when the employee was a child. A biological or legal relationship is not necessary.
 - e) The County reserves the right to require confirmation of a family relationship that the employee giving notice of the need for leave provides reasonable documentation or a statement of family relationship.
- 5) Whenever possible, and subject to your health care provider’s approval and certification when planning medical treatment, eligible employees must consult with their Department Head or Elected Official and make a reasonable effort to schedule the leave so as not to unduly disrupt the Department’s operations.
- a) Employees are expected to consult with the Department Head or Elected Official before scheduling treatment to work out a treatment schedule that best suits the needs of both the employee and the County;
 - b) If an employee who provides notice of the need to take FMLA leave on an intermittent leave basis for planned medical treatment fails to consult with the Department Head or Elected Official to make a reasonable attempt to arrange the treatment schedule. Hence, so as not to unduly disrupt the County’s operations, the Department Head or Elected Official will initiate discussions with the employee and require the employee to attempt to make such arrangements, subject to the approval of the employee’s health care provider.
- 6) If an employee submits a certification signed by a healthcare provider, the County may, with the employee’s permission, have a healthcare provider representing the Employer contact the employee’s healthcare provider for clarification and authenticity of the medical certification. Under appropriate circumstances, the County may require the employee to obtain a second opinion at the County’s expense. The County will designate the healthcare provider utilized in these circumstances to furnish a second and/or third opinion, but the selected healthcare provider will not be employed by the County regularly.
- 7) In those circumstances when the approximate timing of the need for leave is not foreseeable, the employee should provide the County notice of the need for FMLA leave

as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the situation. The County expects that an employee will give notice to their Department Head or Elected Official within no more than one or two working days of learning of the need for leave, except in extraordinary circumstances where such notice is not feasible. In all instances of FMLA leave, the County reserves the right to request medical certification outlining the expected duration and nature of the illness as it relates to the employee's ability to come to work or the need for that employee to care for family members with serious health conditions or other FMLA qualifying reasons.

- 8) When the need for leave is foreseeable based on an expected birth, placement for adoption or foster care, or planned medical treatment for a serious health condition of the employee or a family member, 30 days advance notice is required. In the event 30-days notice is not practicable due to a lack of knowledge of approximately when the leave will be required to begin, or due to a change in circumstances or medical emergency, notice must be given by an employee as soon as practicable.
- a) To assist the County in arranging work assignments during an employee's absence, the County requests that employees give the County prior notice, to the extent possible, of an expected birth or adoption, as well as an indication, to the extent known, of the employee's expected return to work date;
 - b) To facilitate an employee's return to work, the County requests that the employee provide the employee's Department Head or Elected Official with two weeks' advance notification of the employee's intended return to work date;
 - c) If an employee fails to give timely notice when the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable, the employee may be required to delay the taking of FMLA leave until 30 days after the date the employee provides appropriate notice to the County of the need for FMLA leave;
 - d) The County understands that under certain circumstances, it may be necessary for an employee to take more leave than originally anticipated, or an employee may discover after the beginning of FMLA leave that circumstances have changed and the amount of leave originally anticipated is no longer necessary. In these situations, the employee is required to provide the County reasonable notice, within two business days, of the changed circumstances where foreseeable;
 - e) If an employee advises the Employer either before or during the taking of FMLA leave that the employee does not intend to return to work, the employment relationship will end, and the employee's entitlement to continued leave, maintenance of health benefits, and restoration to the job shall cease; and
 - f) If an employee can return to work earlier than anticipated, they shall provide their Department Head or Elected Official two weeks' advanced notice when feasible before returning to work.

- 9) For purposes of FMLA leave, “serious health condition” entitling an employee to FMLA leave means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves:
- a) In-patient care (an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity such as an inability to work, attend school or perform other regular daily activities due to the serious health condition, treatment therefore, or recovery there from, or any subsequent treatment in connection with such in-patient care; or
 - b) Continuing treatment by a health care provider, which includes one or more of the following:
 - 1) A period of incapacity (inability to work, attend school or perform other regular daily activities due to a serious health condition, treatment therefore, or recovery there from, of more than three (3) consecutive calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition that also involves additional treatment by a health care provider, nurse or physician’s assistant under the direct supervision of a health care provider, or by a provider of health care services such as a physical therapist, under orders of, or on referral by a health care provider or treatment by a health care provider on at least one occasion which results in a regimen of continuing treatment under the supervision of a health care provider.
- 10) Leave of absence rights, annual leave and/or sick leave available to employees under other sections of our policies may be counted towards the total time off available under our FMLA policy if the leave is FMLA qualifying.
- 11) On return from FMLA leave employees will be returned to the same position the employee held when the leave commenced or to an equivalent position.
- a) If an employee is unable to perform an essential function of their position because of a physical or mental condition, including the continuation of a serious health condition, the employee will have no right to restoration to another position under the Family and Medical Leave Act;
 - b) However, this does not mean an employee will not be returned to work even if they cannot do so after their FMLA leave entitlement, as the County will seek to return employees to a suitable position, although the County cannot guarantee that one will be available. Regardless of whether an employee can return to an available position, the employee may nevertheless remain eligible for continuing disability pay benefits during this additional leave period following applicable insurance coverage;
 - c) If an employee is unable to return to work after the expiration of their FMLA leave entitlement (12 weeks or less depending on the individual employee’s use of leave during the rolling 12 – month period), the employee shall forfeit his/her

reinstatement rights under the FMLA, but may be returned to work to an alternate position for which the employee is qualified if such a position is available; and

- d) If due to an employee's medical circumstances, they can no longer perform their original job, the County will attempt to transfer such an employee to alternate suitable work, if available.

- 12) While on an FMLA leave of absence under this policy, the County will continue employee group health insurance benefits under the same terms as provided to other employees for up to a maximum of 12 weeks during the applicable 12-month period. If an employee's leave extends beyond 12 weeks, the employee shall be offered the opportunity to purchase continuing coverage under state and federal COBRA continuation rules.

- 13) Other accumulated fringe benefits such as seniority, retirement, service credits, sick pay, vacation pay, holiday pay, etc., shall be preserved at the level earned as of the commencement of FMLA leave, but shall not accrue during any unpaid FMLA leave.

- 14) During any period of FMLA leave, the employee may be eligible for sick pay benefits. Employees should refer to the applicable plan documents for eligibility, benefit amounts, and other particulars of such policies.

NOTE: In addition to the FMLA, Tennessee has a maternity leave law (T.C.A. 4-21-408) which applies to all employers who employ 100 or more full-time employees at a job site or location. This state law allows employees who have been employed for twelve (12) consecutive months to take up to four (4) months of unpaid leave for pregnancy, childbirth, and nursing the infant. To be eligible for this leave, the employee must give at least three (3) months' advance notice, except in cases of a medical emergency. This leave will run concurrently with the FMLA with any leave to which the employee may be entitled under the FMLA or otherwise. Subject to certain conditions, accrued paid leave may be substituted for unpaid maternity leave.

NOTE: This leave of absence is being provided to you in compliance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 as amended by the passage of the military family leave provisions in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2008, Public Law 110-181. Sevier County will comply with all of the requirements of this Act. To determine if you are eligible for a leave of absence, please contact Sevier County.

9.0 HOLIDAYS

Sevier County considers the following days as paid holidays:

NEW YEAR'S DAY	January 1
MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY	Third Monday in January
PRESIDENT'S DAY	Third Monday in February
GOOD FRIDAY	Friday prior to Easter
MEMORIAL DAY	Last Monday in May
INDEPENDENCE DAY	July 4
LABOR DAY	First Monday in September

VETERAN'S DAY
THANKSGIVING
CHRISTMAS

November 11
Fourth Thursday and the following Friday in Nov.
December 25 and 26

Eligibility

Employees are eligible for paid holidays if they meet the following requirements:

- Must be classified as regular, full-time status. Employees in their initial period of employment may be eligible for holiday pay if they meet the stated requirements.
 - Employees on leave without pay at the time of Holiday are not eligible.
 - Employees on Workers' Compensation at the time of Holiday are not eligible.
 - Employees on Military Leave at the time of Holiday will be eligible.

Other Information

If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the County Mayor will determine the day to be taken. At the discretion of the County Mayor, the courthouse and county offices may be closed before the official observance of paid holidays or for a separately declared day. Holiday pay is not considered time worked when calculating overtime.

Options

Due to the variety of county services, Sevier County employees may not be able to observe holidays on the same day, as noted above. If your work schedule requires a deviation from the holiday schedule, your Elected Official or Department Head will notify you. Employees who work on holidays or are scheduled for a regular day off on the holiday will be compensated via payment at regular time. If an employee is scheduled to work on a holiday and requests leave, no holiday pay will be granted, and the employee must use accrued leave to receive pay. Employees who fall under these provisions will be compensated per the schedule below:

8-HOUR AND 10-HOUR SHIFT EMPLOYEES

	Term
Holiday Hours	8 Hours

12-HOUR, 16-HOUR, AND 24-HOUR SHIFT EMPLOYEES

	Term
Holiday Hours	12 Hours

10.0 LEAVE RECORDS

Employees requesting leave are required to record leave on forms provided by the county. The employee gives the forms to the Elected Official or Department Head. The County Mayor's office maintains the leave forms.

SECTION V

INSURANCE, HEALTH, AND SAFETY BENEFITS

The County Mayor's office has information regarding life insurance, medical insurance, and retirement plan benefits offered to full-time regular employees of Sevier County, Tennessee.

1.0 WORKING CONDITIONS

Employees shall be provided safe, sanitary, and healthy working conditions. If employees have questions or concerns regarding workplace safety, they should contact their supervisor, Dept. Head or Elected Official, or Safety Manager.

2.0 BENEFITS

In addition to the holiday and leave benefits provided by Sevier County to its employees, numerous other benefit programs are provided. Some of these programs are provided automatically, and some are voluntary. Additional information about all of the benefits offered by Sevier County is available at the Office of the County Mayor.

None of the employee benefits outlined in this handbook or other personnel policies shall be construed as a "guaranteed" benefit. Employee benefits may be increased, decreased, altered, or eliminated at any time, as determined by the Sevier County Commission.

The following additional benefits will be provided to the employees:

- 1. Retirement Plan** – Sevier County participates in the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS). All new employees have an initial period of employment for six (6) months before they are eligible to enroll with TCRS. The plan is mandatory.
- 2. Social Security** – Sevier County participates in the Federal Social Security Program, the cost of which is shared by Sevier County. Participation is mandatory.
- 3. Health Insurance** – All regular full-time employees and employees in their initial period of employment who are typically scheduled to work thirty (30) or more hours a week are provided a health insurance plan. Employees must enroll within thirty (30) days of employment, and coverage under the health insurance plan begins the first day of the month following a sixty (60) day waiting period. Health insurance coverage is available to the employee's dependents. An employee covered by the insurance plan and would lose coverage due to going from full-time to part-time, going on leave of absence or layoff, retiring, or being terminated may have a right to continuation of coverage. An employee's spouse or dependent children may have continuation rights if they are covered by the plan and would lose coverage for any of the above reasons or would lose coverage because the employee has died, the employee has become eligible for Medicare, the employee and the spouse are divorced, or the dependent child ceases to be a dependent as defined by the insurer.

4. Prescription Drug Program – Sevier County participates in a prescription drug program that allows the employee and any dependents covered under the group health insurance plan to obtain prescription medications at a specified cost. This program is available to regular full-time employees. Coverage under this program begins the first day of the month following a sixty (60) day waiting period.

5. Group Short-Term and Long-Term Disability and Life Insurance – Employees enrolled in the health insurance plan are eligible for Short-Term and Long-Term and Life insurance.

6. Optional Insurance Programs – Sevier County provides regular full-time employees with the opportunity to participate in various insurance programs through payroll deduction. Sevier County authorizes the insurance programs offered, and participation is at the employee's discretion. Sevier County does not contribute financially to these programs; the employee incurs all expenses. Group dental insurance is one such program offered.

7. Deferred Compensation – Sevier County participates in a deferred compensation plan. The plan is voluntary and allows employees to defer a portion of their monthly income for investment purposes.

8. Retiree Insurance – The retiree insurance program is as follows:

- The following are eligible:
 - a covered employee with at least fifteen (15) years of service with the Sevier County Retirement Plan, which is through TCRS, and is at least 55 years of age covered employee that retires under the Sevier County Retirement Plan. The employee may continue coverage under this plan until age 65 or become eligible for Medicare, whichever comes first.
 - Covered employees who are age 65 or eligible for Medicare at retirement may retain dependent coverage
- A covered person has 31 days from the date of retirement to elect such continuation. Coverage continues only if the employee makes a written request for coverage on a form approved by the employer and within 31 days of retirement. If an employee fails to enroll within 31 days of retirement, the employee will be deemed to have declined coverage.
- The retiree will be required to pay the medical contribution as set by the county.
- Dependent coverage may be continued on eligible dependents as long as the dependent meets the plan's eligibility rules.
- The county plan will be secondary if the retiree becomes covered under another group health plan or is currently enrolled in another health plan.

SECTION VI EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

1.0 PURPOSE

Maintaining high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and conduct by Sevier County employees is essential to ensure the proper performance of Sevier County business and the maintenance of confidence by the public in Sevier County government. These standards state the ethical and other conduct standards and responsibilities.

2.0 GENERAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Employees must avoid any action that might result in or create the appearance of using public office for private gain, giving preferential treatment to anyone, impeding Sevier County government efficiency or economy, making a Sevier County government decision outside official channels, or eroding the public's confidence in Sevier County government's integrity. Employees must be careful that their personal interests and activities do not negatively impact or conflict with their Sevier County duties.

An official or employee, or an official's or employee's spouse or child living in the same household, may not accept, directly or indirectly, any gift, money, gratuity, or other consideration of favor of any kind from anyone other than the county:

- (1) For the performance of an act or refraining from performance of an act, that he would be expected to perform, or refrain from performing, in the regular course of his duties; or
- (2) That a reasonable person would understand was intended to influence the vote, official action, or judgment of the official or employee in executing county business.

Use of Sevier County Property for Personal Reasons – Sevier County employees have a clear responsibility to protect and conserve county property and to obey all rules and regulations governing its use. Employees cannot directly or indirectly use or allow another individual to use county-owned property other than for officially approved activities.

3.0 USE OF TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Sevier County's technology resources include but are not limited to computers, software, telephones, facsimile (FAX), and copiers. Sevier County owns and maintains technology resources to carry out Sevier County's business. While Sevier County recognizes that employees may occasionally need to use technology resources for personal reasons, all personal use should be incidental and minimum. This standard of usage applies to all Sevier County equipment at all times. Repeated or intentional misuse of or damage to Sevier County's technology resources is prohibited. Employees will be required to reimburse the county for any damage caused by deliberate misuse or negligence. Information created or stored on Sevier County's technology

resources is the property of Sevier County. Employees should not consider this information to be private.

Equipment and Computer Hardware - Sevier County's purchasing and information technology staff or designees should be consulted before purchasing and installing technology equipment. Only Sevier County's information technology staff or designees are authorized to connect, disconnect, move, or attach devices to company-owned computer equipment.

Computer Software

Software Installation and Copyright - Only information technology staff or designee shall purchase and install PC or network-based software. No other software shall be permitted on company-owned computer equipment. The use of a duplicate copy of licensed software is a violation of federal copyright laws. Employees are prohibited from copying county-owned software for their personal use.

Network Set-ups - Employees shall not change, tamper with, or add to pre-defined network setups and software configurations (except those that are end-user controlled with the software application).

Games - Employees are prohibited from playing unauthorized computer games during working hours. Only games authorized and installed by Sevier County information systems staff are permitted on Sevier County computer equipment.

Viruses - Sevier County has installed anti-virus programs on all agency computers. Employees shall not modify or circumvent the anti-virus software. Employees who suspect a virus should ask the appropriate staff to scan the device.

Electronic Mail (E-mail) - Electronic mail generated in the course of Sevier County business may be considered a public record under Tennessee law. Therefore, employees should not expect that their e-mail correspondence or files are confidential. Employees shall avoid using harassing, offensive, and discriminatory language in electronic mail. Messages addressed to "Everyone" must pertain to Sevier County business and be urgent or of informational use to all employees.

The internet - Employee access to and communication on the internet are intended for business purposes only. Internet use shall not involve intentional contact with or perusal of websites containing offensive, illegal, discriminatory, or pornographic material. All information sent or received via the Internet shall be considered a matter of public record. Therefore, employees should not expect their internet activities and messages to be confidential.

Inappropriate Material - Employees shall not copy, download, upload, or print

offensive, illegal, discriminatory, pornographic, or other inappropriate material using any Sevier County technology resource.

Voice Mail – Sevier County and the service company maintaining the voice mail system have access to all employee voice mailboxes and messages. While Sevier County does not routinely monitor voice mail, it keeps the right to monitor voice mail at any time. Employees should not expect that messages left or received are confidential.

Facsimile Machines – Sevier County facsimile machines are intended for Sevier County business communications. Employee use of these resources for personal business shall be incidental and infrequent.

Photocopy Machines – Sevier County photocopy machines are intended for Sevier County business communications. Employee use of these resources for personal business shall be incidental and infrequent. When outside agencies or individuals request copies of Sevier County documents, these agencies will be charged at the per-page rate and standard labor fee set annually by the County Mayor or their designee.

4.0 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

These guidelines apply to all employees or contractors who create or contribute to any kind of Social Media in a capacity representing Sevier County, whether intentionally or unintentionally

While all employees are welcome to participate in Social Media, we expect everyone who participates to understand and follow these simple but essential guidelines.

1. Be transparent and state that you work for Sevier County Government. Your honesty will be noted in the Social Media environment. If you are writing about Sevier County Government or other entity, use your real name, identify that you work for Sevier County Government, and be clear about your role. If you have a vested interest in what you are discussing, be the first to say so.
2. Never represent yourself or Sevier County Government falsely or misleadingly. All statements must be factual and not misleading. All claims must be substantiated.
3. Post meaningful, respectful comments – in other words, no spam and remarks that are off-topic or offensive.
4. Use common sense and common courtesy; for example, it is best to ask permission to publish or report on conversations that are meant to be private or internal to Sevier County Government. Ensure your efforts are transparent and don't violate Sevier County Government's privacy, confidentiality, and legal guidelines for external speech.

5. Stick to your area of expertise, and do not feel free to provide unique, individual perspectives on non-confidential activities at Sevier County.
6. When disagreeing with others' opinions, keep it appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a situation online that looks like it is becoming antagonistic, do not get overly defensive and do not disengage from the conversation abruptly. Feel free to ask the appropriate supervisory staff for advice and/or to disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner that reflects well on Sevier County Government.
7. If you want to write about other public entities or individuals, make sure you behave diplomatically, have the facts straight, and have the appropriate permission(s).
8. Never comment on legal matters, litigation, or any parties with which Sevier County Government may be in litigation.
9. Never participate in Social Media when the topic being discussed may be considered a crisis. Even anonymous comments may be traced to your or Sevier County Government's IP address. Refer all Social Media activity around crisis topics to the appropriate supervisory personnel.
10. Be smart about protecting yourself, your privacy, and Sevier County Government's confidential information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully. Google has a long memory.

Note: Mainstream media inquiries must be referred to the County Mayor's office.

5.0 EMPLOYEE ONLINE PRIVACY ACT OF 2014

The Employee Online Privacy Act of 2014 prohibits employers from taking the following actions:

- Requesting a password to access the personal internet account of an employee or applicant
- Requiring an applicant or employee to add the employer to the individual's private contact lists
- Requiring an employee or applicant to access their personal internet account in the presence of the employer so that the employer may review the contents; and
- Taking adverse action against an employee or applicant because of his or her failure to disclose a password or take an action listed above.

The Act will not, however, prohibit employers from accessing content available in the public domain – only content in a personal internet account. Moreover, the term “personal internet account” has been defined explicitly as:

- (A) An online account that is used by an employee or applicant exclusively for personal communications unrelated to any business purpose of the employer; and includes any electronic medium or service where users may create, share or view content,

including emails, messages, instant messages, text messages, blogs, podcasts, photographs, videos or user-created profiles; and

(B) Does not include an account created, maintained, used, or accessed by an employee or applicant for business-related communications or the employer's business purpose.

Employers are permitted to require the disclosure of personal internet account passwords to investigate employee violations of applicable laws, regulatory requirements, or prohibitions against workplace employee misconduct. This exception will also apply to an investigation of leaked business information, confidential information, or financial data to an employee's personal internet account.

Employers will maintain the right to request information legitimately related to applicant screening and will not affect an employer's right to monitor the use of or information stored on employer-owned equipment or accounts.

6.0 USE OF INFORMATION OBTAINED ON THE JOB

Sevier County employees may not use information obtained through employment with Sevier County to further a private interest that has not been made available to the general public. Specifically, employees may not use information that has not been dispersed by Sevier County or is available to the public only by special request.

7.0 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Sevier County employees may engage in employment outside Sevier County as long as they have approval from the Department Head and the outside work does not interfere with or otherwise cause harm to the performance of their official Sevier County duties. If outside employment is found to be incompatible with Sevier County employment, a Sevier County employee must stop the outside work, or they will be terminated from employment with Sevier County. The following types of outside employment are prohibited:

- Outside employment which involves acceptance of a fee, gift, or anything of monetary value in circumstances that may result in, or create the appearance of, a conflict of interest;
- Outside employment which tends to harm an employee's mental or physical capacity such that his performance is less than acceptable at Sevier County;
- Outside employment which would conflict with or reduce an employee's effectiveness in conducting their official Sevier County duties; and/or
- Outside employment which would conflict with or harm Sevier County's relations with the public.

The following restrictions are placed on outside employment activities:

- Outside employment activities shall not involve the use of Government-financed time or supplies;
- Outside employment activities shall not use or allow the use of official information that has not been made available to the general public;
- Outside employment activities shall not involve the use of the employee's official job title, statement of affiliation with Sevier County, or suggest official endorsement by Sevier County; and/or
- Outside employment activities shall not involve conducting business with subordinate employees.

8.0 POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Prohibited Political Activities

The Hatch Act places certain restrictions on employees of entities who directly receive federal funds and/or grants. An employee is prohibited from engaging in the following political activities while employed by Sevier County (including while on leave of absence irrespective of pay status):

Using one's official authority or influence to interfere with or affecting the results of an election or nomination for office, including activities such as threatening to deny promotion to any employee who does not vote for certain candidates.

Coercing directly, coercing indirectly, attempting to coerce, or commanding or advising an employee to contribute to political activity is prohibited.

Permitted Activities

Employees may be candidates in non-partisan or partisan elections. However, before deciding to run for public office, employees should be aware of possible conflicts of interest. If an employee is elected to office, the Sevier County Commission Intergovernmental Committee will review the situation to determine if a conflict of interest exists and identify actions necessary to resolve such conflict. Sevier County employees running for any county-wide office will be required to take a leave of absence without pay for thirty (30) days before the election. Elected officials are not required to take a leave of absence.

9.0 SAFETY

All employees shall conform to established safety rules and regulations that may be issued occasionally and be responsible for the appropriate use of protective clothing, equipment, and vehicles. Employees who violate safety rules and regulations shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

OSHA has officially declared that texting while driving is a workplace hazard and a safety violation. The National Traffic Safety Board recommends a total ban on drivers' cell phones or similar devices. Sevier County strongly encourages employees who must utilize their cell phone or other mobile devices while driving to pull over if safely possible, keep conversations short, keep their eyes on the road, and not answer if driving in heavy traffic or the conversation involves considerable concentration.

10.0 HARASSMENT POLICY

Sevier County is committed to providing a safe and secure work environment in which all individuals are treated equally, with respect and dignity. Sevier County strives to create an atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices. In keeping with this commitment, Sevier County will not tolerate harassment in the workplace based on sex, age, race, mental or physical disabilities, color, sexual orientation, national origin, or religious beliefs.

This policy covers all employees and officers. Sevier County will not tolerate, condone, or allow harassment by co-workers, supervisors, associates, outside clients, or other non-employees who conduct business with Sevier County.

Sevier County specifically prohibits sexual harassment in the workplace. For this policy, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when either of the following conditions exists:

- Submission to or rejection of this conduct by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting hiring, evaluation, promotion, or other aspects of employment (called *Quid Pro Quo*); or
- This conduct substantially interferes with an individual's employment or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment (called a hostile work environment).

Both perpetrators and victims of sexual harassment can be of either gender, and sexual harassment can occur between persons of the same gender.

Reporting a Complaint of Harassment – Sevier County encourages employees to report all incidents of harassment regardless of the status or job title of the perpetrator. Other persons who observe an offensive behavior committed on Sevier County property or by a Sevier County representative should report the event even if they are not the target of the behavior.

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 they have been subjected to illegal discrimination or harassment related to employment with Sevier County, the employee should report the incident promptly to the Elected Official or Department Head under whose direction the employee works. If the problem is not resolved within a reasonable time, or if the employee feels uncomfortable reporting the problem to the Elected Official or Department Head, then the problem should be reported to any Department Head, the County Mayor, or their

designee. 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; however, disciplinary action may be taken against any individual providing false information in connection with a complaint. The purpose of having several persons to whom complaints may be made is to avoid a situation where an individual is faced with complaining to the person or a close associate of the person, who would be the subject of the complaint. The reporting officer will report the incident to the County Mayor or legal counsel representing Sevier County for investigation and resolution.

Retaliation Against Complainant - Retaliation against any individual who has articulated any concern of harassment is prohibited. Retaliation is a serious violation of this harassment policy and should be reported immediately. Any person found to have retaliated against another individual for reporting harassment will be subject to the same type of disciplinary action as the perpetrators of harassment.

Investigating the Complaint - All allegations of harassment will be investigated by the reporting officer or panel of officers who received the complaint and/or legal council. All complaints will be investigated promptly. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigative process to the extent practical and appropriate under the circumstances. All officers and employees are required to cooperate in the investigation of any complaints made according to this policy. In pursuing the investigation, the reporting officer and/or legal council will take the complainant's wishes under consideration. Still, they will thoroughly investigate the matter as they see fit, keeping the complainant informed about the status of the investigation.

Resolving the Complaint - Upon completing the investigation of a harassment complaint, a decision as to whether harassment has occurred and the appropriate action to take on the complaint will be made by the County Official or his/her designee, or if the County Mayor is the subject of the complaint, by the Chairman of the County Commission Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. Sevier County will communicate its findings and intended actions to the complainant and alleged perpetrators.

If the investigators find that harassment has occurred, the perpetrators will be appropriately disciplined up to and including termination. Sevier County's ability to discipline a non-employee (e.g., client, supplier) is limited by the degree of control, if any. Sevier County will, if harassment is substantiated and to the extent reasonable, take appropriate action.

If the reporting officer or panel of officers determines that no harassment has occurred, this finding will be communicated to the complainant in an appropriately sensitive manner.

False Accusation - False accusations of harassment make the investigation of valid complaints more difficult. If an investigation finds that the complainant falsely accused another of harassment knowingly or maliciously, the complainant may be appropriately disciplined up to and including termination.

Appeal Process - If either party directly involved in a harassment investigation is dissatisfied with the outcome or resolution, that individual has the right to appeal the decision internally before the Sevier County Commission Intergovernmental Affairs Committee or outside legal counsel.

11.0 SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

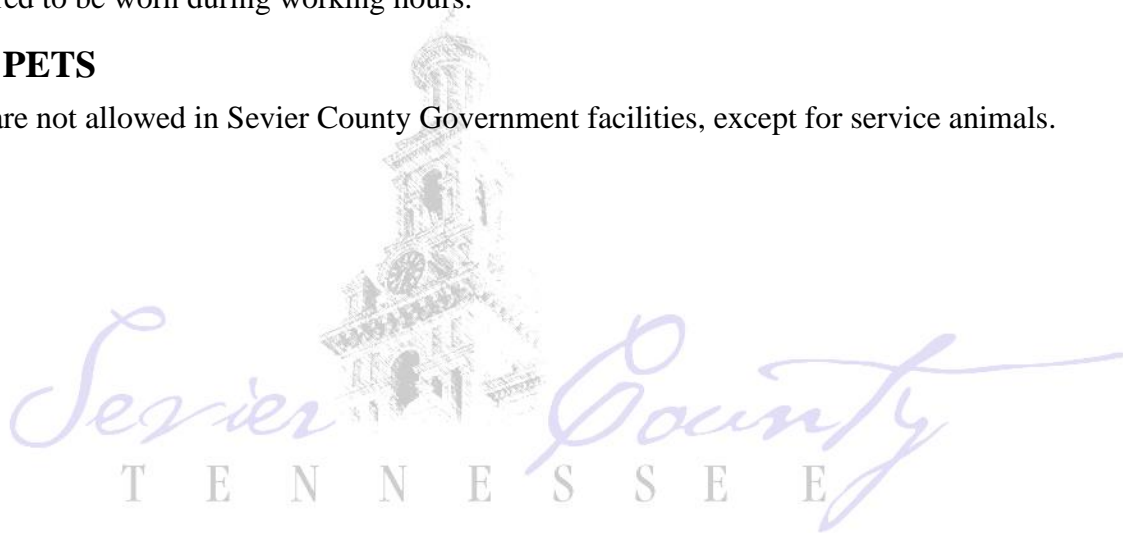
Due to the adverse health effects of second-hand smoke, all facilities owned and operated by Sevier County are designated as smoke-free environments. Employees are prohibited from smoking tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, in county-owned facilities. The use of smokeless tobacco in county-owned properties will be at the discretion of the Department Head/Elected Official and approved by the County Mayor.

12.0 EMPLOYEE APPEARANCE

Sevier County employees should observe good habits of grooming, personal appearance, and personal hygiene. Please dress appropriately when performing your job duties. For certain department positions, the department supervisor may establish more specific guidelines for suitable appearance. Concern for safety or the portrayal of professionalism may necessitate a particular type or style of clothing worn while on duty. In some positions, uniforms may be required to be worn during working hours.

13.0 PETS

Pets are not allowed in Sevier County Government facilities, except for service animals.



SECTION VII

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

1.0 POLICY

Regulations for the acceptable conduct of employees are necessary for the orderly operation of the county's business and the benefit and protection of the rights and safety of all employees. Certain regulations and others may be established from time to time, and the procedures for disciplinary action are published to promote understanding of what is considered unacceptable conduct and provide for consistent action in the event of violations.

2.0 REASONS FOR DISCIPLINE

An employee may be disciplined if any of the following charges are substantiated. The following list is not intended to cover every work situation but is an example of the charges that may result in appropriate disciplinary action. Sevier County's right to discipline or dismiss employees shall not be limited to the following list.

- Having firearms on their person in Sevier County facilities.
- Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Possessing, distributing, or using alcohol or drugs on Sevier County property during working hours.
- Giving false statements on the employment application.
- Intentionally reporting incorrect work schedules or falsifying records.
- Stealing from fellow employees, the county, or Sevier County residents.
- Refusing to do assigned work (insubordination).
- Willfully destroying or abusing Sevier County property.
- Using abusive and/or threatening language.
- Instigating or participating in a fight on Sevier County property.
- Being absent from work without notifying an immediate supervisor.
- Sleeping during working hours.
- Leaving work during working hours without authorization from immediate supervisor (except during lunch period).
- Being habitually tardy without reasonable cause as determined by the immediate supervisor.
- Posting, removing, and/or tampering with official bulletin boards without proper authorization.
- An employee failing to report any work-related accidents or injuries immediately to the supervisor.
- A supervisor failing to notify the County Mayor's Office immediately of any work-related accident or injuries.
- Violating Sevier County's Harassment Policy.
- Violating any Sevier County policy as outlined in various sections of this manual.
- Committing a moving violation under state and/or local traffic laws or regulations while operating a county-owned vehicle.

- Violating a safety rule or safety practice.

3.0 DEFINITIONS OF DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Reprimand

Oral Reprimand - When an employee violates county policy, makes a minor mistake, exhibits poor judgment, etc., and the result has only minor negative consequences, the supervisor should have a meeting with the employee to reach an understanding about the cause of the offense, offer assistance, and establish a plan for corrective action. The Supervisor should briefly document the oral reprimand and file it in the employee's file maintained by the supervisor.

Written Reprimand - When an employee commits a more serious violation of company policy and/or makes a mistake, and the result of this action has more serious negative consequences, a written reprimand is appropriate. A supervisor should proceed to a written reprimand when an oral reprimand fails to achieve improved behavior or when the initial offense is serious enough to warrant this action. The written reprimand documents the nature of the offense, previous efforts to correct the problem (if applicable) and warns of the consequence of failure to correct the behavior. The Written Reprimand form is signed by the Elected Official or Department Head and the employee. A copy of the reprimand is placed in the employee's personnel file. The employee has the right to offer a written response to the reprimand in their personnel file.

Suspension - A supervisor may suspend an employee, with or without pay, for repeated or severe violations of Sevier County's policies and procedures. The length of the suspension should be relevant to the nature of the offense and the employee's employment history at Sevier County. A suspension may follow earlier disciplinary action(s) or may be used when a particular incident in and of itself is serious enough to warrant the action.

An employee may be suspended from duty with pay pending investigation of charges where the employee's presence at work constitutes a hazard to the employee, the county, the public, and/or other employees.

Demotion - Demotion is the re-assignment of an employee to a classification in a lower skill level of the Pay Plan. An employee may be demoted when their job performance is unsatisfactory, and all efforts to bring the employee's performance to a satisfactory level have failed. An employee may be demoted for disciplinary reasons when an employee's behavior is deemed to be serious misconduct.

Dismissal - An employee who gives unsatisfactory service or is guilty of any substantial violation of Sevier County's policies and procedures shall be subject to dismissal at the employer's will. Dismissal may be the culmination of a series of events for which disciplinary actions have been taken. Dismissal may also

result from a single event that is serious enough to warrant immediate termination.

4.0 PROCEDURE FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Disciplinary Authority - A supervisor should recommend appropriate disciplinary action given the severity of the employee's violation. While an employee may be allowed to improve their job performance following a violation, the application of progressive disciplinary action is not required before dismissal. An employee may be dismissed immediately for a single event that is serious enough to warrant this action.

Written Documentation – In memo form and in consultation with the Human Resources Dept.



SECTION VIII

ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

1.0 PURPOSE

Safe and Productive Environment – Sevier County government is committed to maintaining a safe and productive work environment for its employees and to providing high-quality service to its citizens. The goal of this policy is for Sevier County employees to remain or become and remain drug-free. Employee safety and rehabilitation serve as the foundations of this policy.

Outcomes Associated with Alcohol and Drug Abuse - Abuse and dependency on alcohol and/or drugs can seriously affect employees' health, jeopardize their safety, impact the safety of others and impair job performance.

Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 – Sevier County is governed by the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (Pub. L. 100-690, Title V, Subtitle D). This Act requires Sevier County to adopt a written Alcohol and Drug Policy that governs all employees.

Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 – Sevier County government is governed by the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 (Pub. L. 102-143, Title V). This Act requires regular alcohol and drug testing in the aviation, motor carrier, rail, and transit industries in the interest of public safety. In addition, the Federal Highway Administration has issued a rule under this Act requiring alcohol and drug testing of persons required to have a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), including persons employed by federal, state, and local government entities.

Right to an Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace - Employees have the right to work in an alcohol and drug-free environment and to work with persons free from the effects of alcohol and/or drugs.

Required Alcohol and Drug Tests - Alcohol and drug testing for employees shall be under the provisions of Sevier County's Alcohol and Drug Policy. Employees will be subject to the following alcohol and/or drug tests:

- Post-offer testing for job applicants
- Reasonable suspicion testing
- Assignment to a position requiring a CDL
- Return-to-duty testing
- Substance-abuse treatment completion and follow-up testing

- Random testing for CDL employees and employees in safety-sensitive positions
- Post-accident involving company vehicles

Communicating Alcohol and Drug Policy – Sevier County has adopted this written policy to ensure employees' fitness for duty as a condition of employment and to communicate that alcohol and/or drug testing is a requirement of employment.

2.0 GENERAL RULES

Use of Alcohol and Drugs is Prohibited – Sevier County employees may not use or be under the influence of drugs, narcotics, and/or any other controlled substance while at work. Alcohol is a drug and, as such, has no place in a drug-free workplace. Therefore, the use of alcohol while at work is prohibited by this policy. In addition, no employee may report to work under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

Prescription Medication - This policy does not prohibit the use of medicine prescribed by an employee's licensed physician. An employee who is required to take prescription medicine which may impair or impede their ability to perform their job should notify their supervisor of the medication prescribed. The use of prescribed medication may not exceed the prescribed dosage. The use of a prescription drug for which the employee has no prescription will be viewed as a violation of this policy.

Possession, Distribution, Sale and/or Manufacture of Alcohol and Drugs is Prohibited – Sevier County prohibits employees from the possession, distribution, sale, and/or manufacture of any controlled substances on Sevier County property.

Inspection of Property - All property belonging to Sevier County is subject to inspection at any time without notice according to the provisions of Sevier County's Workplace Search Policy.

Notice of Alcohol and Drug Testing - Notice of the alcohol and/or drug testing requirement shall be included in all job announcement postings and recruitment advertisements.

Consent to be Tested - Before alcohol and/or drug tests are administered, applicants and employees will be asked to sign consent forms authorizing the test(s) and permitting the release of the test results to Sevier County officials with a need to know.

Testing During Work Hours - An employee who must submit to alcohol and/or drug testing during work hours shall be given time off with pay for that purpose.

Removal From the Work Site - An employee who is removed from the work site pending the results of alcohol and/or drug test because the employee is deemed to pose a threat or safety or health may be granted administrative leave with pay until Sevier County has

received the test results.

Drugs to be Tested - When alcohol and/or drug testing is required, alcohol and approved substances listed in the Tennessee Controlled Substance Act may be tested for during the testing procedure.

Laboratory Testing Requirements

Laboratory Selection - Laboratories and collection sites for the alcohol and/or drug testing and specimen collection shall be obtained in accordance with Sevier County's procurement policy.

Testing Procedures – Sevier County shall ensure proper collection and chain-of-custody procedures are used by all collection sites to ensure reasonable consistency, specimen integrity, proper identification, and individual privacy.

Confidentiality of Test Results

Maintaining Alcohol and/or Drug Test Results - Individual alcohol and/or drug test results maintained according to this policy shall be considered confidential by Sevier County and its representatives to the extent appropriate, feasible, and permissible under applicable law.

Access to Alcohol and/or Drug Test Results - Alcohol and/or drug test results shall be reported to applicants and employees in as timely a manner as reasonable and be revealed only to those persons having an established need for the information.

Consequences of Failure to Comply - The goal of this policy is for employees to remain or to become and remain alcohol and/or drug-free. However, this policy shall not preclude disciplinary action up to and including dismissal for circumstances that occur in connection with suspected alcohol and/or drug use or positive alcohol and/or drug test. Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy may be used as grounds for disciplinary action.

Alternative to Disciplinary Action – Sevier County reserves the right to allow employees to participate in an education and/or treatment program as an alternative to or in addition to disciplinary action. If such a program is offered and accepted by the employee, the employee must satisfactorily participate in and complete the program, including follow-up care and testing as a condition of continued employment.

Violation of Criminal Drug Statute in the Workplace - Any employee convicted of violating a criminal drug statute in the workplace shall inform their supervisor of such conviction (including pleas of guilty and nolo contendere) within five (5) days of the conviction occurring. Failure to so inform Sevier County subjects the employee to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal for the first offense. Sevier County will

notify the federal contracting officer under applicable provisions of the Drug-Free Workplace Act and the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act.

Treatment – Employees, at the discretion of the Dept. Head/Elected Official, may be referred to the County healthcare provider for treatment. Employees must use sick time if they miss work for treatment.

3.0 APPLICANT DRUG-TESTING POLICIES

Notice to Applicants - Applicants shall be notified of the following:

Existence and requirements of Sevier County’s Alcohol and Drug Policy;

Testing will not be conducted without reading and signing the proper consent forms;

The applicant is responsible for reporting to the collection site at the scheduled time;

Time and location of alcohol and/or drug testing specimen collection;

Proof of identification is required at the collection site;

Consequences of refusal to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing;

Consequences of a confirmed positive alcohol and/or verified positive drug test result; and

The applicant has the right to request a split specimen test within 72 hours; they shall pay for the split specimen test.

Testing Methods - Urinalysis will be used to test for alcohol and/or drugs for employees not required to have a commercial driver's license.

Testing Conditions - An individual offered employment in a position not required to have a CDL shall be required to submit to post-offer alcohol and/or drug testing as a condition of employment. These individuals are referred to as applicants in this policy.

Refusal to Consent - The refusal of an applicant to sign the consent forms shall be considered a refusal to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing as a condition of employment and shall result in the withdrawal of the conditional offer of employment.

Failure to Provide Proof of Identification - Failure and/or refusal by an applicant to provide proof of identification at the collection site shall be considered a refusal to consent to alcohol and/or drug testing and shall result in withdrawal of the conditional offer of employment. Photo identification is required.

Tampering with Testing Procedures and Results - If any applicant intentionally tampers with a sample provided for alcohol and/or drug testing, violates the chain of custody, breaks identification procedures, or falsifies test results, then Sevier County shall withdraw the conditional offer of employment and such actions shall be grounds for disqualification for all positions.

Failure to Report to Collection Site - Failure by an applicant to report to the collection site within four (4) hours shall be considered a refusal to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing as a condition of employment and shall result in withdrawal of the conditional offer of employment. However, the County Mayor and/or their designee can determine there are special circumstances.

Consequences of a Positive Alcohol and/or Drug Test - An applicant who receives a confirmed positive alcohol and/or verified positive drug test result or the equivalent shall have the conditional offer of employment withdrawn immediately. However, the offer of employment may be re-extended given a negative drug test result from the split specimen test.

Rights and Remedies

Right to Request a Test of the Split Specimen - If the Medical Review Officer (MRO) informs the applicant that they have a verified positive drug test, the applicant has 72 hours following notification to request a test of the split specimen. The applicant shall pay for the test of the split specimen. The split specimen test may occur at another Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) laboratory.

Disqualification Action - If the result of alcohol and/or drug testing is the basis for withdrawal of the conditional offer of employment, the applicant has no right to appeal this action.

4.0 EMPLOYEE DRUG-TESTING POLICIES

Notice to Employees - Employees shall be advised of the following:

- Existence and requirements of Sevier County's Alcohol and Drug Policy;
- Testing will not be conducted without the employee reading and signing the proper consent forms;
- The employee is responsible for reporting to the collection site at the scheduled time;
- Notification of the time and location of alcohol and/or drug testing specimen collection;

- Proof of identification is required at the collection site;
- The employee is responsible for calling the County Mayor and/or his or her designee from the collection site if they have a problem complying with Sevier County's testing procedures;
- Consequences of refusal to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing;
- Consequences of a confirmed positive alcohol and/or verified positive drug test result;
- The employee has the right to request a test of the split specimen within 72 hours; they shall pay for the split specimen test.

Testing Methods - Urinalysis will be used to test for alcohol and/or drugs for employees not required to have a commercial driver's license. In cases of reasonable suspicion where alcohol use is suspected, both breath analysis and urinalysis will be used to test for alcohol and/or drugs.

Testing Conditions

Reasonable Suspicion - An employee may be required to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing as a condition of employment if two (2) people in the employee's supervisory chain of command have reasonable suspicion of alcohol and/or drug use by the employee. If the employee's immediate supervisor is an Elected Official or Department Head, one person in the employee's supervisory chain-of-command is sufficient. Reasonable suspicion means an articulate belief based on specific facts and reasonable inference drawn from those facts that an employee may be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. Reasonable suspicion as used in this policy means a judgment made regarding the employee's behavior or evidence found or reported and may be based on, but not limited to, one or more of the following:

- An on-the-job accident or occurrence where there is injury or property damage, evidence to indicate the accident or occurrence was in whole or part the result of the employee's actions or inactions, and/or the employee exhibited behavior or in other ways demonstrated that the employee may have been using or under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- An on-the-job incident, such as, but not limited to, a medical emergency that may be attributable to alcohol and/or drug use by the employee.
- Direct observation of behavior exhibited by the employee which indicates that the employee is unable to perform the employee's job or which may pose a threat to safety or health.
- Information that the employee may be using alcohol and/or drugs or is under the

influence of alcohol and/or drugs, or the employee exhibits behavior that may render the employee unable to perform the employee's job or may pose a threat to safety or health. This information must be verified by a person with the authority as denoted in this policy to determine reasonable suspicion.

- Physical on-the-job evidence of alcohol and/or drug use by the employee.
- Documented deterioration in the employee's job performance that may reasonably be attributable to alcohol and/or drug use by the employee.
- Presence of the physical symptoms of alcohol and/or drug use (e.g., liquor on the breath, slurred speech, unsteady walk, impaired coordination, displays of violent behavior, argumentative conversation, improperly talkative, loud or uncontrolled laughter, glassy or bloodshot eyes, slow reflexes, etc.).
- Newly discovered evidence that an employee has tampered with a previous alcohol and/or drug test.
- Arrest or conviction for an alcohol and/or drug-related offense while on duty.
- The identification of an employee as the focus of a criminal investigation into illegal drug possession, use, or trafficking.

Post-Accident Testing - Alcohol and drug testing shall be conducted after accidents on employees if there is property damage or personal injury, the employee's performance of a job function either contributed to the accident or cannot be discounted as a contributing factor to the accident and/or for all fatal accidents. Each surviving employee shall be tested for alcohol and/or drugs as soon as possible during the four (4) hours following the accident.

Assignment to a Position Requiring a Commercial Drivers License - An employee shall be required to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing as a condition of promotion, special assignment, or transfer into a position requiring a Commercial driver's License.

Random Testing for Safety Sensitive Positions - Alcohol and drug testing will be conducted randomly, unannounced for employees in safety-sensitive positions, including equipment operators, highway workers, and sanitation workers. The testing dates and times are unannounced, and tests are conducted with unpredictable frequency throughout the year. Employees will be randomly selected with each employee having an equal chance of being tested. The number of employees selected for random alcohol and drug testing may equal an annual rate of not less than 50% of the total employees in safety-sensitive positions.

Return-to-duty Testing - Before an employee returns to duty after violating the drug and alcohol policy, the employee shall undergo a return-to-duty alcohol and/or drug test with

a negative result.

Treatment Completion and Follow-up Testing - An employee required to participate in a treatment program shall be subject to unannounced follow-up alcohol and/or drug tests. Follow-up alcohol and/or drug testing may be extended for up to sixty (60) months following return-to-duty.

Refusal to Consent - Refusal of an employee to sign the consent forms shall be considered a refusal to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing as a condition of employment and shall result in immediate dismissal.

Failure to Provide Proof of Identification - Failure and/or refusal by an employee to provide proof of identification at the collection site shall be considered a refusal to consent to alcohol and/or drug testing and will be considered grounds for immediate dismissal.

Tampering with Testing Procedures and Results - Any employee who intentionally tampers with a sample provided for alcohol and/or drug testing, violates the chain-of-custody or identification procedures, or falsifies test results, will be subject to immediate dismissal.

Failure to Report to Collection Site - Failure by an employee to report to the collection site within four (4) hours, in the absence of special circumstances as determined by the County Mayor and/or their designee, shall be considered refusal to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing as a condition of employment and will be considered grounds for immediate dismissal.

Consequences of a Positive Alcohol and/or Drug Test - Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy may be used as grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Sevier County reserves the right to allow employees to participate in an education and/or treatment program approved by Sevier County as an alternative to or in addition to disciplinary action. An employee who received a confirmed positive alcohol and/or verified positive drug test result shall be subject to the following conditions:

Removal from the Work Site - The employee will be removed from the worksite until the next scheduled workday unless at least 24 hours have elapsed.

Treatment - An employee, before taking a drug screen, admits to drug use, may be referred to an approved education or treatment program. Payment for the treatment cost is the employee's responsibility and is strictly dependent upon the provisions of the individual's health plan options.

Leave of Absence - Employees referred for education and/or treatment may be granted leave of absence to participate in an approved education or treatment program under this policy. If an employee does not have available accrued sick and/or annual leave, they

may be granted leave without pay according to Sevier County's policies and procedures.

Verification of Participation - Employees referred to education and/or treatment shall be required to verify to their Elected Official or Department Head that they are participating in an approved education and/or treatment program to receive approved leave.

Verification of Completion - Upon completing an approved education and/or treatment program, the employee shall be required to provide written documentation that they have completed the initial education and/or treatment program. For Sevier County's policy, completing the recommended education and/or treatment program means the employee completed the initial period of education and/or treatment and complied with the after-care program, including attending support groups for one year or longer if recommended by the treatment provider. It also means the employee achieved and maintained an alcohol and drug-free state and will normally be determined by negative results from Sevier County authorized alcohol and/or drug tests.

Failure to Complete Treatment - The employee shall be subject to dismissal if the employee fails to complete an alcohol and/or drug evaluation successfully and the approved education and/or treatment program.

Relief of Duty or Reassignment - If the Elected Official or Department Head determines that the employee poses a threat to safety and health at the worksite while undergoing out-patient or after-care treatment, they may re-assign the employee per the department's policy or relieve the employee of duties according to existing policies and procedures until such time that the threat no longer exists.

Refusal to Participate - Refusal by an employee to participate in an approved drug assessment and education or treatment program will be considered a failure by the employee to complete the approved education or treatment program for disciplinary purposes.

Return-to-duty Testing - An employee shall not return to duty until they have complied with specified treatment recommendations and have received a negative alcohol and/or drug test result.

Treatment Completion and Follow-up Testing - Employees required to participate in a treatment program shall be subject to unannounced follow-up alcohol and/or drug tests. Follow-up alcohol and/or drug tests may be extended for up to sixty (60) months following return to duty.

Rights and Remedies

Right to Request a Test of the Split Specimen - If the Medical Review Officer (MRO) informs the employee that they have a verified positive drug test, the employee has 72 hours following notification to request a test of the split specimen. The employee shall pay for the test of the split specimen. The split specimen test may occur at another

Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) laboratory.

Disciplinary or Disqualification Action - If the result of alcohol and/or drug testing warrants disciplinary or disqualification action, an employee shall be entitled to all the rights and remedies that are otherwise provided in Sevier County's policies and procedures.

Arrest or conviction for an alcohol and/or drug-related offense or an employee's identification as the focus of a criminal investigation into illegal drug possession, use, or trafficking.

Return-to-duty Testing - Before an employee returns to duty after engaging in conduct prohibited by these regulations, the employee shall undergo a return-to-duty alcohol and/or drug test with a negative result.

Treatment Completion and Follow-up Testing - An employee required to participate in a treatment program shall be subject to unannounced follow-up alcohol and/or drug tests. Follow-up alcohol and/or drug testing may be extended for up to sixty (60) months following return to duty.

Refusal to Consent - Refusal of an employee to sign the consent forms shall be considered a refusal to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing as a condition of employment and shall result in immediate dismissal.

Failure to Provide Proof of Identification - Failure and/or refusal by an employee to provide proof of identification at the collection site, shall be considered a refusal to consent to alcohol and/or drug testing and will be considered grounds for immediate dismissal.

Tampering with Testing Procedures and Results - Any employee who intentionally tampers with a sample provided for alcohol and/or drug testing, violates the chain-of-custody or identification procedures, or falsifies test results, will be subject to immediate dismissal.

Failure to Report to Collection Site - Failure by an employee to report to the collection site within four (4) hours, in the absence of special circumstances as determined by the Personnel Manager and/or their designee, shall be considered refusal to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing as a condition of employment and will be considered grounds for immediate dismissal.

Consequences of a Positive Alcohol and/or Drug Test - Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy may be used as grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Sevier County reserves the right to allow employees to participate in an education and/or treatment program approved by Sevier County as an alternative to or in addition to disciplinary action. An employee who received a confirmed positive alcohol and/or verified positive drug test result shall be subject to the following

conditions:

Removal from the Work Site - The employee will be removed from the worksite until the next scheduled workday unless at least 24 hours have elapsed.

Treatment - Before taking a drug screen, if an employee admits to drug use, they may be referred to an approved education or treatment program. Payment for the treatment cost is the employee's responsibility and is strictly dependent upon the provisions of the individual's health plan options.

Leave of Absence - Employees referred for education and/or treatment may be granted leave of absence to participate in an approved education or treatment program according to this policy. If an employee does not have available accrued sick and/or annual leave, they may be granted leave without pay under Sevier County's policies and procedures.

Verification of Participation - Employees referred to education and/or treatment shall be required to verify their Department Head or Elected Official that they are participating in an approved education and/or treatment program to receive approved leave.

Verification of Completion - Upon completing an approved education and/or treatment program, the employee shall be required to provide written documentation that they have completed the initial education and/or treatment program. For Sevier County's policy, completing the recommended education and/or treatment program means the employee completed the initial period of education and/or treatment and complied with the after-care program, including attending support groups for one year or longer if recommended by the treatment provider. It also means the employee achieved and maintained an alcohol and drug-free state and will normally be determined by negative results from Sevier County authorized alcohol and/or drug tests.

Failure to Complete Treatment - The employee shall be subject to dismissal if the employee fails to complete an alcohol and/or drug evaluation successfully and the approved education and/or treatment program.

Relief of Duty or Reassignment - If the Department Head or Elected Official determines that the employee poses a threat to safety and health at the worksite while undergoing out-patient or after-care treatment, they may re-assign the employee following the department's policy or relieve the employee of duties according to existing policies and procedures until such time that the threat no longer exists.

Refusal to Participate - Refusal by an employee to participate in an approved drug assessment and education or treatment program will be considered a failure by the employee to complete the approved education or treatment program for disciplinary purposes.

Return-to-duty Testing - An employee shall not return to duty until they have complied with specified treatment recommendations and have received a negative alcohol and/or

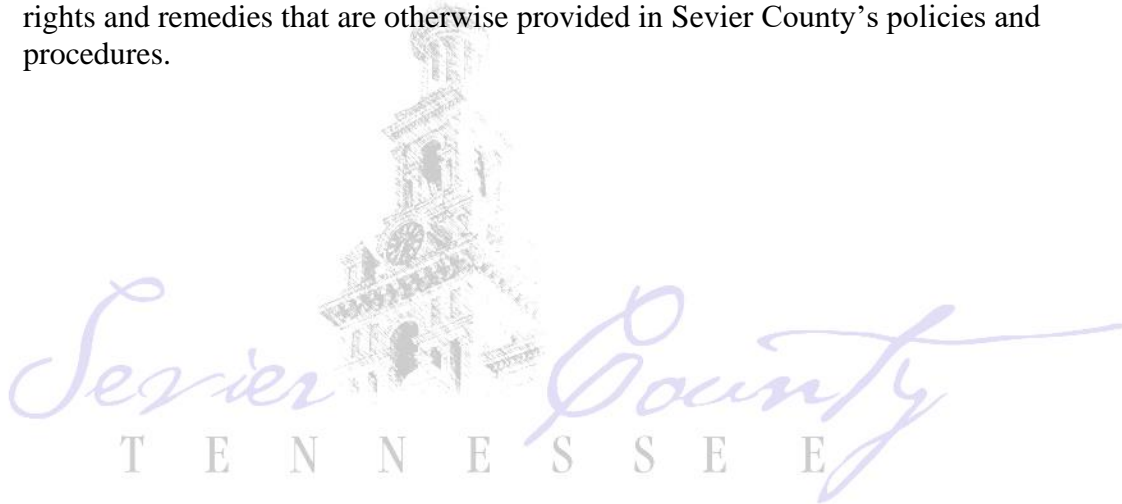
drug test result.

Treatment Completion and Follow-up Testing - Employees required to participate in a treatment program shall be subject to unannounced follow-up alcohol and/or drug tests. Follow-up alcohol and/or drug tests may be extended for up to sixty (60) months following return-to-duty.

Rights and Remedies

Right to Request a Test of the Split Specimen - If the Medical Review Officer (MRO) informs the employee that they have a verified positive drug test, the employee has 72 hours following notification to request a test of the split specimen. The employee shall pay for the test of the split specimen. The split specimen test may occur at another Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) laboratory.

Disciplinary or Disqualification Action - If the result of alcohol and/or drug testing warrants disciplinary or disqualification action, an employee shall be entitled to all the rights and remedies that are otherwise provided in Sevier County's policies and procedures.



SECTION IX MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

1.0 PERSONNEL FILES

The Office of the County Mayor will maintain an individualized personnel file for each employee. It is the responsibility of each employee to provide accurate information to the Employer. Employees are also responsible for reporting any change in the information which they have previously provided, including, but not limited to the following:

- a) Address and telephone number
- b) Marital status and number of dependents

Access to Personnel Files – TCA 8-50-108 Notwithstanding any other provisions of this title to the contrary, any (county) employee, regardless of position or classification, shall be entitled to have access at any reasonable time to such employee's personnel files. The employee may request copies of any material contained in such personnel files, and copies shall be furnished to the employee upon the employee's payment of the cost of such reproduction.

2.0 PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS

Elected officials/department heads may require an employee to undergo a fitness-for-duty physical examination and/or a psychological examination if the employee demonstrates an inability to perform their job-related duties successfully. The examining physician or psychologist will be mutually acceptable to both the County and the employee and is well qualified to determine the employee's ability to perform their job successfully.

3.0 PAYDAY

Employees will be paid every other Friday, except when a holiday falls on the corresponding Friday. Then, the payment will occur on the previous business day. Under no circumstances will any paycheck be distributed before payday. Elected officials are paid semi-monthly.

4.0 MEAL PERIODS

Employees will be allowed to take either 1) a thirty (30) minute lunch break and two fifteen (15) minute breaks (one in the morning and one in the afternoon) or 2) an hour for lunch. The two fifteen-minute breaks are considered compensable time. However, the thirty (30) minute lunch break is not a compensable time. Thirty minutes of the one-hour lunch break are regarded as compensable time. The employee will not be required to work during the meal break. The meal period policy may differ for emergency service personnel.

5.0 ABSENCE DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

Annual leave will be charged to any absent employee due to weather conditions unless a “no work period” has been officially declared. If a “no work period” has been declared, your Elected Official/Department Head will attempt to contact you. Still, you are encouraged to listen to the local radio stations, check the county Website, and watch local television stations for information. A “no work period” and/or snow schedule may be declared by the County Mayor depending upon the severity of weather conditions. If you are absent on annual leave or sick leave when a “no work period” is officially declared, you will not be charged with annual leave or sick leave. When the County Mayor declares a snow schedule, all facilities will open on the same schedule.

6.0 ADMINISTRATIVE CLOSING OF COURTHOUSE

There may be occasions when the County Mayor deems it necessary to close the courthouse. If you are absent on annual leave or sick leave when an administrative closing is officially declared, you will not be charged with annual leave or sick leave.

7.0 TERMINATION PAY

An employee whose services are being terminated shall be paid for all earnings due, and the employee will not be compensated for unused annual or sick leave. Unused sick leave may be transferred to the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System according to the plan’s rules and regulations. In the event of death, the amount owed to the employee, including up to 96 annual hours, shall be paid to his or her estate or the surviving spouse as may be required by law.

8.0 DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The County reserves the right to terminate an employee for any reason or no reason at all, every County employee being an employee-at-will.

9.0 HOUSEKEEPING

Care in handling equipment will help avoid unnecessary losses. Employees are not allowed to remove any equipment from their office without the prior approval of the employee’s Elected Official or Department Head.

Wherever a Sevier County employee works, the way an employee handles and maintains the equipment assigned to them reflects the quality of their work in general. Indeed, it bears on the opinions formed by the general public.

10.0 TELEPHONE USAGE

When an employee is talking to people over the telephone, the employee represents Sevier County and his or her department. What the employee says and how the employee says it can

help or hurt the County and the image of the employee's department. Employees are urged to follow the following telephone tips:

1. Answer promptly
2. Identify yourself
3. Transfer calls properly and promptly
4. Speak distinctly and in a friendly tone of voice
5. Hang up gently

Use of the telephone during regular work hours for calls of a personal nature is discouraged. Personal use of county telephones for long-distance calls is strictly prohibited.

11.0 EMPLOYEE COURTESY

All county employees are encouraged to conduct themselves as follows:

1. Remember at all times that the citizens of Sevier County are our ultimate employers. We must be courteous at all times to our employers.
2. Remember, at all times, the customer/citizen comes first. Do not make them have to wait on us; act promptly on their arrival, and greet them with a smile and a kind word.
3. Our only product to sell is service. Most of our customers are required by law to be here and sometimes they are unhappy about it. Do not argue with them; just politely explain the law and facts. The customer's impression of our offices is based on you.
4. Work to get along with your fellow employees at all times. Remember that we all have good and bad days. A soured relationship between two employees affects the entire office.
5. Even though many of our records are public information, discussing office matters outside the office is not permitted.
6. Laughter and conversation make a happy office, but keep in mind that the customer may not understand office chatter and may think it is directed at them or other recent customers.
7. The dress code is up to each Department Head or Elected Official but dress appropriately at all times. If you have a question as to the appropriateness of an outfit, DO NOT WEAR IT.

8. We all make errors and mistakes, but if you make one, try to correct it immediately and let your Department Head or Elected Official know of the problem.
9. We certainly cannot and do not want to dictate off-the-job activities, but bear in mind that, as public employees, we are held in a special light. Off-the-job activities reflect the offices and the respective Department Heads and Elected Officials.

12.0 ATTENDANCE POLICY

Sevier County's expectation in employee attendance is that people come to work each day on time. We realize, however, that there may be occasions in a person's life when they develop legitimate problems that result in them missing time from work. When employees develop problems concerning their attendance, they will be addressed with the employee. It is important to note, however, that if employees demonstrate that they cannot or are unwilling to come to work regularly, they will be subject to discharge from employment. When you are absent for any reason that your supervisor has not previously approved, you must call in and speak with your supervisor before the time for your shift to start. If your supervisor is unavailable, call in and speak to the County Mayor's office no later than 8:00 a.m. A doctor's excuse can and will be asked for if the situation warrants it.

13.0 SOLICITATION – DISTRIBUTION

Solicitation and distribution of literature by non-employees on County property is prohibited unless approved by the County Mayor. Solicitation and distribution of literature by employees on County property during working time or at a time which interferes with the work of others is prohibited. "Working time" is defined as all time when an employee is supposed to be engaged in performing work tasks but shall not include meal times, breaks, or other specified periods during the workday when the employee is properly not engaged in performing work tasks. No littering of County property is permitted at any time.

14.0 VEHICLE USE GUIDELINES

Guidelines

Sevier County Government provides vehicles necessary for the performance of Sevier County business and controls all aspects of vehicle ownership and usage to ensure safe, effective, and cost-efficient operations.

As fiscal agent, the Sevier County Mayor has legal authority and control over all vehicles purchased, maintained, repaired, and used by all (non-fee basis) operating entities of the Sevier County Government. The following guidelines are intended as general requirements, and more specific requirements may be established by other elected officials/department heads (i.e., pursuit policies for Sheriff's Department, etc.). Revisions may be made when deemed by the County Mayor to be in the county's best interest.

It is the responsibility of the Elected Officials, Directors, and Department Heads to assure their employees comply with vehicle operating guidelines and to assure that all decisions relating to the operation of County-owned vehicles are in the best interest of the taxpayer. This includes determining which employees and tasks require the assignment of a County vehicle; selecting proper vehicle types and equipment; ensuring that all vehicles are maintained and used correctly; and fiscal budgeting for acquisition, maintenance, and use.

Use of a County vehicle is a revocable privilege that accrues to a job position and not to a specific employee. Employees may lose the use of a vehicle when their supervisor, together with the County Mayor, decides this is in the county's best interest. This may result from abuse or failure to maintain a vehicle properly, violations of vehicle use guidelines, unsafe operation and/or occurrence of preventable accidents, change in job position or duties, etc. Non-emergency personnel who use County vehicles must sign a usage form.

General Guidelines

Vehicle Use: The primary purpose for the ownership and operation of vehicles by Sevier County is to enable the performance of job duties by its employees.

Acquisition and Disposal of Vehicles: All Sevier County vehicles shall be purchased after the fiscal budgeting and review process. Vehicles will be purchased based on specifications provided by the Elected Official/Department Head and approved by the County Mayor and the Sevier County Budget Committee. The County Mayor must approve transfers of vehicles between operating departments. The County Commission will approve the disposition of County vehicles according to State guidelines.

Two-Way Radios: Mobile radios and telephones are subject to the financial approval process for vehicle acquisition. They shall be mounted as non-destructively as possible.

Operator Responsibilities: All operators of County vehicles must have a valid Tennessee Driver's License appropriate to their vehicle usage classification. If at any time the license is revoked, suspended, canceled, restricted, or otherwise invalidated, the employee must immediately notify the Elected Official/Department Head and must be suspended from operating any County vehicle. The Elected Official (or their designee), Department Head, or Safety Manager will perform periodic license and driving record checks for employees who operate County vehicles and check these before hiring a new employee who will be driving a County vehicle.

Seat Belts and Safety Devices: The vehicle operator (driver) is responsible for ensuring that all vehicle safety procedures and devices are utilized in full compliance with all applicable State and Federal laws. The use of seat belts and other required safety devices is mandatory for the operator and passengers. The operator may refuse to transport any passengers who fail to comply. Removal or disabling of vehicle safety devices is prohibited. Employees should also understand that under Tennessee Workers' Compensation Law, willful failure to use provided safety devices may affect their rights to workers' compensation benefits.

Operation: Employees driving Sevier County vehicles shall operate them in a safe, lawful, efficient, and courteous manner and shall obey all traffic laws, parking regulations, and road rules. Traffic and parking violations are the operator's responsibility and may result in disciplinary action when warranted. Common-sense security precautions and good driving habits shall be observed.

Transfer, Sale, or Donation of Vehicles: The Sevier County Mayor or their designee is the only person authorized to implement the sale, donation, or transfer of county-owned vehicles.

County Vehicles

Sevier County vehicles will be marked with government license plates or a Sevier County tag unless otherwise approved by the Sheriff and/or County Mayor.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

This policy should be understood to prohibit employees from reporting to work under the influence of any intoxicating substance. Sevier County reserves the right to require drug testing of any employee when it is reasonable under the circumstances to suspect that the employee is using, or will use, is under, or will be under the influence of such intoxicants. This also includes the misuse or unauthorized use of prescription drugs. County employees who drive County vehicles or work in positions that could affect the safety of themselves, other employees, and/or the general public are advised that they must report the use of prescription drugs that may affect their ability to their supervisor before reporting to work.

Sevier County may test all prospective new hires for drugs and alcohol and require such testing for employees transferred into positions where drug or alcohol use may adversely affect other employees, wards, or the general public.

Maintenance

- I. Preventive Maintenance: It is the responsibility of the operator and the Elected Official/Department Head to ensure that vehicles are properly maintained. This is important for both safety and economic reasons. County vehicles shall be serviced at regular intervals of 5,000 miles. Service at these intervals includes oil and filter change and lubrication plus a general safety inspection which includes a tire wear check. Operators should make mechanics aware of any operational problems as they occur. It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure that all preventive maintenance is scheduled and performed. Failure to maintain a vehicle properly may result in action being taken by the Elected Official/Department Head, including denial of the privilege of using a County vehicle.
- II. Service Problems: The operator is responsible for notifying the County Fleet Department of any service problems encountered while operating the vehicle. The County Fleet Department shall determine warranty status, if any, and coordinate all warranty, extended warranty, and recall work. All service work except emergency

repairs should be scheduled in advance. Service work will be reported monthly to the Elected Official/Department Head.

- III. Accident Damage Repair: All accidents must be reported appropriately, as described in the section entitled “Vehicle Accidents and Damage to County Vehicles.” The County Fleet Department is responsible for determining whether repairs will be done in-house or contracted out. Vehicles that may still be driven will be scheduled for body damage repair as soon as possible. The County Fleet Department must decide on the safety of any damaged vehicle if used until repaired. Damage repairs will be reported to the Elected Official/Department Head.
- IV. Fueling: Sevier County Government utilizes the Sevier County Farmer’s Co-op for fuel purchases. During the fueling process, no smoking is allowed, and the vehicle must have the ignition shut off. Gasoline may not be pumped into any container, and no vehicle, except authorized service vehicles, may carry fuel containers. No gasoline or fuel may be used for personal reasons or used as a cleaning fluid. Fuel use is to be tracked and closely monitored by the Elected Official/Department Head.
- V. Vehicle Cleanliness: The operator must maintain a clean and presentable vehicle, inside and out.

Vehicle Accidents and Damage to County Vehicles

In the event of accidents involving County vehicles or other damage to County vehicles, the following reporting procedure applies. It is the supervisor’s responsibility to see that each driver is properly trained in these procedures. The procedure list shall be kept in the glove box of each Sevier County vehicle.

SEVIER COUNTY GOVERNMENT ACCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURES

1. It is important to get all the necessary information while at the accident scene to complete the accident report properly. Use the accident form in your vehicle. The following information is important:
 - a. Location of accident – names of the streets
 - b. Name, address, phone # (home & work) of other driver(s).
 - c. Name, address, and phone # of other driver’s insurance company
 - d. INJURIES: Get the name, address, and phone # (home & work) of all injured persons, describe the injury, and where the injured was taken, if known.
 - e. WITNESSES: Get the name, address, and phone # (home & work) of all witnesses
 - f. SCENE DESCRIPTION: Observe the accident scene for length and location of skid marks, debris, scuff or gouge marks on the pavement, slick spots, etc. (measure or step-off length of skid marks).
 - g. Get make, year model, and describe damage to all involved autos and where taken.
 - h. Do NOT admit liability.

Do NOT say you could have avoided the accident
Do NOT discuss what you did in the accident with anyone at the accident scene,
except the investigating officer or your supervisor.

- i. Call the appropriate LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.
2. Report promptly to your supervisor.
3. Bring or email the accident report to the County Mayor's Office and the Safety Director.
4. **These procedures should be followed if you are using a county-issued vehicle or a personal vehicle.**

Vehicle Accident Reviews: All accidents involving Sevier County vehicles will be reviewed by the Sevier County Safety Committee. The Sevier County Safety Committee will attempt to determine the cause of the accident and whether it was preventable or non-preventable by the operator. The results will be reported to the County Mayor and the Elected Official/Department Head, who may take whatever action is deemed necessary to prevent similar accidents in the future, including but not limited to disciplinary action, mandatory driver training, loss of use of a County vehicle, etc. All accidents involving a County vehicle shall be forwarded in a summary report to the County Mayor and the Elected Official/Department Head.

Completion of Driver Safety Course: Sevier County may require employees to participate in a Driver Safety Course. Participation may be made mandatory for employees whose driving record may be judged by the County Mayor and/or Elected Official/Department Head to warrant this training. This includes drivers who regularly transport passengers, drivers who operate heavy trucks and/or highway equipment, and drivers who are involved in accidents judged to be preventable. Driver Safety Courses may also be mandated in place of, or in addition to, disciplinary action taken because of documented instances of unsafe driving habits.

Out-of-State Driving: The driving of county vehicles out of state should be held to a minimum since governmental tort liability protection does not apply out of state. It is preferred that Sevier County employees traveling out of state on County business use their private vehicle and obtain mileage reimbursement. The County does have vehicle insurance for out-of-state driving when using a County vehicle for this purpose is necessary and approved by the Elected Official/Department Head.

Supplemental "Non-Owned" Auto Insurance Coverage: The Tennessee Governmental Tort Liability Act states that to the extent that a county would be held liable in an automobile accident, the county employee is immune as long as the employee is within the scope of his or her employment at the time of the accident. It has not been determined whether or not the individual employee could be held personally liable for amounts above the government's liability under the act. *The limit to which the government (Sevier County) could be held liable under this act is \$300,000 for any one person or \$700,000 for any one accident, or \$100,000 for the injury or destruction to property in one accident.*

There is available individual non-owned vehicle liability insurance coverage that can be purchased from the employee's own insurance company to protect the employee in the event of an excessive judgment while driving a Sevier County vehicle. It is not required that you purchase this coverage. This is to advise that this coverage is available from most auto insurance

companies at very economical rates, and each employee should decide if they wish to purchase such coverage.

15.0 PROHIBITION OF WEAPONS IN COUNTY BUILDINGS

Under T.C.A. § 39-17-1359, Sevier County has banned weapons within county buildings. Failure to comply with this prohibition is punishable as a criminal act under state law and may subject the violator to a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500).

16.0 DESTRUCTION OF AND TAMPERING WITH GOVERNMENTAL RECORDS

TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED SECTION 39-16-504

Section 39-16-504. Destruction of and tampering with governmental records

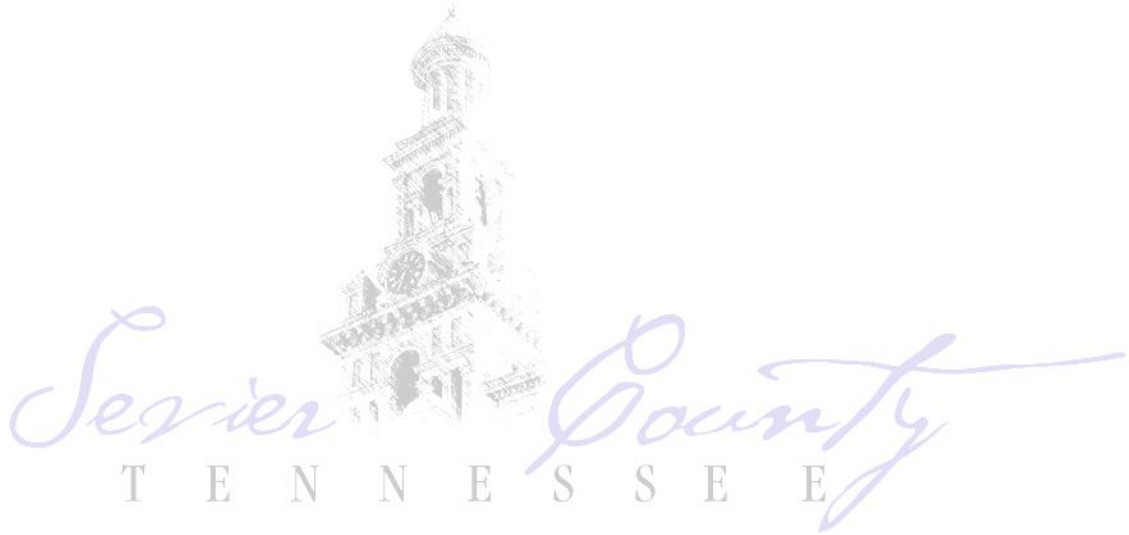
(a) It is unlawful for any person to:

- (1) Knowingly make a false entry in, or false alteration of, a governmental record;
- (2) Make, present, or use any record, document or thing with knowledge of its falsity and with intent that it will be taken as genuine governmental record; or
- (3) Intentionally and unlawfully destroy, conceal, remove or otherwise impair the verity, legibility or availability of any governmental record.

(b) A violation of this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

17.0 SEVERABILITY

Each section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, and clause of this Policy document is hereby declared to be separable and severable. The invalidity of any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, or clause shall not affect the validity of any other portion of these rules, and only any portion declared to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction shall be deleted.



EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the personnel policies currently in effect for my office. I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies. These policies can't and aren't intended to answer every question about my employment with Sevier County. I understand that I should consult Human Resources personnel regarding any part of the policies I do not understand. Any questions not answered in the policies about my employment with Sevier County should be asked to Human Resources. The current policies will always be on file in the office of the Sevier County Clerk, and I may examine them there at any time during regular business hours.

The policies are necessarily subject to change, and I acknowledge that revisions may occur from time to time. I understand that the Sevier County Clerk files all policy changes. Although my Elected Official or Department Head will usually notify me of changes, I understand that changes will apply to me regardless of whether I receive actual notice. I understand that revised information may supersede, modify or eliminate any or all of the policies at any time. All information in the policies is subject to applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations, and I understand that to the extent that any such laws may conflict with any provision of the policies, such laws, rules, and regulations will control.

I have entered into my employment relationship with Sevier County voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specific length of employment. My employment may be terminated by my Elected Official or Department Head at will or by me without cause or prior notice.

I acknowledge that I construe none of the County's policies to create a contract of employment or any other legal obligation, express or implied. 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 Sevier County.

T E N N E S S E E

Employee Name (type or print)

Employee Signature

Date