
SUWANNEE COUNTY CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT



PERSONNEL POLICIES & PROCEDURES Handbook

Barry A. Baker
Clerk of the Circuit Court
200 South Ohio/Dr. MLK, Jr. Avenue
Live Oak, Florida 32064
(386) 362-0516

REVISED 03/10/2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

SECTION 1	
General Provisions	4
SECTION 2	
Definition of Terms	5
SECTION 3	
Types and Terms of Employment	8
SECTION 4	
Code of Conduct	10
SECTION 5	
Rules and Regulations	17
SECTION 6	
Computer Policies	20
SECTION 7	
Employee Harassment	29
SECTION 8	
Employee Activities	32
SECTION 9	
Salary Administration	35
SECTION 10	
Overtime Payments and Compensatory Time	38

SECTION 11	
Paid Leave Time (P.L.T.)	40
SECTION 12	
Other Leave-Related Matters	44
SECTION 13	
Holiday Pay	48
SECTION 14	
Severance Pay	49
SECTION 15	
Continuing Education	50
SECTION 16	
Emergency Building Closures	51
SECTION 17	
Employee Acknowledgment Form	52

SECTION 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with the Office of the Clerk and provide you with information concerning working conditions, employee benefits, and some of the policies affecting your employment. You should read, understand, and comply with all provisions of the handbook. It describes many of your responsibilities as an employee and outlines the programs developed by the Clerk to benefit employees. One of our objectives is to provide a work environment that is conducive to both personal and professional growth.

No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policies. As the Clerk's Office continues to grow, the need may arise and the Clerk reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portions of the handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion. The only thing that is not subject to change is the employer/employee relationship. All employees are employed at the will of the Clerk. The employer/employee relationship may be terminated at any time at the Clerk's discretion.

Employees will be notified of changes to the handbook as they occur. As you read and study all provisions of this handbook, there will be a form for you to read and sign acknowledging that you understand the policies and have received a copy of this handbook.

SECTION 2: DEFINITION OF TERMS

Anniversary Date – The date an employee begins employment and the same date in following years. This is the date upon which entitlement to fringe benefits are based. The anniversary date may be changed in accordance with these rules and regulations.

Applicant – An individual who has completed and submitted an application for employment.

Back Pay – The wages an employee would have earned had he been continuously employed less the periods he was unavailable for work for whatever reason.

Casual Employee – An employee hired on a day-to-day or hour-to-hour basis to perform a specific task.

Chief Deputy Clerk – Person who is assigned the overall responsibility for the operation of a recognized department or area of the Clerk's Office.

Classification Seniority (also referred to as job or position seniority) – The length of time an employee has been continuously employed in his current position classification. This is the date from which length of service in classification is computed for determination of probationary periods, order of layoff and eligibility for merit increases. Classification seniority will be lost or changed upon permanent transfer, promotion, demotion or reassignment to or from one job classification to another.

Compensatory Time (also referred to as Comp Time) – Time off from work in lieu of pay, computed at 1.5 times the number of hours worked. Comp time should be used within the six months that it is earned. Comp time that is not used within this time period will be cashed out. Employees that work comp time should complete a comp time form and have their supervisor verify that they worked. Once the supervisor signs off on the comp time, the comp time sheet should be sent to the Personnel Department so that the necessary records can be maintained. When comp time is used, a leave slip should be completed and forwarded to the Personnel Department.

County Seniority – The total time an employee has worked for the County without a break in service.

Demotion – Permanent assignment of an employee to a lower level job classification.

Departmental Seniority – The length of time an employee has been continuously employed in a department.

Dismissal – Involuntary separation from employment.

Flex Time – Hours worked in excess of the regular work day that are used within the work week to offset time taken off that is not charged to annual or sick leave.

FLSA – The Fair Labor Standards Act.

Immediate Family – Includes spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandparent, grandparent of spouse, grandchild, step-parent, step-child, step-brother and sister, step-grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, and any relative living in the same household. .

Insubordination – The refusal to perform work when and as assigned, failure to obey a direct legal order and/or any other act or acts of disrespect or disregard of proper managerial authority.

Job Description – A written description of sample duties and responsibilities of a job.

Layoff (also referred to as a Reduction in Force) – A reduction in the number of employees due to lack of work, lack of funds, reorganization, abolition of a position and other reasons not reflecting discredit on the service of the employee.

Merit Pay Increase – An increase in the employee’s wage based on merit as may, from time-to-time, be granted by the Clerk of Circuit Court.

Overtime – Time worked in excess of forty (40) hours in a seven-day work period for all non-exempt employees; except for those employees covered by Section 7(k) schedules under the Fair Labor Standards Act, overtime shall be those hours worked in excess of whatever Section 7(k) schedule adopted for them by the Clerk of Circuit Court. Non-exempt employees include all those employees occupying positions that are not covered by the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. These positions include those professional and administrative employees who are exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Probationary Period – Initial 180 days during a regular full-time or part-time employee’s employment.

Promotion – Permanent assignment of an employee to a higher level job classification.

Promotional Probationary Period – The first one hundred eighty (180) days after an employee has been permanently promoted to a higher-level job classification.

Reemployment – The hiring of a person who formerly worked for the Clerk’s Office. Persons rehired shall be new employees for all purposes unless the Clerk of Circuit Court approves otherwise in a particular case.

Regular Full-Time Employees – Employees who have successfully completed their initial probationary period and who are assigned a regular schedule of at least thirty (30) hours per week.

Regular Part-Time Employees – Employees who have successfully completed their initial probationary period and are assigned to work a regular schedule of less than thirty (30) hours per week.

Reinstatement – Reemployment of a former employee in his former, or equivalent position without loss of seniority or other benefits of employment.

Resignation – Voluntary separation.

Section 7 (k) – Refers to Section 7 (k) of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Temporary Employee – An employee appointed for a special project or other work of a temporary or transitory nature. Such an appointment will not exceed a four-month period unless specified by the project, program or grant.

Trainee – An employee undergoing a training period to learn the job duties or to obtain education or certification level.

Transfer – The permanent reassignment of an employee from one position to another.

Work Day – The scheduled number of hours an employee is required to work per day.

Work Week or Work Period – The number of hours regularly scheduled to be worked during any seven (7) consecutive days or other work period allowed by the Fair Labor Standards Act and adopted by the Clerk for an employee or group of employees.

SECTION 3: TYPES AND TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

PURPOSE

To outline the Clerk's employment types and terms as well as state the benefits associated with each employment status.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the Clerk's Office.

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Employees of the Clerk of the Circuit Court are either regular full-time, regular part-time, or temporary employees. The following benefits apply to regular, full-time and regular, part-time employees:

The Clerk's Office operates under a bi-weekly payroll. The work schedule of a regular full-time employee shall be between sixty (60) and eighty (80) hours per pay period. A regular part-time employee's hours shall be determined by the Department Supervisor and be approved by the Chief Deputy Clerk over the department. All payroll information is to be forwarded to the Personnel department in a timely fashion.

Regular full-time and part-time employees shall serve in probationary status for a period of one hundred eighty (180) days, which may be extended at the Clerk's discretion.. During this time, they will be eligible to use their earned Paid Leave Time at the Department Supervisor's discretion. Under this status, they will undergo an evaluation so that the Department Supervisor and Chief Deputy Clerk are certain that the employee's skills meet the requirements necessary to fulfill staffing needs.

Employees shall accrue but not earn Paid Leave Time at a prorated amount that is equal to 10 % of the hours worked in one week. For example, an employee whose schedule is eighty (80) hours per pay period shall accrue four (4) hours per pay period of P.L.T. ($80/2=40$ hours per week. $40 \times 0.10 = 4$ hours per pay period. Please reference the Paid Leave Time Section for further details.

All regular, full-time employees shall be eligible for life and health insurance coverage. The Clerk pays individual employee coverage. Coverage is available for dependents of the employee at the employee's expense. Regular part-time employees may participate in this benefit if they work thirty (30) or more hours per week. Health insurance for eligible employees will be effective the first day of the month after the date of hire.

Eligible employees become members of the Florida Retirement System as of their date of hire. The employer pays the employee's monthly benefit to the Division of Retirement. The benefit is computed as a percentage of the employee's gross earnings based on percentages mandated by the Division of Retirement. Participating employees are also required to contribute 3% of gross earnings into the Retirement System .

Temporary employees shall be employed for a period of time not to exceed four months, unless otherwise approved by the Clerk. Said employees shall not be eligible for any benefits unless their tenure exceeds the four-month period. In this case, temporary employees are eligible to receive retirement benefits as set forth by the rules and regulations of the Florida Retirement System.

EXCEPTIONS

All exceptions to this policy must have prior written approval of the Clerk.

SECTION 4: CODE OF CONDUCT

I. PURPOSE

To define the Code of Conduct of the Clerk's Office and to describe the set of corrective discipline guidelines used to ensure that every Clerk's Office employee is afforded objective, consistent and equitable treatment should violation or apparent violation of rules occur.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Clerk's Office employees at all locations.

III. CODE OF CONDUCT

The Clerk's Office maintains a single high standard of integrity in all activities. We keep our word; we promise no more than we can reasonably expect to deliver; and we only make commitments we intend to keep. We expect total integrity from all employees at all times (including off-duty hours).

The success of the Clerk's Office and our ability to provide meaningful, rewarding work depends upon the commitment of each employee to the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct is as follows:

Give willingly a full day's effort as demonstrated by punctual and regular attendance; apply individual skills, training, abilities and conscientious care in avoiding the waste of time, effort, facilities or materials in both scheduling and performing work.

Deal equally, reasonably, considerately and honestly with all engaged in the operation or associated with it in any way fellow employees, including Department Supervisors and subordinates as well as judges, and attorneys, suppliers and the general public.

Comply fully with the principles, policies and instructions, which are established for the conduct of the business and the approved methods and procedures provided to assure that standards of quality and safety are met.

Act with the recognition that together we are the Clerk's Office and are associated for the purpose of serving our customers and members of the general public, and that our success and that of the Clerk's Office are determined and measured by the extent to which our customers are served.

Abide by the established ethical, moral and legal codes that govern the behavior of both individuals and associations of people in our professional and private life.

IV. POLICY

The Clerk's Office maintains confidence in its employees and in their honesty in all Clerk's Office related activities and relies on them to follow specified safety and operating procedures. Rules and regulations have been established in the best interest of the Clerk's Office and its employees. Clerk's Office rules attempt to assure fair practices for all employees regardless of race, religion, color, sex,

national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, and status as a disabled or veteran and to maintain a safe and smoothly functioning work environment. However, no effort on the part of the Clerk's Office alone can ensure its continued efficiency without the cooperation of its employees in assuming responsibility for abiding by these rules.

The Clerk's Office has the right to discharge an employee immediately for infractions specified below. This policy is not all-inclusive and an employee may be disciplined or discharged without warning for a serious offense that is not listed below. The Clerk's Office also reserves the right to use discretion in determining appropriate disciplinary action when mitigating circumstances are present. The Clerk's Office may act in sole discretion and without advance notice. Nothing in this policy is intended to be or should be construed as being contractual in nature.

The Clerk's Office will take disciplinary action in any case where the conduct of the employee is detrimental to the Clerk's Office or other employees. Infractions are grouped into categories, dependent upon their relative seriousness. Each infraction results in a definite action depending upon the seriousness of the infraction, previous action taken and thorough review of the circumstances of each individual case. All disciplinary actions as well as memos clearing the record must be clearly documented and shall become a permanent part of the employee's personnel folder, not subject to removal for any reason.

A. CLASS I INFRACTIONS

Class I infractions are relatively minor in nature and generally call for a series of documented progressive disciplinary steps intended to train the employee and put him/her on notice that correction of the problem is expected. A period of twelve (12) consecutive months of active service after any of the following disciplinary steps without a further infraction “clears” the record. The progressive disciplinary procedure must begin again with step one, should infractions occur.

The following list represents examples of behavior or acts that are unacceptable and will be treated as Class I infractions. This list is not exhaustive, as conduct of a similar nature will also be cause for corrective action.

1. Excessive or repeated absenteeism, tardiness and/or failure to observe work schedules.
2. Failure to notify the Clerk’s Office of non-scheduled absences of one or more consecutive days.
3. Failure to report for scheduled overtime, or reporting late.
4. Wasting time, material or effort, or interfering with others by action, excessive noise, or non-work related conversations.
5. Failure to follow instructions.
6. Obscene or abusive language.
7. Failure or reluctance to adhere to safety rules.
8. Failure to be at employee’s assigned workstation, ready for work, at the start of their workday.
9. Unsatisfactory work due to carelessness or continued inefficiency after a reasonable training period.
10. Using Clerk’s Office telephones excessively for non-official purposes. Emergency situations are excused.
11. Creating or contributing to unsafe, unsanitary, or unclean conditions on Clerk’s Office premises; failure to keep equipment and working areas clean.
12. Failure to provide customers and members of the general public appropriate and timely service.
13. Inability or unwillingness to work harmoniously with other employees.
14. Wearing clothes that are inappropriate for the professionalism of the office.
15. Sharing work-related matters for the purpose of being a busybody or to someone that wishes to be a busybody.
16. Excessive use of personal cell phone during working hours.

B. CLASS II INFRACTIONS

Class II infractions are serious in nature, but by themselves may not be a dischargeable offense. They generally call for one (1) final warning. A period of twelve (12) consecutive months of active service after a Class II infraction without a further infraction may clear the record. The Clerk reserves the right to consider Class II infractions in determining future discipline regardless of when they were committed.

The following list represents examples of behavior or acts which are unacceptable and will be treated as Class II infractions. This list is not exhaustive, as conduct of a similar nature will also be cause for corrective action.

1. Gambling, lotteries or pools.
2. Unauthorized solicitation and/or distribution of literature, services or products.
3. Using Clerk's Office property, equipment, computers, or vehicles for non-official purposes without prior management approval.
4. Sleeping on Clerk's Office time.
5. Failure to use assigned safety protective equipment.
6. Deliberate discrimination and/or harassment or retaliation in any form (verbal, written or otherwise) of another employee because of his/her sex, age, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.
7. Insubordination or the refusal to perform work or accept a workstation when properly requested by another employee having the authority for such action.
8. Disorderly Conduct -- causing a disturbance on Clerk's Office property such as might result from horseplay, practical jokes, throwing objects, using foul or abusive language to another worker or Department Supervisor, or otherwise disrupting the normal work environment.
9. Leaving the department during working hours without permission.
10. Failure to report an accident or injury.

C. CLASS III INFRACTIONS

Class III infractions are very serious in nature and generally result in discharge. Employees are normally not to be released on the spot without a review of the situation by the Clerk. If a Class III infraction occurs when the Clerk is not present, the employee will normally be sent home and instructed to return at an appropriate time on the next scheduled working day for discipline resolution. While the discipline will usually be termination, in certain circumstances a final warning may be substituted. In either event, a final warning indicating the reasons for disciplinary action will be presented to the employee for signature. If the employee refuses to sign, the Department Supervisor will read the incident report to the employee in the presence of a witness. Both the Department Manager and the witness will sign the form.

The following list represents examples of behavior or acts which are unacceptable, and will be treated as Class III infractions. This list is not exhaustive, as conduct of a similar nature will also be cause for corrective action.

1. Possession of weapons or explosive materials on Clerk's Office premises.
2. Immoral or indecent acts on Clerk's Office premises, or attempting to harass or intimidate another employee into committing immoral or indecent acts.
3. Deliberately vandalizing, damaging, defacing, misusing or unauthorized removal of Clerk's Office property, or other employee's personal property.
4. Unauthorized possession or inspection of Clerk's Office records, documents, lists, etc.
5. Possession or use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs on Clerk's Office premises.
6. Reporting to work under the apparent influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or testing positive on a drug test.
7. Deliberate falsification of Clerk's Office records (time sheets, expense reports, employment and personnel records, insurance claims, etc.).
8. Stopping work early or deliberately shutting down or delaying scheduled work.
9. Misuse of documents including the unauthorized reproduction, copying or altering any document without prior authorization from the official custodian of the document.
10. Conviction, pleading nolo contendere, and/or sentencing for any felony under state or federal statutes.
11. Violent behavior, fighting or threatening violence on Clerk's Office premises at any time.
12. Appropriation of Clerk's Office property or funds for private gain; theft of another employee's property; sale or purchase of stolen goods on Clerk's Office premises.
13. Failure to protect sensitive proprietary information including financial information, personnel records, marketing plans, business plans, member lists, etc.
14. Removal of or tampering with any emergency equipment including security devices, fire alarms, first aid equipment, or fire extinguishers.
15. Gossiping – Repeating, creating, whispering about co-workers and/or supervisors, Interrupting, disrupting, or sabotaging a co-worker's ability to do their job.
16. Discrimination, harassment or retaliation of any kind.

In addition, if the Clerk's Office has reason to believe that a violation of civil or criminal law has taken place, the Clerk's Office may also file formal complaints to the appropriate police departments, or pursue the matter through civil Courts.

V. PROCEDURE

A. PROCEDURE FOR CLASS I INFRACTIONS

1. First Incident -- Oral warning from the Department Supervisor. (Department Supervisor should record date and subject of oral warning.) The Chief Deputy Clerk over the department should be made aware of the warning.
2. Second Incident -- Written warning from the Department Supervisor. A summary of the discussion topics and date of the discussion must be recorded in the employee's department records. The employee must be given an opportunity to sign this summary, or indicate an acknowledgement that the discussion has occurred. A copy of the written warning must be forwarded to the Chief Deputy Clerk and the Clerk. A copy should be included as a permanent part of the employee's personnel record.
3. Third Incident -- Final warning. The Department Supervisor, after consultation with the Chief Deputy Clerk, includes a statement that a further infraction within the next twelve (12) months may lead to discharge. The employee will be asked to sign the statement. If the employee refuses, the Department Supervisor will read the statement to the employee, in the presence of the department's Chief Deputy Clerk. Both the Department Supervisor and the Chief Deputy Clerk will sign the form. The Clerk and the Chief Deputy Clerk will review this statement with the employee, and the employee will be given an opportunity for appeal.
4. Fourth Incident -- Termination of employment. This is a last resort and must be approved by the Chief Deputy Clerk and Clerk. After approval, a statement summarizing the reasons for discharge, including the dates of the previous oral and written warnings, will be presented to the employee for signature. If the employee refuses to sign, the Chief Deputy Clerk will read the statement to the employee in the presence of the Clerk. Both the Chief Deputy Clerk and the Clerk will sign the form.

B. PROCEDURE FOR CLASS II INFRACTIONS

1. First Incident -- Final warning from the Department Supervisor, after consultation with the Chief Deputy Clerk, including a statement that a further infraction within the next twelve (12) months may lead to discharge. The employee will be asked to sign the statement. If the employee refuses to sign, the Department Supervisor will read the incident report to the employee in the presence of a witness. Both the Department Supervisor and the Chief Deputy Clerk will sign the form. A statement must be reviewed with the employee by the Chief Deputy Clerk and the Clerk, and the employee given the opportunity to appeal.
2. Second Incident -- Termination of employment. This is a last resort and must be approved by the Chief Deputy Clerk and the Clerk. After approval, a statement summarizing the reasons for discharge, including the date of the final warning, will be presented to the employee for signature. If the employee refuses to sign, the Chief Deputy Clerk will read the statement to the employee in the presence of the Clerk. Both the Chief Deputy Clerk and the Clerk will sign the form.

C. PROCEDURE FOR CLASS III INFRACTIONS

1. First Incident -- Termination of employment. This is a last resort and must be approved by the Chief Deputy Clerk and the Clerk. After approval, a statement summarizing the reason for discharge

will be presented to the employee for signature. If the employee refuses to sign, the Chief Deputy Clerk will read the statement to the employee in the presence of the Clerk. Both the Chief Deputy Clerk and the Clerk will sign the statement.

There may be occasions where mitigating circumstances dictate a suspension from work instead of a discharge. In these situations, the Chief Deputy Clerk and the Clerk must review and approve the exception.

VI. EXCEPTIONS

All exceptions to this policy must have the prior written approval of the Clerk.

SECTION 5: RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. PURPOSE

To state the Rules and Regulations pertaining to the employees of the Clerk.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Clerk Office employees at all locations.

III. RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. All employees are expected to work at the scheduled time and remain there until the scheduled leaving time. Each Department Supervisor shall be responsible for the attendance of all persons within the department. An employee that is late or expects that he/she will be absent without prior approval should:

1. Call his/her Department Supervisor before the commencement of the scheduled work period with a justifiable reason for tardiness or absenteeism. If the Department Supervisor is not available, the employee should notify the Chief Deputy Clerk over that department.
2. Failure to call in before the employee's work period begins will subject the employee to discipline, unless Department Supervisor is satisfied that the failure to call in was for a reason beyond the employee's control.
3. The Department Supervisor may require that an employee prove that an absence or tardiness is for a legitimate reason. A doctor's excuse may be required if the employee claims that it was due to an illness.
4. When all Paid Leave Time is exhausted, the employee may be absent or late with an approved unpaid leave of absence by the Department Supervisor. This approval will only be granted under extenuating circumstances. The employee may be subject to disciplinary action in cases where unpaid leave is taken without supervisory approval.
5. A record of attendance shall be kept on file in the Personnel Department.

Employees that have any dealings with the court, or in the courtroom and chambers, shall conduct themselves in a manner that does not embarrass the Clerk's Office in actions or preparation for duties. Employees shall be in the designated area ready to perform their duties on time and shall make every effort to facilitate the smooth flow of the proceedings. Employees shall adhere to the courtroom dress code while in the designated area.

B. The Clerk's Office adheres to a Drug-Free Workplace Policy. Employees may be tested for the use of illegal drugs and/or controlled substances at the discretion of the Clerk. If the person tests positive, they may be denied employment. If the employee is currently employed by the Clerk's Office, he/she may be subject to disciplinary action as set forth in the Code of Conduct adopted by the Clerk.

- C. Employees shall not smoke pipes, cigarettes or e-cigarettes in the building. They may smoke in the designated areas on their breaks and during their lunch hours. The Clerk will designate all smoking areas. The use of any tobacco products such as dip or chewing tobacco in the building is also prohibited.
- D. As a deputy of the Clerk's office, you have accepted the responsibility to conduct yourself in a courteous, conscientious and considerate manner at all times. Your smile and personal hygiene contribute to your positive appearance.

All personnel should maintain a professional, businesslike appearance and demeanor. Extremes such as tight fitting apparel, short skirts or skorts should be avoided. Jeans may be worn by staff on Fridays with Clerk office shirts unless you are required to be in the courtroom. Business attire is always required in the courtrooms. All staff is expected to appear neat, clean and well-groomed.

- No short skirts
- No shorts
- No flip-flops, clogs or slippers
- No leggings or sweatpants
- No Capri or crop pants
- No low-cut or revealing blouses or dresses
- No tank-tops unless covered by an additional shirt

This is a professional office and, therefore, all deputies should address appropriately. Remember that the impression you create and the image you project to the public is a direct reflection upon the office of the Clerk. If specific working conditions make general business attire unsuitable, please seek guidance from your supervisor.

Employees are encouraged to cover any tattoos while at work. Extreme, bizarre or exotic tattoos that are visible are prohibited. Body piercing (other than ears) unless covered by clothing is prohibited.

- E. Employees should be aware that all matters in relation to the public and their business with the Clerk's Office should remain a confidential matter. Any employees found guilty of discussing matters of a private nature in a public forum may be subject to disciplinary action at the Clerk's discretion. **Due Care** is very important. Any employee accused of discussing work-related matters for the purpose of being a busybody or to someone who wishes to be a busybody may be subject to disciplinary action.
- F. Employees are expected to practice "common sense" safety procedures when performing their respective tasks. Chairs should be pushed to the desks. Filing cabinets should be closed. Materials should not be left in the walkway. Employees involved in an accident should report it to the Department Supervisor immediately so that an accident report can be completed. If an employee observes a customer that is involved in an accident, it should be reported to the Department Supervisor so that an accident report can be completed.
- G. All employee grievances should be directed to their Department Supervisor. Department Supervisors will confer with the Chief Deputy over the Department and try to come to a conclusion regarding the matter. If a conclusion cannot be reached amicably, the Chief Deputy will take the matter up with the Clerk. The Clerk will confer with the employee and

try to come to an amicable conclusion concerning the matter. Employees have the option to go directly to the Clerk with any grievances.

SECTION 6: COMPUTER POLICIES

Employees that have access to the Internet and e-mail utilization should not abuse their use of these sources for non-work related projects. Employees should be diligent in their work and not be found to be negligent where these media sources are concerned. Employee use of the Clerk's computer systems and/or cell phones may be accessed and monitored by the Clerk at any time. Employees should have no expectation of privacy during the use of their computers and cell phones.

1. Computer Usage Policy:

The Clerk owns and operates various computer systems, which are provided for use by Clerk and County employees in support of the activities associated with our various responsibilities. All users are responsible for seeing that these facilities are used in an effective, ethical, and lawful manner.

This document establishes rules and regulations that define acceptable use of these systems. Unacceptable use is prohibited, and is grounds for loss of computer privileges, as well as discipline or legal sanctions under federal, state or local laws.

All users of the Clerk's and County's computer systems must read, understand and comply with the policies established in this document as well as additional guidelines established by the systems administrators of each system.

BY USING ANY OF THESE SYSTEMS, USERS AGREE THAT THEY WILL COMPLY WITH THESE POLICIES.

These computer systems, facilities and accounts are owned and operated by the Clerk. The Clerk and the County reserve all rights, including termination of service without notice, to the computer resources they own and operate. These procedures shall not be construed as a waiver of any rights of the Clerk's office or the County, nor shall they conflict with applicable acts of law. Users have rights that may be protected by federal, state and local laws.

Access and privileges on the Clerk's and the County's computer systems are assigned and managed by the Systems Administrator. Eligible individuals may become authorized operators of a system and be granted appropriate access and privileges by following the approval steps for that system. Unauthorized access to individual systems without prior acknowledgment from the Systems Administrator or the designated supervisor may result in immediate disciplinary action.

The Systems Administrator must approve all access to the Clerk's and the County's computer resources, including passwords.

Users may not, under any circumstances, transfer or confer these privileges to other individuals. Other employees shall not use any account assigned to another individual without permission from the Systems Administrator. The authorized user is responsible for the proper use of the system, including any password protection. Users may not install any device on a computer without authorization from the Systems Administrator.

Users are responsible for maintaining the following:

- An environment in which all the Clerk's and County's computer resources are shared equitably among users. The Systems Administrator sets minimum guidelines within which users must

conduct their activities.

- An environment which does not harm the functionality of the hardware or software.
- An environment conducive to business: A user who harasses, or makes defamatory remarks, shall bear the full responsibility for his or her actions. Further, by using these systems, users agree that individuals who transmit such remarks shall bear sole responsibility for their actions. Users agree that the Clerk's Office role in managing these systems is only as an information carrier, and that they will never consider transmission through these systems as an endorsement of said transmission by the County.
- Many of the Clerk's and County's computers provide access to outside networks, both public and private, which furnish electronic mail, information services, bulletin boards, conferences, etc. Users are advised that they may encounter material that may be considered offensive or objectionable in nature or content. Users are further advised that the Clerk's Office and the County do not assume responsibility for the contents of any of these outside networks.
- The user agrees to comply with these guidelines and other documents for outside networks or services they may access through the Clerk's or County's computer systems.
- All employees are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Be polite. Do not get abusive in your messages to others.
 - Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.
 - Do not engage in activities that are prohibited under state or federal law.
 - Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by other users.
- The user agrees never to attempt to transmit, or cause to be transmitted, any message in which the origination is deliberately misleading (except for those outside services which may conceal identities as part of the service). The user agrees that, in the unlikely event that someone does transmit, or cause to be transmitted, a message that is inconsistent with an environment conducive to business or with a misleading origination, the person who performed the transmission will be solely accountable for the message, not the Clerk or the County, who are acting solely as an information carrier.
- An environment free of illegal or malicious acts: The user agrees never to use a system to perform an illegal or malicious act. Any attempt to increase the level of access to which he or she is authorized, or any attempt to deprive other authorized users of resources or access to any Clerk or County computer systems shall be regarded as malicious, and may be treated as an illegal act.
- A secure environment: Any user who finds a possible security lapse on any system is obligated to report it to the Systems Administrator.
- Knowledge of passwords or of loopholes in computer security systems shall not be used to damage computer resources, obtain extra resources, take resources from another user, gain

unauthorized access to resources or otherwise make use of computer resources for which proper authorization has not been given.

- The Systems Administrator is responsible for backup of everyone's data that is stored in the "Q" drive on the server.
- An account assigned to an individual must not be used by others without permission from the Systems Administrator. The individual is responsible for the proper use of the account, including proper password protection.
- While reasonable attempts have been made to ensure the privacy of your accounts and your electronic mail, there is no guarantee that your accounts or electronic mail is private. The systems are on a secure network. It is entirely possible that in the course of normal system administration activities your e-mail, and any data stored in your account, will become visible to the Systems Administrator. Further, in case of a request from law enforcement authorities, your e-mail and other data may be made available to the requesting agency.
- Electronic communications facilities (such as e-mail-please see email policy for further details) are for office-related activities only. Fraudulent, harassing or obscene messages and/or materials are not to be sent or stored.
- No one should deliberately attempt to degrade the performance of a computer system or to deprive authorized personnel of resources or access to any computer system.
- Loopholes in the computer system or knowledge of a special password should not be used to damage the computer system, obtain extra resources, take resources from another user, gain access to systems, or use systems for which proper authorization has not been given.
- Computer software protected by copyright is not permitted to be used within the Clerk's or Suwannee County's computer facilities, except as permitted by law or by contract with the owner of the copyright. This means that such computer software may only be copied in order to make back-up copies, if permitted by the copyright owner.
- The number of copies and distribution of copies may not be done in such a way that the number of simultaneous users in a department exceeds the number of original copies purchased by that department.
- The Clerk's Office and Suwannee County abide by all applicable federal and state statutes and regulations pertaining to the use of computer hardware and software including, but not limited to, federal copyright laws. Unauthorized copying, altering, modifying, merging, transferring, de-compiling, or reverse assembly of licensed software is strictly prohibited.
- Most copyright licenses for software contain single CPU usage restrictions. These restrictions must be honored. In some instances, the software copyright owner may grant a variance from these restrictions to the Clerk or to Suwannee County. However, without explicit written variance, single usage restrictions in the license apply to all users.
- An individual's computer use privileges may be suspended immediately upon discovery of a possible violation of these policies. Such suspected violations will be confidentially reported to the appropriate supervisors.

- Violations of these policies will be dealt with in the same manner as violations of other policies and may result in disciplinary review. In such a review, the full range of disciplinary sanctions is available including the loss of computer use privileges, dismissal, and legal action. Violations of some of the above policies may constitute a criminal offense.
- The Clerk's Office and Suwannee County reserve the right to review any material accessed by employees with Internet access to determine the appropriateness of such material. The Clerk's Office or Suwannee County may review this material at any time.
- The Systems Administrator will establish more detailed guidelines, as needed, for specific computer systems and networks. These guidelines will cover such issues as allowable connect time and disk space, responsibility for account approval, and other items related to administrating the system.

2. Internet use policy

The new resources, new services, and interconnectivity available via the Internet all introduce new opportunities and new risks. In response to the risks, this policy describes the Clerk's and Suwannee County's official policy regarding Internet security. It applies to all users (employees, contractors, temporaries, etc.) who use the Internet. All Internet users are expected to be familiar with and comply with these policies. Violations of these policies can lead to revocation of system privileges and/or disciplinary action, including termination if necessary.

The purpose of this policy is to establish management direction, procedures, and requirements to ensure the appropriate protection of the Clerk's and Suwannee County's information and equipment by Internet connections.

Clerk or County provided Internet/intranet privileges, like computer systems and networks, are government resources intended for official purposes. Use of Internet/intranet is subject to monitoring for security and/or network management and employees may further be subject to limitations on their use of such resources.

Conditions of use: Users shall not use the Internet for any illegal purpose.

Upload, download or otherwise transmit commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to parties outside of the Clerk's Office or Suwannee County or to the Clerk's Office or Suwannee County itself.

Visit Internet sites that contain illegal, obscene, or hateful content which is objectionable and inappropriate for the workplace. Neither shall users send or receive material that is obscene or defamatory or which is intended to annoy, harass or intimidate another person.

Use the Clerk's or County's internet resources (software/hardware or data) for other than authorized official purposes.

Permit any unauthorized individual to obtain access to county internet connections.

At any time and without prior notice, the Systems Administrator reserves the right to examine e-mail, personal file directories, and other information stored on county computers. This examination assures compliance with internal policies.

All users wishing to establish a connection with the Clerk's Office or County computers via the Internet must authenticate themselves at a firewall before gaining access to the Clerk's internal network. This authentication process must be done automatically by the Systems Administrator.

If sensitive Clerk or County information is lost, disclosed to unauthorized parties, or suspected of being lost or disclosed to unauthorized parties, the Systems Administrator must be notified immediately.

If any unauthorized use of the Clerk's or the County's information systems has taken place, or is suspected of taking place, the Systems Administrator must likewise be notified immediately. Similarly, whenever passwords or other system access control mechanisms are lost, stolen, or disclosed, or are suspected of being lost, stolen, or disclosed, the Systems Administrator must be notified immediately.

Because it may indicate a computer virus infection or similar security problem, all unusual systems behavior, such as missing files, frequent system crashes, misrouted messages, and the like must also be immediately reported. The specifics of security problems should not be discussed widely but should instead be shared on a need-to-know basis.

Questions about this policy may be directed to the Systems Administrator. Violation of these policies may subject employees or contractors to disciplinary procedures.

3. Social Media

This policy provides guidance for employee use of social media, which should be broadly understood for purposes of this policy to include blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a contemporaneous manner.

All employees must understand the importance of confidentiality within our offices. While much of the material in our office is open to the public, the manner in which we treat and disseminate that information is of great importance. We must retain the trust of those we serve if we are to be effective and retain the integrity of this office. Please do not post work-related information on social media venues such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. It is imperative that our office remain a neutral part of the political and judicial processes.

Employees are not allowed to use office phones, tablets, or computers to access social media sites. Employees should be aware of the effect their actions may have on their images, as well as the Clerk's Office image. The information that employees post or publish may be public information for a long time.

Employees should be aware that the Clerk's Office may observe content and information made available by employees through social media. Employees should use their best judgment in posting material that is neither inappropriate nor harmful to the Clerk's Office, its employees, or customers.

Employees are not to publish, post or release any information that is considered confidential or not public. If there are questions about what is considered confidential, employees should check with the Clerk or their department head.

Employees should get appropriate permission before you refer to or post images of current or former employees, members, vendors or suppliers. Additionally, employees should get appropriate permission to use a third party's copyrights, copyrighted material, trademarks, service marks or other intellectual property.

4. Cell Phones

The use of cell phones is a distraction to the work and purpose of our office. This involves calls, texting and other cell phone functions. When you get to work, please turn off your phones and put them away.

In the event someone needs to reach you in case of emergency, please give them our office number.

Other than emergency calls, please keep personal calls at a minimum. To those who are mainly reached using their office cell phones, please put your ringer on vibrate and keep their usage work related. In the event you use your cell phone while in court, please limit text to your supervisor or department Director. Please keep these conversations on a professional level.

5. Email Policy

If you send or forward emails with any libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist, or obscene remarks, you and the Clerk's Office may be held liable. If you unlawfully forward confidential information, you and Clerk's Office may be held liable. If you knowingly send an attachment that contains a virus, worm, or Trojan, you and the Clerk's Office may be held liable.

By following the guidelines in this policy, the email user can minimize the legal risks involved in the use of email.

The following rules are required by law and are to be strictly adhered to. It is prohibited to:

Send unsolicited email messages.

Forge or attempt to forge email messages.

Disguise or attempt to disguise your identity when sending mail.

Send email messages using another person's email account.

The Clerk considers email as an important means of communication and recognizes the importance of proper email content and the professional attitude that should be portrayed. Users should take the same care in drafting an email as they would for any other communication. Therefore, the Clerk's Office insists users adhere to the following guidelines:

Writing professional emails:

Write well-structured emails and use short, descriptive subjects.

The use of Internet abbreviations including "lol", "rofl", "brb" and characters such as smileys, are not encouraged.

Electronic signatures may include your name, job title, company name, and address.

Users should spell check all mails prior to transmission.

Do not send unnecessary attachments. Compress attachments larger than 200MB before sending them.

Only send emails of which the content could be displayed on a public notice board. If they cannot be displayed publicly in their current state, consider rephrasing the email or using an alternative means of communication.

Only mark emails as important if they really are important.

Replying to emails:

Emails should be answered as soon as possible, or whenever the time is right.

Maintenance (*BE SURE TO ASK THE RECORDS MANAGER BEFORE DELETING ANY EMAILS IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTION AS TO ITS RETENTION PERIOD*):

Periodically delete email messages that you do not need; however, to assure that we comply with the public records laws, take special note of the following:

6. Electronic Records

Record schedules apply to records regardless of their physical format. Therefore, records created or maintained in electronic format must be retained in accordance with the minimum retention requirements presented in these schedules, whether the electronic records are the record copy or duplicates. Printouts of standard correspondence in text or word processing files are acceptable in place of the electronic files. Printouts of email files are acceptable in place of the electronic files. Printouts of e-mail files are acceptable in place of the electronic files provided that the printed version contains the complete header information, including all date/time stamps, routing information, etc.

All public records must have an approved retention schedule in place before they can be destroyed or otherwise disposed of. Retention periods are determined by the content, nature, and purpose of records, and are set based on their legal, fiscal, administrative, and historical values, regardless of their form. Therefore, there is no single retention schedule that would apply across the board to all e-mails. E-mails, like other records, irrespective of their form, can have a variety of purposes and relate to a variety of program functions and activities. The retention period of any particular e-mail message will generally be the same as the retention for records in any other form that document the same program function or activity.

Clerk's employees are required to relate each e-mail that is created or received by the employee through the Clerk's e-mail system to the activity it documents, as well as to other records documenting that activity, and apply the appropriate retention period based on that activity or function. If you have any questions or for the approved retention schedules for Local Government Agencies, contact our Records Manager.

It is the responsibility of each Clerk's employee to ensure that e-mail and other public records in their custody are maintained for the required retention period(s). Although the Clerk routinely backs up its servers, each back-up is maintained only briefly for disaster recovery purposes and therefore cannot be regarded as a tool for meeting public records retention requirements.

7. Correspondence and Memoranda; Administrative:

This record series consists of routine correspondence and memoranda of a general nature that is associated with administrative practices but that does not create policy or procedure, document the business of a particular program, or act as a receipt.

See also DIRECTIVES/POLICIES/PROCEDURES". These records may have archival value.

Record Retention:

Record copy: 3 fiscal years.

Duplicates: Retain until obsolete, superseded, or administrative value is lost.

8. Directives/Policies and Procedures

This record series consists of the official management statements of policy for the organization, supporting documents, and the operating procedures which outline the methods for accomplishing the functions and activities assigned to the agency. It includes all correspondence and memoranda generated relating to the policies and procedures which are to be followed by employees. See also "CORRESPONDENCE & MEMORANDA: ADMINISTRATIVE". These records may have archival value.

Record Retention:

Record copy: 2 years after superseded or becoming obsolete.

Duplicates: Retain until obsolete, superseded, or administrative value is lost.

9. Transitory Messages

This record series consists of those records created primarily for the communication of information, as opposed to communications designed for the perpetuation of knowledge. Transitory messages do not set policy, establish guidelines or procedures, certify a transaction, or become a receipt. The informal tone of transitory messages might be compared to the communication that might take place during a telephone conversation or a conversation in an office hallway. Transitory messages would include, but are not limited to: E-mail messages with short-lived, or no administrative value, voice mail, self-sticking notes, and telephone messages.

Many, though not all, e-mails fall under the retention schedule for "TRANSITORY MESSAGES" (General Records Schedule GS1-SL for Local Government Agencies, Item #146). For instance, an e-mail message notifying employees of an upcoming meeting would only have value until the meeting has been attended or the employee receiving the message has marked the date and time in the calendar.

Record Retention

a) Record copy. Retain until obsolete, superseded or administrative value is lost.

b) Duplicates. Retain until obsolete, superseded or administrative value is lost.

Sorting e-mail into appropriate personal folders is a helpful way to manage these records and to ensure that appropriate retention requirements are identified and met. That is, just as file cabinets are set up to house different sets of files and employees know where to file paper records in those files, e-

mail files and folders can be set up with the appropriate retention period designated for each of those files and folders. If no retention schedule exists for records relating to a particular activity, then one must be established through our Records Manager, and that retention schedule would then apply to all documentation of that activity, regardless of form (paper, film, electronic, etc.).

Do not use your office email when registering junk mail or spam.

Never send any confidential information via email. If you are in doubt as to whether to send certain information via email, check with your supervisor first.

All email accounts maintained on our email systems are property of the Clerk. Your passwords should be kept private and not be given to other people. Email accounts not used for 90 days will be deactivated and possibly deleted.

Users expressly waive any right of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive on the Clerk's Office computer system. The Clerk can, but is not obligated to, monitor emails without prior notification. If there is evidence that you are not adhering to the guidelines set out in this policy, the Clerk reserves the right to take disciplinary action, including termination and/or legal action.

If you have any general questions or comments about this email policy please contact the IT Department by phone at 386.362.0565 or by email at support@suw.gov. If your questions are regarding the deletion of or retention requirements for emails, please contact our Records Manager.

All exceptions to this policy must have the prior written approval of the Clerk.

SECTION 7: EMPLOYEE HARASSMENT

I. PURPOSE

To state the Clerk's policy and commitment to a working environment free from harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, age, status as a veteran.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees and employees of outside agencies contracted by the Clerk to perform work in the Clerk's facilities.

III. POLICY

It is the policy of the Clerk to prohibit harassment of its employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, age, status as a disabled or military veteran as a matter of policy. Our policy on Employee Harassment is consistent with objectives set forth by federal, state and local statutes.

Sexual Harassment is defined as, "Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment."

IV. Examples of Harassment

Referring to a woman as girl, doll, babe, honey, sweetie, etc.,

Referring to a minority in a derogatory way,

Referring to an older person in a derogatory way,

Referring to a person in a derogatory way regarding his/her religion or ethnic group,

Whistling at someone, making catcalls, making kissing sounds, howling, etc.

Making sexual comments about a persons body,

Turning work discussions into inappropriate topics,

Talking about sexual preferences, fantasies, or history,

Telling sexual, racial, ethnic, religious, or other discriminatory jokes or stories,

Asking unwelcome personal questions about sexual, ethnic, racial, religious, etc. issues,

Repeatedly asking out a person who isn't interested,
Looking at a person sexually,
Staring at someone (leering),
Blocking a person's path,
Following a person,
Giving unwanted personal gifts,
Displaying sexually suggestive visuals,
Making facial expressions such as winking, throwing kisses, licking lips etc.,
Making sexual gestures with hands or through body movements,
Physical contact of a sexual nature,
Sexual touching,
Suggestive touching,
Any behavior that could be interpreted as being intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

V. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

A. All employees have an absolute duty to report any observed or suspected claims of discrimination, harassment or retaliation. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Complaints may be oral or written and must be made to the Deputy Clerk or Clerk immediately. Chief Deputy Clerks and Supervisors at all levels are responsible for ensuring implementation of the Clerk's Employee Harassment Policy. Each member of management is accountable for adherence to this policy and responsible for its dissemination to all employees under their supervision, precisely as he/she is held accountable for meeting other organizational goals.

1. When a Chief Deputy Clerk or supervisor becomes aware of a complaint or problem of harassment, discrimination or retaliation, he/she will contact the Clerk within twenty-four (24) hours of becoming aware of the complaint or problem.
2. The Clerk will initiate an investigation into the circumstances regarding the complaint or problem, will reach a determination as to whether or not there has been a violation of policy, and will determine what disciplinary action is to be taken.
3. If the complaint or problem involves an individual(s) from outside agencies, or other organizations, the Clerk will initiate contact with the appropriate management representative from the

other organization and will apprise them of the harassment or discrimination. The Clerk will work with the other organization to ensure that appropriate action is taken.

If the complaint or problem involves a member of the public, the Clerk will initiate contact with the individual and apprise him/her that the conduct is inappropriate. If the conduct continues, the Clerk will have a member of management handle all further contact with the individual. Security may be asked to observe further dealings with the individual.

All employees are responsible for helping to maintain a working atmosphere free of employee harassment. All misconduct in the areas of employee harassment, discrimination or retaliation which violates this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Additionally, each Clerk employee is responsible for compliance with the Employee Harassment policy.

Employee Harassment due to race, color, religion, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, age, status as a veteran will not be tolerated by any employee, individuals employed by other agencies or organizations, employees contracted through outside agencies, or members of the general public.

Any employee who believes that they have been harassed, discriminated or retaliated against due to race, color, religion, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, age, status as a military veteran should contact his or her Department Supervisor, Chief Deputy Clerk, or the Clerk.

Any questions concerning this policy should be directed to the employee's immediate Department Supervisor, Chief Deputy Clerk, or the Clerk.

VI. EXCEPTIONS:

Any exceptions to this policy must have prior written approval of the Clerk.

SECTION 8: EMPLOYEE ACTIVITIES

PURPOSE

There are certain matters of importance that should be addressed by these Personnel Rules and Regulations as they relate to employee relations. This policy will address those issues.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Clerk Office employees at all locations.

POLICY

The following policies concerning employee relations shall be in force:

- A. Employees shall refrain from relationships that may impair their independent judgment in carrying out the duties of the Clerk's Office. They shall not accept loans, advances, gifts, gratuities, or favors from a supplier, bidder, or other person doing business with the Clerk's Office except as prescribed by Florida Statutes.
- B. Employees shall not use their position at the Clerk's Office to obtain any special favors. Employees must notify their Department Supervisor or Chief Deputy Clerk prior to creating any business relationships which does or might do business with the Clerk's Office. If the employee deems that a situation will present a conflict of interest, he/she should notify their Department Supervisor and Chief Deputy Clerk. The Clerk will direct the employee's activities if it is deemed that a conflict of interest exists.
- C. Political activities should be limited to the employee's time off. These activities should not interfere with the operations of the Clerk's Office. Employees shall comply with all state and local laws involving political activity. Employees should refrain from displaying local political items while on the job. Employees may run for or be appointed to an elective office as long as there is no interference with their duties at the Clerk's Office.
- D. Employment of relatives may only be done at the discretion of the Clerk.
- E. Employees must notify the Department Supervisor and the Chief Deputy Clerk in writing and receive prior written approval when they desire a position with an outside employer while employed at the Clerk's Office. If the outside employment causes interference with the employee's position at the Clerk's Office, the employee may be required to quit the outside job at the discretion of the Clerk. Clerk's Office equipment and office supplies may not be used for outside employment.
- F. Employees wishing to solicit funds on behalf of a charitable organization must have the written approval of a Chief Deputy Clerk and the Clerk. Employee contributions are to be purely voluntary. There will be absolutely no coercion. Distribution of literature of any kind that is not work related must also have the approval of a Chief Deputy Clerk and the Clerk.

All full-time employees of the Clerk’s Office contribute to the Flower Fund in the amount of \$3.00 per pay period. This amount is automatically deducted from your paycheck.

The Flower Fund is used as follows:

Get-Well: Flowers or fruit baskets for employees.

Allotted amount	\$50.00
Extra amount for wiring/shipping, if needed	12.00

Funeral: Flowers for employees or immediate family consisting of spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, and parents and grandparents of spouse.

Allotted amount	\$75.00
Extra amount for wiring, if needed	12.00

Weddings and Baby Showers:

Allotted amount for refreshments/decorations – up to (Gift amount – same as below)	\$75.00
--	---------

Resignations and Retirements:

Allotted amount for refreshments/decorations – up to	\$75.00
Allotted amount for gift:	
1-5 years of employment	\$25.00
5-10 years of employment	\$50.00
10-20 years of employment	\$100.00
20+ years for employment	\$200.00

G. As recognition of an employee’s service, a fulltime employee will receive a check upon reaching increments of five (5) years of service worked in the Suwannee County Clerk of the Circuit Court’s Office. The checks will be written through the Payroll Department, with the County paying the taxes. The amount of this employee check will be as follows:

5 years	\$ 25.00
10 years	\$ 50.00
15 years	\$ 75.00
20 years	\$100.00
25 years	\$100.00
30 years	\$100.00
35 years	\$100.00

In the event an employee severs their service with the Clerk's Office and is later rehired, their service will be calculated using their rehire date. This policy will apply retroactively from January 6, 2009 forward.

H. The Clerk has adopted the following policy on providing letters of recommendation for former employees:

1. No verbal recommendations shall be given.
2. Recommendations will be given by the Clerk or Directors only.
3. Recommendations will be given in writing and consist of the following information only.
 - A. Dates of employment
 - B. Position/Positions held
 - C. Department Classification
 - D. Duties

I. Court file integrity is very important in maintaining the public trust. Because of the critical importance of the public trust, it is mandatory that the integrity of court files and employee conduct associated with those files not only be professional and ethical but also be demonstrable to the public.

J. All employees are reminded of the following policy:

1. No employee shall perform official Deputy Clerk duties in cases involving members of their immediate families. Immediate family, for the purposes of this policy includes: children either at home or elsewhere, brothers, sisters, parents and spouses.
2. Actions not allowed include filing documents, certifying documents, interviewing or assisting customers who are parties in the case, preparing and sending notices, subpoenas, capiases, warrants, mailing copies of orders or other documents, data entry and data modification. Other prohibitions may be imposed on a case by case basis.
3. These policies in no way prohibit employees from filing cases involving themselves or family members in the same manner provided for the general public, nor does it prohibit employees from filing affidavits on their own behalf or on behalf of family members. When these actions become necessary, employees are required to follow the same procedures expected of the general public utilizing the Deputy Clerk of the appropriate court and the case is filed In the court to which the employee filing the action is assigned, then the Courts Supervisor or designee will assist and make all copies and certifications.

The purpose of this policy is to uphold the professional standards of the Clerk, to protect case file integrity, to protect employees from real or imagined breach of ethics, to protect the Clerk from the same, and to assure the public of the trustworthiness of our records and the impartiality of our procedures.

All exceptions to this policy must have prior written approval of the Clerk.

SECTION 9: SALARY ADMINISTRATION

I. PURPOSE

In order to attract and retain qualified personnel to fill openings at all levels, and with the potential to assume responsible positions within the organization, it is the Clerk's Office's policy to maintain fair and competitive salary ranges consistent with the economic requirements of the organization, and commensurate with those of the community in which we operate.

II. OBJECTIVES

It is our objective to establish and maintain a compensation system that will:

- A. Attract, retain, and reward qualified personnel at all levels of responsibility.
- B. Reflect the difficulty and responsibility of the jobs.
- C. Be externally competitive, internally consistent and fair.
- D. Motivate employees to work toward achievement of the Clerk's goals.
- E. Create incentive for personal growth and monetary advancement on the basis of demonstrated performance.
- F. Control direct and indirect personnel costs.
- G. Foster good employee understanding and relationships by providing individual employees with information on the pay structure and its administration.
- H. Be flexible and simple to administer
- I. Comply with applicable laws.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Non-exempt employees are subject to the overtime pay provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.
- B. Exempt employees are administrative, professional, and executive personnel as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act and are exempted from the overtime pay provisions of that Act.
- C. Merit Increase -- An increase in base salary, the relative amount of which is based on individual performance compared to established measurement criteria for the employee's job.
- D. Promotion -- The reclassification of an employee to a position involving significantly increased responsibility, tasks of greater complexity, and requiring the application of additional skill, judgment, and/or decision making. Must fill a vacancy resulting from attrition, force expansion, or reorganization.
- E. Demotion -- The reclassification of an employee to a job assignment that has less duties/authority as the previously held position. A demotion is the result of a demonstrated lack of acceptable performance of job responsibilities in the previous job.

IV. POLICY

- A. Establish wages that reflect the value to the Clerk's Office of the various jobs, as determined by a system of continuing job evaluation and review, taking into account the duties and level of responsibility of each job.
- B. Establish and maintain justifiable differentials between job levels.
- C. Ensure that, for comparable jobs, pay rates and benefits are equal to or better than those offered by other employers providing similar employment.
- D. Provide equal pay for equal work under comparable working conditions without regard for race, color, religion, marital status, sex, age, national origin, handicap, sexual orientation or status as a veteran.
- E. Wherever possible, reflect a direct relationship to individual job performance.
- F. Adjust pay rates when warranted by changing economic and competitive factors, as determined by periodic surveys.

V. POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Each position shall have an accurately written description of duties and responsibilities. Each unique job will be assigned a descriptive title.

VI. COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES

- A. Appointment and starting pay rates for new employees shall be approved by the Clerk.
- B. Merit increases shall be granted at the Clerk's discretion for superior service. Length of service will be considered in assessing proficiency, but it shall not be the determining factor. Merit increases are to be based on employees' performance, which will include an assessment of the employee's attitude towards co-workers and the public.
- C. Merit increases may not be granted more frequently than once each year to employees, unless otherwise authorized by the Clerk.
- D. Each succeeding salary increase should be considered in the light of increasingly higher standards that are entirely satisfactory in all respects.
- E. Promotion is the advancement from one position to another that requires more skill and has more salary as sufficient, a salary increase may not be granted.
- F. Reclassifications may be made when a major change in the position content occurs, or when the incumbent in the position relinquishes or assumes substantial responsibilities. When a position warrants reclassification, it shall be re-described and re-evaluated and assigned to the proper position classification.

G. When a position is upgraded because of a change in marketplace value, this is not a promotional increase. The only salary change is an adjustment to bring the incumbent(s) up to a sufficient salary amount.

H. Transfers may be effected from one position to another within the same department or from a position in another department. An employee shall receive an adjustment in salary if the Clerk deems that it is necessary.

I. When an employee is demoted, the employee's salary may be adjusted at the Clerk's discretion.

J. The Clerk retains the right to grant non-recurring compensation supplements during the fiscal year at his/her discretion as outlined in Section 215.425 of the Florida Statutes.

VII. EXCEPTIONS

All exceptions to this policy must have the prior written approval of the Clerk.

SECTION 10: OVERTIME PAYMENTS AND COMPENSATORY TIME

I. PURPOSE

To describe the manner of payment and rules regarding overtime pay and compensatory time.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all non-exempt Clerk's Office employees.

III. POLICY

A. It is the Clerk's Office policy to pay non-exempt employees at the rate of time and one-half for all time actually worked in excess of forty (40) hours per week. Hours worked include all hours actually worked by the employee plus any paid holiday hours and hours not worked due to office closure. Vacation and sick hours taken during the week do not count as hours worked.

B. Employees classified as Exempt from the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act regarding overtime payments will not be eligible for overtime pay. The Clerk may grant discretionary time off for Exempt employees.

C. All overtime must be pre-approved by a Chief Deputy Clerk.

D. Overtime should only be assigned in those situations where the Chief Deputy Clerk is convinced that the work is essential in order to meet established schedules or deadlines. Advance notice will be given to employees whenever possible; however, employees should be aware of the fact that emergencies occasionally arise that do not permit advance notification. In an emergency situation, the supervisor in charge will make every effort to notify the employees who are scheduled for overtime work as soon as possible.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Notice

1. Daily overtime shall be mandatory if notice is given on the preceding day. In the absence of such notice, overtime shall be solely voluntary. Failure to work on the voluntary basis shall not be disciplined, unless the party agrees to work and does not appear.

2. Non-emergency weekend overtime (usually Saturday) shall be mandatory only if notice is extended two days in advance. In the absence of such prior notice, fulfillment of overtime shall be strictly voluntary. Failure to volunteer for overtime in the absence of sufficient notice shall be without prejudice; unless the employee has volunteered and fails to appear as agreed.

B. Discipline

1. Employees who have been assigned to work overtime, whether voluntary or mandatory shall be expected to report to work as scheduled.

2. Failure to report shall be subject to disciplinary procedures as specified for any other non-appearance for a regularly scheduled work time.

3. Employees should be released from mandatory overtime, without fear of discipline, when they can provide a reasonable excuse such as the following:

- a. Personal family emergency
- b. Personal or family health maintenance
- c. Personal long-range commitments, such as: legal appointments, long-range planned projects, which would be breached at great expense, or where personal penalty is involved (court dates, defaults of deposits, etc.)
- d. Important family functions (weddings, etc.)

4. If there is doubt concerning the employee's sincerity in offering such an excuse, the burden of proof will rest with the employee.

C. Holidays

If overtime is worked on a holiday, overtime payment will be made at two and one-half (2 1/2) times the normal rate of pay.

Employees that work on a holiday will receive holiday pay in addition to holiday overtime pay. For example, an employee that works on a holiday will receive regular hours for the holiday in addition to overtime hours for the actual hours worked on the holiday.

Paid Leave Time, Bereavement Leave, or any other type of leave shall not be counted as time worked for overtime computations.

D. Compensatory Time

1. Employees may be granted compensatory time off at the rate of time and one-half for all time actually worked in excess of forty (40) hours per week at the discretion of the Clerk.

2. Compensatory time off will be computed in the same manner as financial compensation would otherwise have been computed.

3. Employees are encouraged to use their compensatory time as soon as possible. A maximum of forty hours may be accumulated.

4. Payment shall be made for unused compensatory time at the time of separation based on the employee's regular rate of pay at the time of termination.

5. The use of compensatory time off shall be at the discretion of the Supervisor and consistent with the operating needs of the Clerk's Office. Compensatory time shall be taken at a time convenient to the employee, who will request such time off at least five (5) workdays in advance. A supervisor may grant an employee's request for compensatory time off with less notice at his/her discretion.

6. All earned compensatory time credits of employees who die while in the service of the Clerk's Office shall be paid to the spouse or the estate of the employee at the same rate and in the same manner as described in section IN-C-S of this policy.

F. Time Reporting

Employees must adequately document overtime hours worked and provide documentation to their supervisor. Intentional falsification of overtime records will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Compensatory time should be forwarded to the Personnel Department for record keeping purposes. Employees should submit leave slips for compensatory time taken.

V. EXCEPTIONS

All exceptions to this policy must have the prior written approval of the Clerk.

It should also be understood that Flextime should not be confused with Compensatory time. Flex time is time taken during the week that it is earned. It is matched on an hour-for-hour basis.

SECTION 11: PAID LEAVE TIME (P.L.T.)

I. PURPOSE

To provide all employees with time off with pay in order to maintain employee health, morale and efficiency. Paid Leave Time combines time off for vacations, and unexpected absences such as short-term illness, etc., to provide employees maximum flexibility in planning for and taking time off.

II. POLICY

A. Requested time off for planned absences (i.e. vacations) will be approved only when arrangements can be made to assure required staff coverage. Time off for vacation must be requested in accordance with departmental procedures. The Department Supervisor must approve any other absence, in advance.

B. Vacation time may be taken at any time as long as the Department Supervisor approves. When there is a conflict, scheduling will be at the Supervisor's discretion. Preference in scheduling will normally be given to the employee who requested the time off first.

C. Employees are eligible to use P.L.T. time for unscheduled absences due to illness, illness in the family, personal business, and other necessary causes for absences from work, which include legal quarantine because of exposure to a contagious disease. P.L.T. may also be used for medical, dental, or optical appointments, which cannot be arranged at any time other than during the employee's normal working hours. A physician's certificate may be required when it is felt that an employee is abusing sick leave privileges.

D. P.L.T. hours used during a pay period are not counted as hours worked for the purpose of computing overtime.

E. P.L.T. time is paid at the employee's current hourly rate.

F. Employees may use P.L.T. hours down to a zero balance. Employees may not take P.L.T. time that has not yet been earned.

G. When an employee leaves active service with the Clerk's Office, they will be paid the balance of their annual leave at their current rate of pay. The Clerk reserves the right to deny payment for any accrued leave if an employee leaves in bad standing or fails to provide timely notice of his/her resignation.

When an employee leaves active service with the Clerk's Office after ten (10) consecutive years of employment, he/she shall be paid for 25% (or 100% for those employed before August 3, 1993) of his/her accrued sick leave. The amount paid shall be determined by the hours of accrued sick leave times the employee's current hourly rate of pay.

When an employee with ten (10) years of continuous employment has accrued sick leave in excess of twenty-six (26) weeks (130 working days) the employee has the option to be paid for all sick leave exceeding twenty-six (26) weeks based on the percentages stated above.

H. P.L.T. hours are accrued (but not earned for purpose of payment) according to the number of hours worked each pay period (to a maximum of 80). The accrual schedule is as follows:

<u>Annual /Sick Days</u>	<u>Annual/Sick Hours</u>		
<u>Length of Service</u>	<u>Eligibility</u>	<u>Accrued Per Pay Period</u>	
1 year through 9 years	12days/12days	4	hours/4 hours
10 years through 19 years	15 days/12days	5	hours/4 hours
20 years and up	20 days/12 days	6.67	hours/4 hours

*Please note that temporary employees do not accrue any paid leave time. The above schedule applies to those employees who are full-time. Part-time employees accrue paid leave time based on 10 % of the hours scheduled per week. For example, an employee that is scheduled to work twenty (20) hours per week will accrue two (2) hours of sick leave and two (2) hours of annual leave per pay period.

Each employee is allowed to accrue a total of 320 annual hours and 2080 sick hours. Upon separation, an employee will be paid a maximum of 240 annual hours and 2080 sick hours (please note the rule as mentioned above).

I. If it is deemed that an employee cannot take annual leave and will forfeit time at December 31st because they are over their cap accrual, the Clerk may grant payment for those annual hours that the employee will have to forfeit at his/her discretion.

J. P.L.T. accumulation and use records will be based upon and maintained in the Clerk’s Office’s Personnel Department. No P.L.T. is granted except on the basis of these records.

K. P.L.T. is charged according to the actual number of hours used by the employee for the days that the employee would normally work.

L. P.L.T. must be used if an employee takes any leave time under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

In the case of any Clerk’s Office employee experiencing a catastrophic family illness, based on the Clerk’s determination, solicitation of voluntary contributions of P.L.T. hours from other Clerk’s Office employees may be accomplished, if and when the employee’s P.L.T account is exhausted. All donations will be made in increments of eight (8) hour multiples only, and will be accomplished by charging the donating employee’s account and forwarding the net check issued to the employee experiencing the catastrophic illness so that taxes may be computed according to IRS specifications. All donations must be strictly voluntary as individually determined responses to a memorandum with an attached donation completion form. No pressure to donate time will be tolerated.

On or before January 31 of each year, the employee will be required to sign a written statement indicating that they agree with their balance concerning their P.L.T. as of the last date of the previous calendar year.

Annual leave is an important and valuable benefit offered by the Clerk. It is time for an employee to rest, rejuvenate, and spend time away from their duties at the Clerk’s Office. However, in extraordinary and/or extenuating circumstances, upon written request by a staff member and with the approval of the Clerk, an employee may be paid in lieu of accrued annual leave.

Prior to granting approval for payment, the Clerk shall examine operational and budget considerations, and the impact upon each, should payment be allowed. The Clerk shall make the decision whether or not an employee’s situation warrants payment in lieu of time off. The Clerk’s decision shall be final and an employee shall have no right to appeal.

Unless otherwise approved by the Clerk, the following criteria must be met:

- The staff member must have or will have at least 60 hours of accrued leave on the books on the date of the requested payment.
- Payment may only be for that portion of accrued time over and above 60 hours of accrued leave.
- The staff member may sell a minimum of 8 hours but not to exceed 40 hours during any fiscal year.
- Payment will only be considered once during any fiscal year.
- The payroll supervisor shall receive the approval of the Clerk prior to any payment in lieu of annual leave time is made.

In addition, in order to maintain a lower overall liability for accrued annual leave, the Clerk may determine from time to time that it is in the best interest of the office to offer to all staff members payment in lieu of accrued annual leave time. Such payment would be a voluntary program using the same criterion as noted above.

III. EXCEPTIONS

All exceptions to this policy must have the prior written approval of the Clerk.

SECTION 12: OTHER LEAVE-RELATED MATTERS

PURPOSE

To state the Clerk's policy concerning situations that arise which require the employee to be absent from work.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Clerk Office employees at all locations.

POLICY

- A. It is the Clerk's Office policy to pay employees that are involved in Court proceedings when said employee appears on behalf of the County and has to serve as a witness. Any monies received for appearing should be forwarded to the Finance Department. If the employee is only detained for a portion of the workday, he/she is expected to report to work for the remainder of the workday.

If the employee is absent due to personal litigation or for matters that are non-work related, said employee may use annual leave or be granted leave without pay at the Department Supervisor's discretion.

Employees will receive paid leave time for absences due to service on a jury. Any compensation received, other than mileage, shall be returned to the Finance Department. Employees that are released before the end of the workday are required to return to work for the remainder of the day. If the employee wishes to take the remainder of the day off, he/she may do so by using annual leave or taking leave without pay at the discretion of the Department Supervisor. An employee that attends court on his/her day off shall be exempt from the reimbursement requirement.

- B. The Clerk's office adopts the Board of County Commissioner's policy concerning Military Leave in Section 18 of the Suwannee County Personnel Rules and Regulations. It reads as follows:

All employees who are commissioned reserve officers or reserve enlisted personnel in the United States military or naval service or members of the National Guard shall be entitled to leaves of absence from their respective duties, without loss of pay for the first seventeen (17) days, time or efficiency rating, on all days during which they shall be engaged in field or coast defense exercises or other training ordered under the provisions of the United States military or naval training regulations for such personnel when assigned to active duty; provided, however, that leave of absence is granted as a matter of legal right under the provisions of this section shall not exceed seventeen (17) days in any one (1) annual period: provided, further that leaves of absence for additional or longer periods of time without pay for assignment to duty with civilian conservation corps units or other functions of a military character may be granted at the Clerk's discretion. Request for military leave shall be submitted in writing with a copy of the military orders attached thereto at least one (1) month (if possible) prior to the commencement date of the proposed leave. Employees will receive all benefits during the seventeen (17) day leave. However, only longevity benefits will continue for those leaves granted for longer periods of time, except as granted by the Clerk.

C. Bereavement leave will be granted to employees as follows:

Relationship to Employee:	Bereavement Leave Granted:
Spouse, mother, father, child, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandparent, grandparent of spouse, grandchild, step-parent, step-child, step-brother and sister and step-grandchild	3 Days
Aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, and any other relative living in the same household.	1 Day

D. Employees may take additional time for bereavement by utilizing their annual time or being granted leave without pay at the Department Supervisor’s discretion. The employee may be required to provide the Department Supervisor with proof of death if it is deemed necessary. The Clerk may grant exceptions to this rule.

E. Maternity leave is available at the end of the sixth month of pregnancy provided the employee does not get authorization from the physician to work more or less than this period. Maternity leave terminates three (3) months after delivery. The employee may return to work before this period if a doctor’s note proving authorization is submitted.

Employees on maternity leave qualify for short-term disability under the policy provided by the Clerk’s Office. The policy pays 50% of the employee’s salary during the maternity leave. The employee is entitled to utilize their paid leave time and receive a full paycheck. Once the employee’s paid leave time is exhausted, they will continue to receive their disability payments.

Employees on maternity leave will accrue paid leave time provided that they receive the additional pay through the Clerk’s Office. Once paid leave time is exhausted, accruals will cease until such time that the employee is paid through the Clerk’s Office. Immediate re-employment with the same rate of pay at the end of the leave is guaranteed, provided the position has not been eliminated. Maternity leave is not considered a break in service as far as longevity and insurance benefits are concerned.

F. Employees that must see a physician as a result of a work-related injury, he/she shall receive regular salary for a period of absence that is less than seven (7) days. If the employee is absent seven (7) days or more, the employee will be compensated by the worker’s compensation carrier at a rate that is equal to sixty-six and two-thirds (66 2/3) of the employee’s salary or as otherwise set forth in Chapter 440, F.S.S. The employee is entitled to utilize paid leave time and receive a full paycheck. Once paid leave time is exhausted, the employee will continue to receive worker’s compensation benefits. The employee will receive accruals during the time that they are receiving a paycheck through the Clerk’s Office. Once paid leave time is exhausted, the accruals will cease.

An employee that is deemed as unable to perform the necessary duties of a position by a medical doctor may be replaced at the discretion of the Clerk.

- G. A leave of absence without pay may be granted with the permission of the Department Supervisor, Chief Deputy Clerk, and the approval of the Clerk if the employee submits a written request stating the need for the leave of absence. Although the leave does not constitute a break in service, paid leave time accruals will cease during the leave period.

Unauthorized leaves of absences will not be granted. The employee should contact his/her Department Supervisor or Chief Deputy Clerk immediately in the event of an unexpected absence. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Employees on leave without pay shall not be entitled to holiday pay and the employee may be responsible for the payment of health and life insurance premiums at the discretion of the Clerk.

- H. Employees who have worked for the Clerk for at least twelve (12) months and at least 1,250 hours during twelve (12) months may take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave for the following reasons:

1. The birth of a son/daughter of an employee and to care for the child;
2. The placement of a son or daughter with an employee for adoption or foster care;
3. In order to care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition;
4. A serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's position.
5. Employees who are called to active duty by the U.S. Military or who are injured as a result of serving in the military.

A "serious health condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either: (1) in-patient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility; or (2) continuing treatment by a health care provider.

In the case of unpaid leave for the birth or placement of a child, intermittent leave or working a reduced number of hours is not permitted unless both Clerk and employee agree.

In the case of unpaid leave for a serious health condition, the leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced hours basis only if such leave is medically necessary. If intermittent or reduced hours leave is required, the Clerk may in his sole discretion temporarily transfer the employee to another job with equivalent pay and benefits that better accommodates that type of leave.

During family leave of absence, the Clerk will continue to pay its portion of the health insurance premiums and the employee must continue to pay his or her share of the premium. Failure of the employee to pay his or her share of the health insurance premium may result in loss of coverage. If the employee does not return to work after the expiration of the leave, the employee will be required

to reimburse the Clerk's Office for payment of health insurance premiums during the family leave, unless the employee does not return because of the presence of a serious health condition which prevents the employee from performing his or her job or circumstances beyond the control of the employee.

During leave, the employee shall not accrue employment benefits, such as vacation pay, sick pay, or retirement. Employment benefits accrued by the employee up to the day on which the family leave of absence begins will not be lost.

Employees are required to use their available vacation time during the twelve (12) week family leave, and available sick days shall be used when the family leave is taken because of a serious health condition. That portion of the family leave of absence, which is vacation time and/or sick days, will be with pay according to the Clerk's policies regarding vacation time and sick days.

Employees who return to work from family leave of absence within or on the business day following the expiration of the twelve (12) weeks are entitled to return to their job or an equivalent position without loss of benefits or pay.

Requests for family leave of absence must be submitted in writing. Requests should be submitted at least thirty (30) days before the leave is to commence, or as soon as possible if thirty (30) days notice is not possible. Employees requesting family leave should provide the Clerk's Office with appropriate medical certification to include the date leave is to begin and the date the employee will be released to return.

Any employee who is out of work due to a job injury may be placed on Family and Medical leave by the department head and the twelve (12) weeks of the FMLA would run simultaneously with the Worker's Compensation.

Key Employees: Those employees who are in the top 10% of financial compensation will be granted FMLA. However, due to their position, the Clerk may need to replace the employee and therefore deny reinstatement.

All exceptions to this policy must have prior written approval of the Clerk.

SECTION 13: HOLIDAY PAY

I. PURPOSE

To state the Clerk of the Circuit Court's policy regarding payment for holidays.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the Clerk's Office in all locations.

III. POLICY

Holidays will be observed by the Clerk's Office according to the Clerk's calendar submitted to the courts that is established prior to the beginning of each calendar year. A minimum of eleven holidays will be granted each year.

Employees shall be paid for the holiday when it falls on the employee's regularly scheduled workday. The rate of pay shall be at the employee's regular hourly rate.

Employees that work on a scheduled holiday shall be paid at the rate set forth in Section 4 of these Personnel Policies and Procedures concerning overtime payments.

Employees shall be paid holiday pay whenever the holiday falls on a day when the employee is on approved vacation or sick leave. Employees shall not be paid holiday pay when the employee is on a leave of absence without pay.

All exceptions to this policy must have prior written approval of the Clerk.

SECTION 14: SEVERANCE PAY

PURPOSE

To state the Clerk's position on Severance Pay

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the Clerk's Office at all locations.

POLICY

It is the Clerk's policy to award severance pay when an employee is separated from service due to termination unrelated to the employee's conduct or performance, resignation at the request of the Clerk, or the elimination of a position. Payment will be made on the last date of employment or the week immediately following. The amount will be based on precedent and the Clerk's discretion.

All exceptions to this policy must have prior written approval of the Clerk.

Policy on Payment of Severance Packages

The Clerk has adopted this policy on the Payment of Severance Packages:

The Clerk may pay a departing employee severance pay in lieu of notice or enhanced severance package benefits in exchange for a resignation and voluntary Waiver and Release Agreement.

This policy shall remain in effect until changed by the Clerk.

SECTION 15: CONTINUING EDUCATION

I. PURPOSE

The Clerk is committed to a working environment that encourages continuing education when the skills will enhance the employee's skills in their employment with the Clerk's office.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all part-time and full-time employees of the Clerk's Office.

III. POLICY

It is the policy of the Clerk to promote the employee's enhancement of their skills in performing their duties at the Clerk's office. At the Clerk's discretion, employees will be allowed to take classes towards their continuing education. The Clerk has the right to pay for said education and may request that the employee pay a portion of the expenses whenever he/she deems it necessary. These expenses will be paid from the education expense line item in the budget.

IV. PROCEDURE

Whenever an employee is interested in taking advantage of this opportunity, the said employee should notify his/her Department Supervisor of their intentions. At the Department Supervisor's approval, the Chief Deputy Clerk over that department will be notified and will ask the Clerk for final approval. Employees are expected to maintain a "B" status or above while attending courses funded by the Clerk's Office.

V. EXCEPTIONS

All exceptions to this policy must have prior written approval of the Clerk.

SECTION 16: EMERGENCY BUILDING CLOSURES

I. PURPOSE

To state the Clerk's policy regarding the closing of the Clerk of Court Offices during a declared emergency situation.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all part-time and full-time employees of the Clerk's Office.

III. POLICY

It is the policy of the Clerk during declared emergency to determine whether the Clerk's office will close or remain open during a regular workday. In the event of office closure, all Clerk employees will be compensated at their regular rate of pay for each hour that the office is officially closed. If certain employees are required by their Supervisor to work during the closure period, they will be compensated at two and one half (2 1/2) times their regular pay rate for each hour worked. If the Clerk's office remains open during a declared emergency, any employee who chooses not to report to work should notify the Clerk or their Supervisor immediately and will be required to take vacation leave or accrued compensatory time during their absence.

IV. PROCEDURE

All employees of the Clerk will be notified by the Clerk or their Supervisor as soon as possible concerning an office closure.

V. EXCEPTIONS

All exceptions to this policy must have prior written approval of the Clerk.

SECTION 17: EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

The employee handbook describes important information about the Clerk, and I understand that I should consult my Supervisor, Deputy Clerk, or the Clerk regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I have entered into my employment relationship with the Clerk voluntarily and I acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment. Accordingly, either I or the Clerk can terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time as there is no violation of applicable federal or state laws.

The information, policies, and benefits in this handbook are subject to change. I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur excluding the Clerk’s employment-at-will policy. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the Clerk has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of my employment nor a legal document. I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it. I also affirm that I have received and read the Clerk’s policy prohibiting discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation and understand that I have a duty to report any observed or suspected conduct that is a violation of that policy.

EMPLOYEE’S NAME (printed):

EMPLOYEE’S SIGNATURE:

DATE: _____