

Williamson County

Employee Policy Manual

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Note: numbering will be updated after acceptance of red-lined revisions.

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Policy Manual Disclaimer

This employee policy manual constitutes the general personnel policies for all Williamson County employees. It does not constitute a contract or provide a guarantee of employment. Policies may be altered, deleted, or amended at any time by action of the Commissioners Court. If any provision or part of a provision of these policies is held invalid, unlawful, or unenforceable, it will not affect the validity of the remaining provisions or parts of provisions, which will remain in effect. In cases where federal or state laws or regulations supersede local guidelines, such laws or regulations will substitute for these personnel guidelines only insofar as necessary for compliance. Specific departments may have additional policies unique to their operations.

Policies within this manual may be revised by Human Resources as necessary to add, delete, and modify procedural or administrative elements, as well as typographical corrections, without reapproval from the Commissioner's Court. All material changes to Policy scope, responsibilities, roles, intent, or other substantive changes must be formally approved by the Commissioner's Court. The Employee Policy Manual, and any changes therein, will be posted to the County's Policy Management System and issued for electronic employee acknowledgement signature.

Elected official's rights and responsibilities as defined by Texas law supersede these policies where conflicts may occur. Elected officials are encouraged to follow all policies contained herein in order to provide uniform application across the County and to protect the County against potential employment related issues.

About Williamson County Government

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

Commissioners Court

The Commissioners Court consists of four County Commissioners; each elected by the voters of a Commissioners precinct, and a County Judge, elected by all of the voters of the County. Officials are elected for a four-year term. The Commissioners Court is the chief policy, administrative, and executive branch of County government.

County Operations

County operations are conducted through departments and offices; each administered by an elected public official or an appointed department head.

Employment

At Will Employment

Employment with Williamson County is on an at-will basis*:

- An employee may resign at any time, with or without notice.
- Williamson County may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or notice.
- Williamson County may change the terms and conditions of employment at any time, with or without notice.

*Excluding employees under Civil Service within the Sheriff's Office.

Equal Employment Opportunity & ADA Compliance

Williamson County is committed to providing a workplace free of discrimination. All employment decisions (hiring, compensation, promotions, terminations, etc.) are made without regard to any covered or protected class as defined by law and applicable statements of the law by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) or disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act and applicable state laws, including those enforced by the Texas Workforce Commission. If an employee requires an accommodation due to a disability, contact the Human Resources Department.

Employment Status

- Full-time: Full-time positions are scheduled to work consistently 30 or more hours in a pay week.
- Part-time: Part-time positions are scheduled to work no more than 29 hours in a pay week and are not eligible for benefits or longevity pay.
- Temporary: Temporary employees are limited to working 130 days in a rolling calendar year. They are not eligible for TCDRS retirement, benefits, holidays, leave time, or County longevity pay. They are limited to no more than 29 hours in a pay week, unless they fall under the subcategory of a Seasonal Employee.
 - Seasonal: Temporary employees may be classified as seasonal and customary and work up to 40 hours in a pay week if they meet the following criteria: (i) by the nature of the position an employee typically works for a period of six months or less, and (ii) the period of employment should begin each calendar year in approximately the same part of the year, such as summer or winter. Please contact your HR Generalist to determine the parameters for any temporary employees.

Position Classification

Positions are classified as exempt or non-exempt based on the definitions and requirements of the Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

- Exempt: Exempt positions are salaried positions which are not eligible for overtime or compensatory time.
- Non-Exempt: Non-exempt positions are hourly positions which are eligible for overtime pay or compensatory time as determined by County policy.

*All full-time, part-time, and temporary employees must reside within the State of Texas during the scope of their employment.

Employment

Overtime		
Classification	Eligibility	Accrual
Exempt	NO	Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime compensation.
Non-Exempt	YES	• Time-and-a-half pay or compensatory time after 40 hours actually worked in a work week. • Determination of pay vs. comp time is based on departmental budget.
Non-Exempt: Department of Infrastructure	YES	• Time-and-a-half compensatory time after 40 hours actually worked. • In the event of a public safety emergency, the Senior Director has the discretion to grant overtime pay at time and a half to those employees performing emergency response duties at the request of their supervisor.
Non-Exempt: Public Safety Positions	YES	Time-and-a-half overtime pay or compensatory time after 40 hours actually worked.
Non-Exempt: Law Enforcement Positions	YES	Time-and-a-half overtime pay or compensatory time after 86 hours worked in a 14-day pay period. The hours worked between 80 and 86 hours, for this period, are compensated at straight overtime pay or compensatory time.
Non-Exempt: Catastrophic Event Pay	YES	Upon EOC activation and/or declaration of a local, state or federal disaster, non-exempt essential personnel (EP) may receive time-and-a-half pay in lieu of compensatory time, once the normal hours required before overtime eligibility have been exceeded.

All overtime must be preapproved by the Elected Official or Department Head. Policy infractions involving abuse of unapproved overtime may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Only hours actually worked are included in the determination of overtime. Sick leave, vacation, holidays, bad weather, and other uses of leave accruals do not count toward the accrual of overtime and will be reduced to balance the timecard to 40 hours per week (or 80 hours per pay period for Law Enforcement employees).* As used above, overtime may refer to accruals of compensatory time or payments.

Compensatory time is limited to 240 hours, all hours above this limit will be paid at time and one-half.

*EMS and Emergency Communications use leave based on scheduled shift hours, rather than the pay period.

Employment

Recruitment

When a position becomes vacant, the position may be ~~posted externally through Human Resources, internally (within the department) by the Elected Official or Department Head or the posted internally or externally, as outlined in the table below.~~ A vacant position may be filled by an applicant that has previously applied for a like position within the past 180 days. The Elected Official, Department Head or their designee will make the final selection in the recruitment process. The chart below generally defines the processes:

Job Posting Options			
Type	Description	Documentation	Process
External Job Posting	Vacant position is posted online through Human Resources.	A request to post must be sent to Human Resources.	Position will be posted through online hiring system for a minimum of five calendar days.
Internal Job Posting	Vacant position is posted internally through email or other written communication method within the hiring department only, <u>or posted online.</u>	• An email or written posting may be used to notify employees of the vacancy. <u>• Online postings may be set up with screening to allow consideration of only current employees of the hiring department.</u>	• Email or written postings <u>Notifying</u> internal employees of the an opportunity and should provide instructions on how they must apply (i.e. via resume, email response, etc.). <u>• All posting types should remain open to accept Applications, resumes, or letters of interest should be accepted</u> for a minimum of 5 calendar days.
Applicant Pool	Candidate applications submitted in response to job posting.	Contact Human Resources to request applications from a previous posting for a position with the same title and grade within the past 180 days.	Applications will be provided through the online hiring system for the hiring manager to review.

Candidate Selection Process

All candidates being considered should meet the minimum requirements for the position and should go through a consistent screening and interviewing process. Once a candidate is selected, the hiring manager must notify Human Resources to complete the final steps in the hiring process.

Nepotism

Nepotism is the hiring or influencing others to hire relatives without regard to merit. The County and the [Texas Government Code Chapter 573](#) outline specific rules prohibiting the appointment, confirmation of appointment, or voting for the appointment (or confirmation of appointment) of a relative. Refer to the Texas Government Code Chapter 573 (Relationships by Consanguinity or by Affinity) for additional clarification. The Commissioners Court will not affirm any employee who is related to another employee within their chain of command or reporting structure.

Changes in relationships which may violate this policy must be immediately reported to Human Resources.

Employment

Hiring Post TCDRS Retirement

Williamson County elected officials, department heads, or other agents of the County may not make any prior commitments, agreements, or arrangements to rehire a Williamson County TCDRS retiree. Any retiree selected for a position with Williamson County will require pre-approval from the Human Resources Department due to TCDRS rules. If the retiree is on Williamson County retiree health benefits, the benefit-enrollment waiting period still applies.

Pre-Employment Screening

Potential employees of Williamson County may be required to submit to a criminal history check, physical exam, drug screening or other job-specific screening prior to employment. Any job offer is contingent upon successfully completing and meeting the requirements of these screenings. If additional information is received after employment begins which fails to meet the screening requirements, the employment relationship may be terminated. False information provided by an applicant will disqualify the applicant from consideration, or if discovered after employment begins may result in termination.

Post Hire

New Employee Orientation

All new employees must complete new employee orientation before the end of the pay period in which they are hired.

Direct Deposit

Direct Deposit is strongly recommended. The first paycheck will be mailed to the address of record, as could the first paycheck whenever changing banking institutions or account information. Pay remittance slips can be viewed and printed online located on the Wilco Self Service site in ~~Oracle~~the County Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.

Texas County and District Retirement System (TCDRS) Contributions

All officials, part-time and full-time employees are required to participate in the Texas County and District Retirement System (TCDRS) as a condition of employment. Temporary employees are exempt from participation as specified by Retirement System regulations. The required contribution is deducted from an employees pay each pay period.

Employment

Transfers

Employees transferring from one County office or department to another should give at least a two-week written notice to their current official/department head. The current official/department head may waive the two-week period. If an employee's status changes from a non-exempt to an exempt position, the employee's current compensatory time balance will be paid out as of the last day in the non-exempt position and at the hourly rate for the non-exempt position. Compensatory time will also be paid out when a non-exempt employee transfers from one County department to another. If an employee transfers from a position that allows for a higher vacation or sick leave balance, the amount that is in excess of the limit for the new position will be forfeited.

Transfers to and from WCCHD, Museum or CSCD are considered employment separations.

Separation of Employment

Employees are encouraged to provide at least a two-week written notice in order to resign in good standing. The last day of employment is the last day the employee is present at work performs authorized work duties. Leave time cannot be used on the last day of employment, with the exception of USERRA leave, administrative leave or medical leave covered under or at the conclusion of FMLA. In some cases, the last day of employment may be adjusted after a review and approval process involving the department, Human Resources, and the County Auditor's Office. At the discretion of the Elected Official or Department Head, the resignation may be accepted immediately or at any time within the resignation notice period. In the event that an employee passes away, the last date of employment will be the last date worked or the last day on approved leave with the exception of vacation leave. Employees must return all Williamson County property immediately upon request or upon termination of employment. Any items not returned may be deducted from the final paycheck for certain eligible employees.

The following will be paid on the final paycheck or when County assets have been disabled/returned to the County:

- Eligible accrued vacation time
- Comp time

Adjusted Service Dates for Rehired Employees (Non-retirement)

Employees rehired into a full-time position within 90 days from his/her last employment within a full-time position, will be reinstated with service time based on a calculated adjusted service date. The adjusted service date is the original date of full-time employment minus the number of break in service days either not employed with the County or working in a part-time, temporary or seasonal capacity. The adjusted service date will also be used for determining vacation and County longevity accrual rates. Employees rehired 91 or more days after separation of employment will not receive service credit for previous employment, unless a one-time exception, that cannot exceed a one-year break in service, is awarded based on review and approval by Human Resources (factors considered include high turnover positions, knowledge, skills and abilities of a former employee or other special circumstances). Request for the one-time exception must be received by Human Resources within 30 days following rehire date. Any resulting change to longevity amount paid will not be effective until budget funds are available. Retroactive payments will not be made for payments missed pending budget funds availability.

~~Refer to the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act (USERRA) for reemployment rights if the break in service is related to active military leave. Contact the Human Resource Department for assistance.~~

Work Environment

Communications to Employees

All employees are assigned a County email address. County email is the official communication tool for employee communications. All employees are responsible for accessing and reviewing their County email on a regular basis.

PowerDMS, a document management system, will be utilized to disseminate County policy documents and informational memos. Employees will be responsible for the review and electronic receipt acknowledgement of County communications in PowerDMS.

Breaks

Supervisors may schedule breaks to accommodate operating requirements. County offices are encouraged to stay open during the noon hour to better serve the public. Supervisors will inform employees of breaks, if any, and the break schedule. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) does not require employers to provide breaks or meal periods to employees.

- Breaks of less than 20 minutes will not require the employee to clock out and will be considered compensable time while on County property.
- Breaks of more than 20 minutes (i.e. errands) or offsite will require non-exempt employees to clock out and not perform any work during that time.
- Lunch breaks will be for a period of not less than 30 minutes, during which non-exempt employees clock out and may not perform any work.

Lactation breaks

For up to one year after a child's birth, any employee who is breastfeeding her child will be provided reasonable break times as needed with the same rules for breaks. During lactation breaks in which non-exempt employees clock out, they may not perform any work. Williamson County has designated certain rooms for this purpose. Employees who work off-site or in other locations will be accommodated with a private area as necessary.

Reporting Time Worked and Leave Time

Employee timesheets must be balanced to their regularly scheduled hours for the work week.

Timesheets must be approved and signed off, by the employee and department designee, on the day indicated on the payroll calendar by the time indicated by the Auditor Payroll Department. ~~Employee timesheets must be balanced to their regularly scheduled hours for the work week.~~ An employee may not serve as the department designee for approval of their own timecard.

- Nonexempt: Employees must report all hours worked and leave time taken in the timekeeping system.
- Exempt: Employees do not enter the hours worked, but must record leave time such as sick or vacation in the timekeeping system. Holiday time is preloaded for all exempt employees. Payroll must be contacted to adjust holiday time if an exempt employee works on the holiday.

Time records are a governmental record and according to Texas Penal Code Section 37.10 you are tampering with a government record if you knowingly submit your time record inaccurately.

Employee Leave Policies

Employees accrue vacation and sick leave on the last day of each pay period. The leave accrual will be adjusted when employees have any unpaid leave, with the exception of workers compensation. The leave chart within this section provides the policies related to the various leave types authorized by the County.

Leave Chart

Use of leave accruals must be approved by the Elected Official or Department Head

**Employees are encouraged to take leave throughout the year,
as business needs can change and leave approval is not guaranteed.*

Type	Rate of Accrual	Max Accrual / Payout	Policy
VACATION	< 5 years = 3 Hours 5 minutes per pay period	80 hours	- Changes in work schedules may result in adjustments to leave balances & accruals. - Part-time employees earn 1.5 hours per pay period with the same max accrual as full-time employees. - Proration may occur for full-time employees who work less than 30 hours per week. - Contact Human Resources for more information.
	5 to < 10 Years = 4 hours 37 minutes per pay period	120 hours	
	10 + years = 6 Hours 10 minutes per pay period	160 hours	
VACATION (EMS Paramedics on 48-hour shifts)	< 10 years = 5 Hours 32 minutes per pay period	144 hours (6 shifts)	
	10+ years = 6 Hours 27 minutes per pay period	168 hours (7 shifts)	
SICK LEAVE 480 hours accrual max	4 hours per pay period	N/A (Not paid at termination)	- May only be used for illness, or mental health, medical and preventive appointments for employee or qualifying family member, as defined by FMLA. - May not be used to care for a newborn child or the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care without certification from the treating physician of the child having a serious medical condition.
SICK LEAVE (EMS Paramedics on 48-hour Shifts) 672 hours accrual max	6 hours per pay period	N/A (Not paid at termination)	- May be required to provide documentation. - Not a substitute for vacation. - Part-time employees earn 1.5 hours per pay period with the same max accrual as full-time employee (Effective 10/1/16).
FLOATING HOLIDAY*	2 (8-hour) days per fiscal year (Effective October 1, 2017) Does not roll over	N/A (Not paid at termination)	- Only available to full-time employees. - Available to new hires as of start date. - Must be used by end of fiscal year. - EMS Paramedics will receive up to 12 hours per day based on regular shift assignment.
HOLIDAY*	- Part-time employees receive 4 hours - Full-time employees receive 8 hours	N/A (Not paid at termination)	- Dates are established by Commissioners Court and are subject to change annually. - Employee must work or be on approved paid leave the day before and after the holiday. - EMS Paramedics will receive up to 12 hours per day based on regular shift assignment. - Holiday hours may not be applied before earned on the actual holiday date. - For information on application of holidays during FMLA leave, contact HR.

***Refer to Public Safety Adjustment policy details within this table.**

Leave Chart

Use of leave accruals must be approved by the Elected Official or Department Head

**Employees are encouraged to take leave throughout the year,
as business needs can change and leave approval is not guaranteed.*

Type	Rate of Accrual	Max Accrual	Policy
BANKED HOLIDAY LEAVE*	Up to eight (8) hours per occurrence, determined by number of hours worked on the holiday.	200 hours (<u>Not paid at termination</u>)	- Holiday hours may be banked when an employee works on the actual holiday and will match the hours worked, up to a maximum of eight (8) hours. Will not be paid upon termination if earned after 10/1/14. - Banked Holiday accruals earned before 10/1/14 will no longer be paid out upon termination after 10/1/24.
BEREAVEMENT LEAVE*	2 (8-hour) days per fiscal year; does not roll over	N/A (Not paid at termination)	- May be granted to full-time employees following the death of a friend or family member at the discretion of your department's leadership. - Documentation may be required. - EMS Paramedics will receive up to 12 hours per day based on regular shift assignment. - Up to two (2) additional days may be approved by HR for the death of an immediate family member (spouse, child, sibling, parent, legal guardian, spouse's parent, child's spouse, or other individual for whom the employee stands "in loco parentis.") Contact HR for further information. - The additional bereavement leave may be requested via online form submission and upload of required documentation.
PUBLIC SAFETY ADJUSTMENT	4 hours per paid holiday, floating holiday, and bereavement day allotted; does not roll over	N/A (Not paid at termination)	- Includes positions in Law Enforcement, Corrections and Emergency Services with some exceptions. - Max of 4 hours per shift and must be used with 8 hours of holiday, floating holiday, or bereavement to cover shift as scheduled. - Contact Human Resources regarding application of Public Safety Adjustment accruals within FMLA.
BAD WEATHER	As determined by order of the County Judge	N/A	- Employee must be at work or scheduled and ready for work on the day of office closure. - Employees on approved leave of any type are not eligible. - If office closure continues beyond five (5) consecutive days, employees must use vacation pay, compensatory time, personal holiday or unpaid leave unless otherwise determined by Commissioners Court.
CIVIL LEAVE	Includes jury duty, voting, work related court summons, USERRA (Uniformed Services Employment & Re-employment Rights Act)	N/A	- Employee must show jury duty summons to their supervisor and must return to work if time permits. - County employees will be paid if they are required to miss their regularly scheduled work shift, in addition to the jury pay from the court. <u>Civil Leave may be approved when an employee is summoned to testify for a case that is work-related only related to their Williamson County employment.</u> <u>Employees summoned for jury duty or work-related court testimony must return to work if time permits.</u> - Time off to vote may be approved due to unusual circumstances, please refer to State of Texas Regulations. - Paid military leave will be granted for eligible military service in accordance with Government Code Section 437.202 and as defined in the Military Leave Policy section within this manual. - Contact HR for further information related to USERRA leave and benefit continuation.

*Refer to Public Safety Adjustment policy details within this table.

Leave Chart

Use of leave accruals must be approved by the Elected Official or Department Head

**Employees are encouraged to take leave throughout the year,
as business needs can change and leave approval is not guaranteed.*

Type	Rate of Accrual	Max Accrual	Policy
COMPENSATORY LEAVE	Refer to Overtime Policies for accrual.	240 hours	Must be used before vacation time.
ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL LEAVE	As determined by order of the County Judge	N/A	- Essential Personnel Leave is granted when exempt employees must work outside their regular schedule during an office closure that has been declared by the County Judge. - FEMA reimbursement may be possible. - Essential Personnel leave must be used before the end of the current fiscal year.
PAID QUARANTINE LEAVE	Used by eligible employees who are ordered by their supervisor or the Local Health Authority to quarantine or isolate due to a possible or known exposure to a communicable disease while on duty.	N/A	- As defined by Texas Government Code 180.009, eligible County employees include peace officers, corrections officers, paramedics, and emergency medical technicians employed by, appointed by, or elected for a political subdivision. - Covers all employee benefits, including compensation for all regularly-scheduled shift hours, leave accruals, retirement benefits, and health plan benefits for the duration of the leave. - Quarantine reimbursement requests may also be submitted for reasonable related costs. - Contact HR for more information.
WORKERS COMPENSATION LEAVE	Used by employees who must miss work due to an on-the-job injury. Contact Risk Management for more information	N/A	- Any on-the-job injury must be reported immediately. Failure to report within 30 days of the injury may result in a denial of benefits including leave (Texas labor code Sec.409.001). - Workers' Compensation is administered by Risk Management. In cases requiring FMLA, leave time will be administered in the County timekeeping system by Human Resources. - Medical expense coverage is dependent upon compliance with the contracted workers' compensation network of providers and facilities. A signed network acknowledgement is required at time of hire. - FMLA can run concurrently with lost time under workers' compensation and may provide for medical insurance continuation if you are receiving workers' compensation income benefits. Contact Risk Management for further details related to Workers' Compensation.

Wilco PTO leave time is applied in the following order:

1) Compensatory time 2) Vacation leave

All leave accruals are based on time actually worked by the employee. Leave accrues at the end of the pay period and will be adjusted or removed if the employee has any unpaid leave, other than workers compensation, in the pay week.

Military Leave

Paid Military Leave	- In accordance with <u>Government Code Section 437.202</u>, Paid Military Leave will be granted to employees under the following parameters: - The first 15 business days (per fiscal year) of Military Leave will be paid without the requirement of leave usage by the employee. Beyond the first 15 business days the employee may choose to use available leave accruals (excluding sick accruals) or be placed on leave without pay (LWOP). - Up to seven additional paid military leave days may be applied in accordance with Government Code Section 437.202, as required relating to Emergency Orders issued by the Governor.		
Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)	Definition	The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) provides employment protections for service members, subject to rules and exceptions as defined by the U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS).	
	Eligibility	USERRA applies to employees who perform duty, voluntarily or involuntarily, in the "uniformed services," which include the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Public Health Service commissioned corps, as well as the reserve components of each of these services. Federal training or service in the Army National Guard and Air National Guard also qualify for rights under USERRA.	
	Provisions	USERRA prohibits employment discrimination against a person because of past military service, current military obligations, or intent to serve. USERRA provides rights related to reemployment upon conclusion of military service, and medical benefit coverage continuation during, or reinstatement after, leave for military service. <u>Military Leave under USERRA does not constitute a break in service.</u>	
Employee Responsibilities	<u>Notification</u>	<u>Notify your supervisor and HR of need for military leave</u>	
	Activation	<u>Paid Military Leave (15 business days)</u>	<u>Emergency Orders Issued by Governor (Up to seven additional days)</u>
		<u>Submit online Paid Military Leave Activation form.</u>	<u>Submit online Paid Military Leave Activation form, as needed, for emergency orders up to seven days per fiscal year.</u> <u>If issued emergency orders two or more times, subsequent forms may be submitted until the maximum of seven (7) days of paid leave have been granted.</u> <u>Governor's letter regarding emergency orders must be submitted.</u>
		Notify your supervisor and HR of need for military leave Submit online Paid Military Leave Activation form, including will include: Dates of military service Electronic upload available for supporting documentation Document upload field available for supporting documentation Contact information Elect usage of vacation accruals or Military LWOP after paid military leave hours are exhausted. Elect whether to retain benefit coverage during leave (benefit premiums will apply).	
		<u>Paid Military Leave Activation forms should be submitted in advance of leave need. Paid military leave accruals will be loaded in the timekeeping system within the active pay period at time of request. Application of paid military leave accruals to prior pay periods requires review and approval by Human Resources.</u>	

	During Leave	• Provide notification of any change in duration to HR.
	Return To Work	• Notify your supervisor and HR of your intent to return to work within the allowable timeframe following end of military orders. • Provide your discharge documents to HR. ○ Return-to-work scheduling will not be impeded by any delay in government issuance of discharge paperwork. • Contact Benefits department to reinstate your benefit coverage if not maintained during leave. • Contact TCDRS to restore your service time credit and the opportunity to contribute missed deposits.
Resources	• Wilco HR Military Leave site page • Paid Military Leave Activation form • Department of Labor USERRA website • USERRA Rights Poster • Contact HR for further information	

Family Medical Leave Chart

As required by law, Williamson County will permit eligible employees to take family or medical leave ("FMLA leave"), in accordance with the terms of this policy. If this policy conflicts with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), eligible employees will be afforded the rights required by law.

Eligibility

- Worked for the County for at least 12 months.
- Worked a minimum of 1250 hours in the last 12 months.

Basic FMLA

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles eligible employees to take job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons with continuation of group health insurance coverage under the same terms and conditions as if the employee had not taken leave.

The FMLA only requires that employers provide unpaid leave, however employees' accrued paid leave will be applied throughout the duration of their leave until accruals are exhausted, in accordance with this policy (see section on concurrent application of available leave accruals, below). Either continuous or intermittent FMLA leave may be granted to meet the needs of the employee, as medically certified by the healthcare provider. Employees are allotted a period of 15 calendar days for completion of certification forms by the healthcare provider. Therefore, the certification may be received by Human Resources after an employee is already taking leave for an unscheduled medical necessity. Work shall not be performed during continuous FMLA leave. All time worked by non-exempt staff during intermittent leave shall be reported in the County timekeeping system. All unworked time during intermittent leave, for either exempt or non-exempt employees, shall be reported via online form and FMLA-coded leave entries will be administered by HR. FMLA fraud or abuse will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Entitlement

Qualifying Reasons/Policy

- 12 weeks job-protected leave per rolling calendar year; if eligibility and qualifying reasons are met, including relationship rules.
- 12 weeks of FMLA leave accrual tracking will be recorded as follows:
 - Eligible Part-Time employees: 240 hours
 - Eligible Full-Time employees: 480 hours
 - Eligible EMS Paramedics: 504/672 hours, based on work schedule

Specified family and medical reasons:

- Employee's own serious health condition, defined as an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider. An FMLA serious health condition generally involves a period of incapacity.
- To care for employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition.
 - Employees requesting leave to care for an immediate family member with a serious health condition may be required to submit proof of the familial relationship, such as a birth certificate or marriage license.
 - An affidavit will be required for cases in which:
 - An employee stands "in loco parentis," acting in the role of a parent for a child under the age of 18, or 18 years-old or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability; or
 - An employee serves as Attorney-in-Fact for an otherwise non-covered family member who is incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.
- The birth of a child.
- To care for a newborn child within one year from birth. *
- The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care within one year of placement. *

*Employees are not eligible to utilize sick leave without certification of the child having a serious medical condition. See Baby Bonding policy for additional details.

Concurrent application of available leave accruals:

- Eligible employees with accrued leave will have the leave applied in the following order when the leave is related to a serious medical condition: sick, compensatory time, PTO, essential pay, banked holiday, floating holiday.
- Eligible employees with accrued leave will have the leave applied in the following order when the leave is not related to a serious medical condition: compensatory time, PTO, essential pay, banked holiday, floating holiday.
- Holiday leave will not bank, it will be utilized in the week earned.
- In the event that all available time-off accruals become exhausted during FMLA leave, the employee will enter an unpaid leave status. Contact HR regarding possible Sick Leave Pool eligibility, benefit premium deduction repayment schedule, and any other leave questions.

Family and Medical Leave Chart

As required by law, Williamson County will permit eligible employees to take family or medical leave ("FMLA Leave"), in accordance with the terms of this policy. If this policy conflicts with the Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA"), eligible employees will be afforded the rights required by law.

Military Family Leave – Qualifying Exigency Leave

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of FMLA Leave (with or without pay) for a "qualifying exigency" arising out of the deployment of the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent ("Military Member") who is a member of the Armed Forces (including the National Guard and Reserves) and who is on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty.

Williamson County requires eligible employees to use accrued paid leave concurrently with Qualifying Exigency Leave and it will be applied in the following order: compensatory time, PTO, essential pay, banked holiday, floating holiday.

Military Member:

1. Employee's Spouse:
 - Includes husband or wife as defined or recognized in the state where the individual was married, including common law marriage or same-sex marriage.
2. Employee's Son or Daughter:
 - Includes biological, adoptive, step or foster child, a legal ward, or a child for whom you stood in loco parentis, and who is of any age.
3. Employee's Parent:
 - Includes biological, adoptive, step or foster parent or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to you when you were a child.
 - Excludes parents "in law."

Covered Active Duty:

1. Regular Armed Forces:
 - Duty during deployment of the military member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country.
2. Reserve Components of Armed Forces (National Guard and Reserves):
 - Duty during deployment of the military member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country under a call or order to active duty in support of a contingency operation.
3. "Foreign Country" means an area outside of the United States, the District of Columbia, or any Territory or possession of the United States. It also includes deployment to international waters.

Qualifying Exigency Categories:

1. Short-notice deployment (limited to 7 days of leave),
2. Military events and related activities,
3. Childcare and related activities,
4. Financial and legal arrangements,
5. Counseling,
6. Rest and recuperation (limited to 15 days of leave),
7. Post-deployment activities,
8. Care for a military member's parent,
9. Additional activities that the County agrees are qualifying exigencies.

If you have any questions regarding whether your situation is a qualifying exigency under the FMLA, please contact Human Resources.

Certification Requirements:

The County may require certification providing the appropriate facts related to the qualifying exigency sought, including, but not limited to:

- Military member's active-duty orders;
- Rest and Recuperation orders;
- Third-party contact information; and/or
- Other documentation confirming the dates of the military member's leave or support for the qualifying exigency sought.

The County may also contact the Department of Defense to verify a military member's active-duty status.

Family and Medical Leave Chart

As required by law, Williamson County will permit eligible employees to take family or medical leave ("FMLA leave"), in accordance with the terms of this policy. If this policy conflicts with the Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA"), eligible employees will be afforded the rights required by law.

Military Family Leave – Military Caregiver Leave

An eligible employee, who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member or covered veteran, can take up to 26 workweeks of FMLA Leave (with or without pay) to care for the covered service member's or covered veteran's serious injury or illness ("Military Caregiver Leave").

Williamson County requires eligible employees to use accrued paid leave concurrently with Military Caregiver Leave and have it applied in the following order: sick leave, compensatory time, PTO, essential pay, banked holiday, floating holiday.

Eligible spouses who both work for the County must split the 26 workweeks for a shared service member or veteran. If an eligible employee takes both Military Caregiver Leave and any other FMLA Leave, the total combined leave may not exceed 26 workweeks during a single 12-month period.

Covered Service Member:

1. A "covered service member" is a current member of the Armed Forces (including the National Guard or Reserves) who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, or is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness.
2. A "serious injury or illness" means an injury or illness that was incurred by the member in the line of duty on covered active duty in the Armed Forces (or existed before the beginning of the member's covered active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on covered active duty in the Armed Forces) and that may render the member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank, or rating.

Covered Veteran:

- A "covered veteran" is a veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness and who was a member of the Armed Forces (including the National Guard or Reserves) who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable and was discharged within the five-year period before the eligible employee takes Military Caregiver Leave.
- A "serious injury or illness" means an injury or illness that was incurred by the veteran in the line of duty or that existed before the veteran's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty and that is either:
 - (1) a continuation of a serious injury or illness that rendered the service member unable to perform the member's military duties; or
 - (2) a physical or mental condition that qualifies the veteran for certain benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs; or
 - (3) a physical or mental condition that substantially impairs the veteran's ability to work.

Relationship to service member/veteran:

1. Spouse, Son, Daughter, Parent – see Qualified Exigency Leave Chart
2. Next of Kin:
 - Nearest blood relative, other than current spouse, parent, son, or daughter in following order of priority:
 - Blood relative designated in writing by service member/veteran as NOK for FMLA purposes;
 - Blood relative who has been granted legal custody of service member/veteran;
 - Brothers and sisters;
 - Grandparents;
 - Aunts and uncles;
 - First cousins.

Certification Requirements:

Certification for the serious injury or illness of the covered service member or covered veteran may be required. The employee must respond to such request within 15 days or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave. Such certification must be supported and completed by (1) an authorized health care provider, or (2) for service members, by submitting a copy of an Invitational Travel Order (ITO) or Invitational Travel Authorization (ITA), or (3) for veterans, by submitting a copy of a Veterans Affairs Service-Related Disability Rating (VASRD). In addition to the certification documents, the employee may be required to provide confirmation of family relationship and documentation of discharge date and status.

Family and Medical Leave Chart

Information and Resources

Please contact Human Resources for additional information on the following:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restoration of Employment• Employee Benefits• Group Health Benefits | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certification of Health• Relationship to PTO• Notification• Status Reports | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leave Without Pay (LWOP)• Intermittent Leave• Failure to Return from FMLA Leave• Baby Bonding FMLA Leave |
|---|---|---|

[Informational resource links inserted here in published version.]

Administrative Leave

Occurrences of administrative (admin) leave with or without pay are rare, but may be appropriate when the Elected Official or Department Head ~~believes-determines~~ immediate action is necessary to protect an employee, the Department, the public, and/or additional time is needed to investigate an employee's performance or behavior. Admin leave, with or without pay, temporarily suspends employees job duties.

Type	Department	Policy
Administrative Leave (with pay)	Non-Elected & Elected Offices	- May not be used during or to extend FMLA. - Paid admin leave lasting more than ten days will require approval of the County Judge for non-elected offices only. - If the County Judge denies a request to grant admin leave with pay in excess of ten days, the non-elected office may appeal such denial to Commissioners Court. - The employee will be paid base wages, this will not count as hours worked for overtime purposes. - Medical benefits will continue at active employee rates. - The employee must contact his/her supervisor weekly and remain available to return to duty with 12 hours' notice. If the employee returns to work, he/she shall receive full credit for any County longevity and supplemental pay, unless determined otherwise.
Administrative Leave (without pay)	Non-Elected & Elected Offices	- Employees may only be placed on admin leave without pay for serious infractions of workplace conduct policies. - Full days/full week periods are administered for exempt employees on admin leave without pay (partial days will not be granted). - Employees may not substitute accrued paid leave during unpaid admin leave. - Employees must coordinate payment of medical and dental benefits with the HR Department. - Employees may be required to periodically contact their supervisor.
Administrative Leave (with or without pay)	Non-Elected Offices	- Department heads and appointed positions who are direct reports to Commissioners Court, <u>or their approved designee</u>, may place an employee on admin leave with or without pay with HR consultation. - Subject to the oversight of Commissioners Court. - HR will provide proper notices/estimated time duration to the employee that is placed on admin leave with or without pay.
Administrative Leave (with or without pay)	Elected Offices County Auditor's Office Juvenile Services	- Must provide the Chief People Officer with written notice that sets forth: the name of the employee being placed on admin leave, whether admin leave is with pay or without pay, and the estimated duration of the leave. - If the employee is reinstated or terminated the Elected Official/Appointed Official must provide the Chief People Officer with the time and date of the employee's reinstatement/termination.
Reinstatement	Non-Elected & Elected Offices	The County does not guarantee the reinstatement of an employee on admin leave, unless reinstatement is required by some other protected leave.
Other Information	Non-Elected & Elected Offices	- Requests for admin leave with pay for any grant-funded position must be preapproved by HR and Audit prior to leave usage. - Paid leave will not be accrued for any pay week in which an employee is on admin leave without pay. - County longevity or supplemental pay may not be paid while employee is on any admin leave for one or more pay periods. - Supplemental pay is defined in the budget order. - If paid or unpaid admin leave exceeds 13 weeks, the employee will no longer be eligible for county benefits under the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

Elected Officials are strongly encouraged to comply with all administrative leave policies that are applicable to employees in non-elected offices. As a part of the Commissioners Court budgetary responsibilities and fiduciary oversight of public funds, the Commissioners Court will consider the amount of time that an Elected Official has granted in administrative leave during the prior fiscal year. Elected Officials will continue to maintain the right to terminate employees under their sphere of authority or provide harsher penalties, within applicable legal rules, than those that are set out and encouraged herein. Elected Officials are strongly encouraged to consult with the Chief People Officer prior to placing employees on administrative leave and prior to making reinstatement and termination of employment decisions.

Sick Leave Pool

Membership	Policy
BENEFIT SUMMARY	- Per Texas Local Government Code Sec.157.075: A participating enrolled employee is eligible to use time contributed to the County sick leave pool if: because of a catastrophic injury or illness and the employee has exhausted all the accrued paid leave and compensatory time to which the employee is otherwise entitled. - Provides sick leave to an eligible employee once the employee has exhausted all accrued/ banked paid leave. - The maximum amount of Sick Leave Pool (SLP) time that may be granted per benefit year will not exceed 1/3 of the total amount in the SLP, or 240 hours, whichever is less, at the time of the request for SLP.
ENROLLMENT	- One continuous year of full-time employment must be completed as of first day of open enrollment. - A minimum of 8 Hours and no more than 40 hours must be contributed. - Must enroll each year during benefits open enrollment. - Contributed sick leave hours will be deducted on the first day of the pay period which includes January 1st. - Sick leave balance must meet or exceed employee's selected contribution amount.
QUALIFICATION	- An employee with an illness or injury that makes them unable to perform their job while on approved FMLA for their own catastrophic injury or illness. - SLP time will not be granted to an employee when they are receiving workers' compensation income benefits under the Texas Workers Compensation Act. - SLP time will not be granted beyond the end date of approved FMLA leave (12 week max). - There is no guarantee that an employee will receive or be eligible to be reimbursed for any time that they contribute. - All withdrawal requests must go through an approval process. - Employees cannot receive time from the SLP if they are placed on temporary suspension, administrative leave, authorized non-medical leave without pay or are otherwise terminated.
PROCEDURE	- Employees must apply for permission to receive SLP benefits. (Contact the Human Resources Department for more information) - Upon receipt of the completed SLP benefit request, Human Resources will review the request and FMLA documentation to determine whether the request is approved.
UTILIZATION	- The number of hours granted through the SLP will be based on the FMLA documentation or report of catastrophic illness or injury. - SLP time may only be used for approved workdays and for holidays. - SLP time may not be used to supplement reduced work schedule during Light Duty Assignments outside of FMLA. - SLP benefits end when the employee returns to work, exhausts the SLP benefit, exhausts eligible FMLA leave time, upon separation, suspension, or administrative leave.
CONTRIBUTIONS	- Employee contributions of sick leave hours are irrevocable. - Sick leave hours that are contributed become the property of the SLP and cannot be returned. - Time contributed to the SLP cannot be designated to a particular employee. - If, at any time, the SLP balance falls below two times the number of members, each member will be required to contribute eight additional hours to maintain membership. - An employee separating from employment may contribute up to 80 hours of sick leave to the SLP. - All unused time that was granted to an employee from the SLP shall be returned to the pool.
DISCLAIMER	- The County may discontinue and/or terminate the SLP program without cause, legal repercussions, or ramifications with 120 day written notice to all participating employees. - If any provision of this SLP is determined to be invalid or unenforceable, it is the intention of the County that the provision will be reformed to the best extent possible in its sole discretion. - The guidelines, terms, and conditions of this SLP program may be amended at any time. The Commissioners Court must approve any recommended amendment.

Benefits

Benefits

Williamson County offers an excellent comprehensive benefits package to all full-time employees. Benefits are administered by the Benefits Administration team, which is a division of the Human Resources Department. Benefit plans are reviewed annually by the Benefits Committee, which has the responsibility to make final recommendations to the Commissioners Court for approval. Additional benefit information is provided in the chart below. Click to see the [Benefits Guide](#) or go to the [Benefits Portal](#) for more details.

Benefits		
- Full-time employees are eligible for medical, vision, dental, group term life, voluntary term life, FSA and voluntary supplemental benefits coverage on the first of the month following the completion of 30 days of employment. - The new-hire benefit enrollment period is 10 calendar days starting from the date of hire. - Current employees can make changes to benefits only during open enrollment or due to a qualified life event. - If an employee is on leave under USERRA, it is the employee's responsibility to cancel benefits if they are no longer needed.		
Type	Policy	Premium Payment
Medical, Vision, Dental	Full-time employees must enroll during new-hire enrollment period, open-enrollment period, or due to a qualified life event.	- Employees are responsible for the employee portion of all benefit premiums. If an employee is on leave without pay (LWOP), for any reason, unpaid premiums must be paid through payroll deductions upon return to work. - Employees who do not return to work, after LWOP, are responsible for unpaid premiums. - Failure to pay premiums will result in termination of benefits. Benefits termination will be determined based on the last payroll deduction. - Upon retirement, the retiree benefit premiums must be paid prior to the month of coverage.
Voluntary Term Life	Full-time employees may purchase additional voluntary life insurance for themselves and their dependents during the above-mentioned enrollment periods. If not selected during initial new-hire enrollment, or if there is a gap in coverage, Evidence of Insurability will be required by the insurance carrier at enrollment, and coverage will be dependent upon carrier approval.	
Short Term Long Term Disability (STD/LTD)	Full-time employees may select STD/LTD during the above-mentioned enrollment periods. If not selected during initial new-hire enrollment, or if there is a gap in coverage, Evidence of Insurability will be required by the insurance carrier at enrollment, and coverage will be dependent upon carrier approval.	
Flex Spending Account (FSA) Health & Dependent Care	Full-time employees may elect FSA during the above-mentioned enrollment periods. Maximums may apply.	- If an employee is on leave without pay, for any reason, the employee is responsible for the elected benefit deduction to be paid within the same elected tax plan year as the elected benefit. - Upon return from leave, benefit deductions will be recalculated based upon the number of the remaining pay periods within the tax year. - If contributions are unpaid, benefits may be terminated back to the last date of the pay period in which premiums are paid.
Health Spending Account (HSA)	- May only be elected in conjunction with enrollment in the High Deductible Health Plan. - Full-time employees may elect HSA during the above-mentioned enrollment periods. - Maximums may apply.	Contributions may be made by both the County and the employee. See the benefit guide for details.
Group Term Life	- Full-time employees receive group life insurance for themselves and covered spouse/children at no cost. - Dependents must be added by employee at time of enrollment.	Premiums paid by employer regardless of active employee status.
Voluntary Supplemental Benefits	- Full-time employees may purchase these additional offerings during the above-mentioned enrollment periods. - Evidence of Insurability may be required. Coverage is dependent upon carrier approval.	- If an employee is on leave without pay, premiums must be paid directly to vendors to avoid cancellation. - Once the employee returns to work, premiums will be deducted from paycheck as previously scheduled
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	EAP is provided to all full-time and part-time employees and offers 24/7/365 access to short-term counseling, WorkLife services, legal and financial consultations, ID theft and fraud resolution, wellness tools, and much more.	- EAP is provided at no cost to all full-time and part-time employees regardless of enrollment status in medical benefits. - EAP extends to household members. - The benefit waiting period does not apply to EAP, which is available on start date.

Retirement	Williamson County has a very generous retirement plan which all full-time and part-time employees are required to contribute to every pay period.	- See additional information on TCDRS in the Employment section. - Visit TCDRS at www.tcdrs.org
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Compensation

Compensation Philosophy

Williamson County strives to be an employer of choice and demonstrates the honor and value we place on working in public service. Accordingly, the County's total compensation policy is to be competitive within the relevant, comparable labor markets by:

- Basing our B pay chart positions' minimum salaries on the market median
- Basing our L and C pay chart minimum salaries on the market median
- Recognizing outstanding performance and organizational contributions through the use of the merit pay policy
- Maintaining the public trust in the County's financial stewardship
- Ensuring accountability for compliance with all Federal, State, and local laws, as well as County policies

Salary Study

It is the intention of the Commissioners Court that a comprehensive salary study be conducted for every position classification at least once every three fiscal years. Some positions may be reviewed externally or more often based on factors including high turnover, recruitment difficulty or market demand.

**Changes will not be made outside of the salary study process unless the position fits the reclassification/conversion criteria or there is a change in senior leadership.*

Participant	Role and Responsibility	Policy/Process
Commissioners Court	• The Commissioners Court shall set the amount of compensation, office and travel expenses, and all other allowances for County and precinct offices and employees who are paid wholly from the County funds.	• Sec. 152.011, Texas Local Government Code
Human Resources	• Maintains all official job descriptions. • Works closely with departments/offices to clearly understand structure & how each position fits within the organization. • Identifies positions to be reviewed during the current salary study. • Gathers & analyzes market data. • Provides recommendations to the Commissioners Court.	• The position classifications that have been identified for the study will be presented to Commissioners Court. • An initial presentation & other meetings, as necessary, will occur between HR & participating departments/offices throughout the salary study. • Job descriptions & job analysis tools will be reviewed and/or updated prior to data collection. Job Analysis Tools will only be required for conversions/reclasses. Minor updates may be made to existing job descriptions. • Requests will be sent to the identified market entities (see Market below). • Data received will be analyzed & compiled. • Pre-recommendation meetings will occur between HR & department/offices. • Recommendations will be presented to Commissioners Court. • Departments/offices that wish to address Commissioners Court would place an item on the agenda through the normal process. • Job descriptions will be finalized. • All changes will be effective in the new fiscal year following Commissioners Court approval.
Departments / Offices	• Each department/office will select a designated point of contact. • Works closely with HR to ensure that the organization structure and positions are fully understood.	• Attends meetings throughout the process. • Completes job analysis tools as needed.
Market (Based on population, entity structure and/or geographic location)	• Provides substantiated market data for the identified positions.	<u>Counties used for the study will be:</u> Bell, Brazoria, Collin, Denton, Fort Bend, Hays, Montgomery & Travis. <u>Cities used for the study will be:</u> Cedar Park, Georgetown, and Round Rock.

		For L Chart only: <u>Cities used will be:</u> Cedar Park, Georgetown, Hutto, Leander, and Round Rock. For C Chart only: Counties used will be: Burnet, Hays, and Travis. *This list may be amended as needed based on unique attributes of some position classifications
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Salary Study Findings

Human Resources is responsible for conducting the salary study and making recommendations to Commissioners Court based on the findings. Compensation recommendations follow court approved comparables and criteria but may be adjusted for approval to reflect current market and economic conditions. Recommendations require Commissioners Court approval for implementation.

Recommendation	Policy/Process
Title Change	• A title change may be recommended when it is determined that a new title would better reflect the required job duties, responsibilities and/or market standards. • Some job titles are unique and therefore can only exist in the departments/offices that manage the services of those position types (example: the position title "Corrections Deputy" can only exist within the Sheriff's Office).
Pay Grade Increase	• Pay grade increases may be recommended when the salary study data indicates that the current minimum salary is below market median. • Employees moving up in pay grade will be adjusted to the minimum of the new grade, if current salary is a lesser amount.
Pay Grade Decrease	• Pay grade decreases may be recommended when the salary study data indicates that the current minimum salary is above market median. • An employee with a current salary that is above the new pay grade maximum will not receive a reduction in pay, however, merit eligible positions will be limited to a lump-sum merit. • When the position is vacated, the new offer cannot exceed the pay grade maximum and other hiring policies apply.
FLSA Exemption Status	• Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) exemption status will be updated when it is determined that the position is currently misclassified, as required by law. • The update will occur at the beginning of the next pay period following the determination for any position that must be changed from exempt to non-exempt and as determined most appropriate for a change from non-exempt to exempt. • Compensatory time will be paid at the time of the update for positions changing status from non-exempt to exempt.

Compensation

Pay Frequency and Work Week

- Payday is typically every other Friday, ~~or the last business day prior to any holiday that falls on a Friday. Reference the published payroll calendar for changes when a payday falls on a County holiday.~~
- A pay period consists of two weeks' pay ending on the Thursday of the week preceding pay day.
- The official work week for County departments is 12:00 a.m. Friday to 11:59 p.m. Thursday unless otherwise notified.
- The official work week for the 911 Emergency Communications Department is 6:00am Friday to 5:59am the following Friday.
- The payroll calendar is located on the Auditor's Portal.

Payroll Corrections

Underpayment: Any underpayment in compensation for 16 hours of regular pay or less, and all overtime or supplemental pay will be processed on the following pay cycle.

Overpayment: No employee is entitled to retain any pay in excess of the amount he or she has earned according to the agreed-upon rate of pay. If an employee has been paid in excess of what he or she has earned, the employee will need to return the overpayment to the County as soon as possible. Any overpayment will be regarded as an advance of future wages and absent repayment, will be offset in whole or in part from the next available paycheck(s) until the overpaid amount has been fully repaid. Each employee will be expected to sign a wage authorization agreement to acknowledge the amount and provide for the offset.

Deductions: Every effort is made to apply deductions accurately. If you have any questions about insurance/benefits deductions, contact the HR Benefits Department. If you have questions about any other deductions from your pay, please contact the Audit/Payroll Department immediately.

Discrepancies: If your pay does not accurately reflect all hours worked, you should report your concerns to Human Resources. Every report will be fully investigated and corrective action will be taken as appropriate based on findings. In addition, the County will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report alleged violations of this policy.

Pay Schedules (Pay Charts)

Williamson County has multiple pay schedules that cover all classified positions. These pay schedules are approved by the Commissioners Court. For more information on current pay schedules refer to the internal Human Resources website.

Timeline for Compensation Changes

Salary study changes, approved COLA's, annual tenured based LE and C step increases, and any other compensation changes approved during the annual budget processes are effective the first full pay period in October each fiscal year.

~~If merit is allocated through HR-driven bulk upload, reviews should be completed and merit keyed on the HR-provided spreadsheet. Merit can also be allocated through Oracle and entered by the department throughout the year after the bulk upload until early August. If merit funding is approved by Commissioners Court as part of the annual budget, prior to allocating those funds to an employee, a~~

performance evaluation should be conducted by department leadership. The timelines and processes for awarding merit to employees during the first pay period of the fiscal year will be communicated by Human Resources. Merits can also be allocated through the County ERP system throughout the year, excluding blackout periods that occur during the budget process.

Compensation

Court Reporters

Employment Status

Court Reporters are non-exempt employees of the County who perform primary duties for the Court and also may have secondary independent contractor jobs preparing transcripts. In this second statutory role, who ordered the transcript and when the transcript is prepared dictates whether the Court Reporter is paid wages for time worked or paid by the page for producing the transcripts.

Work Hours

When Court Reporters are working for the Court, recording and reading back court proceedings, attending court hearings, or preparing transcripts for the Court at work or on special assignment by the Court, these are hours worked that must be recorded. An example of “on assignment by the Court” includes instances where the Court Reporter is required to perform duties at the direction of the Court in another location, or when the Court instructs the Court Reporter to work away from the Court House to complete a transcript for the Court.

Court Reporters are required to accurately record actual time worked for the Court, including time when they are required to be at the Court or at any other designated place to perform work. Any hours worked beyond forty hours in the work week shall be compensated with compensatory leave, pursuant to the County’s policy. Vacation leave, sick leave, compensatory leave or holiday leave must be used for any scheduled work time missed during the pay period.

Transcripts Prepared For or Paid By the Court/State/or Local Government

Transcripts (1) prepared for the Court, any judge, another court, County Attorney, District Attorney, Attorney General, State, State Agency, Public Defender, or any other public entity or person, or (2) paid for by the County for a public entity or private attorney, are subject to the following rules:

- **Transcripts Prepared During Working Hours**
Transcripts prepared for the public entities and persons listed above as a part of the Court Reporter’s daily or assigned duties during work hours shall be paid their salary wages for all hours worked, but no additional pay per page of transcripts prepared at work.
- **Transcripts Prepared Outside of Hours Worked**
Transcripts prepared for the public entities and persons listed above, by the Court Reporter on his or her own time and outside of any other work for the Court (i.e. attending, recording and reading back court proceedings), shall be paid the maximum established per page rate for transcripts established by the Court, or State, as may be applicable, for such transcripts prepared by the Court Reporter. Time spent preparing transcripts for these parties outside of work, on the Court Reporter’s own time, is not considered time worked and no salary wages or overtime will be paid in relation to this time.
- **Private Paid Transcripts**
Private paid transcripts are ordered by third parties such as attorneys, media, etc. Preparation of transcripts, including any portion thereof, for private paid clients cannot be conducted during the normal work hours or utilizing County equipment, office space or supplies. This is an independent contractor relationship between the Court Reporter and the third-party client, and the production of the transcript must be performed outside of hours the Court Reporter performs work for the Court. The fees and collection of payment for these transcripts shall be freely negotiated between the Court Reporter and the third party client, and are not set by the judge who presided over the proceedings.

Compensation

The chart below indicates the policies related to pay increases and decreases due to position changes, vacancies and/or merit. All changes are contingent on budgeted fund availability. Any funds remaining in a department's merit line item will roll over each budget year unless otherwise determined by the Court. Any request outside of these policies will require the approval of Commissioners Court. The effective date for salary and/or position changes should be scheduled to align with the first day of the pay period. Multiple pay changes cannot be processed within the same pay period. Policy guidelines and ERP system limitations may preclude the ability to process multiple pay-type changes within the same pay period. Contact Human Resources regarding exceptions for further review for further details.

Salary/Position Changes

Type	Description/Policy	Pay +	Pay –	Approval Process	Additional Information
Merit	- Merit funding can only be used for performance pay increases. - Merit is awarded based on job performance which is evaluated by the applicable department head or elected official. Therefore, an employee must receive a performance evaluation in order to be eligible for a merit increase. - An employee is eligible for merit after 90 days in their current Position Control Number (PCN). For cases involving unique circumstances, such as protected leave status, position reclasses and/or conversions, department leadership may contact HR for further details.	Max of 7% per employee, per budget year* authorized as a merit percentage amount and added to their annual salary. If an employee reaches the maximum of their grade, a lump sum may be issued.	N/A	Oracle ERP workflow required. - Each processing period will have a cut-off date. - Employee must have completed 90 days of employment by that date. - A line-item transfer form must be submitted in addition to the workflow. - Merit can only be transferred out of the merit line item. - Merit is not transferrable between positions.	- District Court Reporters, Elected Officials, Associate Judges, Director of Juvenile Services, County Auditor, Positions on the LE and C Charts are not eligible for merit increases. - Merit for small departments with 4 or fewer merit-eligible employees who do not roll up to a department with an 8000 account, will be granted merit at 1% higher than the amount approved by the Commissioners Court not to exceed 5%. (i.e. if the Court approves merit at 3%, the small departments will receive 4%) - Verification of evaluation required.
Position Salary Surplus	<u>PCN budget funds in excess of the incumbent employee's annual pay rate.</u> - Cannot be used for merit increases. - Cannot be requested to be moved between positions outside of November 1 through May 1.	Refer to filling a vacancy, promotion and/or reclassification policies.	N/A	Refer to filling a vacancy, promotion, and reclassification policies.	Contact HR for additional requirements.
Filling a Vacancy	When a current employee separates from employment or position. Applies to B Chart only.	A vacant position may be filled with a salary up to 15% above the minimum of the pay grade, See promotion for current employees	N/A	Oracle ERP Workflow Required	The maximum salary for a position cannot exceed the budgeted annual salary even if the full amount may not be used during the budget year due to the position being vacant for part of the year (i.e. budgeted salary = \$30,000, position vacant 6 months = \$15,000 not used, when filled the maximum salary cannot exceed \$30,000 even though \$15,000 is unused).
Retention	An increase in pay that is awarded to an employee, as an incentive to retain them in their current position, when the employee has received a bona-fide job offer from another department or employer or there is a high risk that the employee will be recruited or seek employment for a similar position with another employer	Maximum of 10% above the current salary*.	N/A	Approval by Commissioners Court; public hearing required if additional funding is needed. Change will be effective on the first pay period after Court approval.	Contact HR for further details.

	or department with a higher salary.			• Oracle-ERP workflow required. • Verification required.	
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Compensation

Salary/Position Changes

Type	Description/Policy	Pay +	Pay –	Approval Process	Additional Information
Certification Pay	Certification pay will be paid to eligible Fire Marshal employees, and eligible Telecommunicators who hold a full-time position in the Communications department with the County. Payment for an entire fiscal year beginning on October 1st will be based on the level of certification held as of September 15th of the preceding fiscal year. For new hires, certification pay will be paid based on certification level at the date of hire. Certification pay does not transfer with an individual employee who leaves a Telecommunications position to accept another position.	\$50 per month for Intermediate Certification; \$100 per month for Advanced Certification. \$150 per month for Masters Certification - This pay must be added into the regular rate of pay when calculating overtime. - Certification pay may move with the employee to accommodate promotions/ position changes within the department.	N/A	Oracle ERP Workflow Required	Must submit a TCOLE document to the Human Resources Department. Funding must be available. Subject to budget funds availability.
Career Ladder Advancement	A department with an approved career ladder may advance employees according to the parameters established in the career ladder documentation. Must be approved during the annual budget process, or between November 1 and May 1.	- Based on the steps in the chart or career ladder approved by Commissioners Court. - No additional funding is allocated for career ladders. Surplus salary dollars must exist within the departmental budget. - Maximum 10% above current salary.	Based on the steps (when appropriate)	Submission of request through budget software or during Nov 1 - May 1 timeline, with backup documentation.	Documentation of each position that will advance along with the approved career ladder plan is required at the time of request submission. Contact the HR department for additional rules.
Promotion	- When a current employee is hired into a different position with a higher pay grade. - No additional pay increases in the first 12 months with the exception of merit, <u>COLA</u>, retention, or additional promotion.	Max 15% above minimum of the pay grade, or 10% above current salary, including overtime average, whichever is greater (Cannot exceed maximum of pay grade or budgeted amount for position)	N/A	OracleERP workflow required. - HR will partner with Payroll and provide an overtime rate.	Promotions and Merit cannot be processed during the same pay period.
Demotion	When a current employee is hired into a position with a lower pay grade or is demoted to a lower pay grade. <u>When a current employee is hired or placed into a position with a lower grade.</u>	N/A	Maximum decrease to the minimum of the new pay grade.	Oracle ERP workflow required.	- Written justification required. - Salary may remain the same if within the new pay grade. - Demotions within 90 days in Position Control Number (PCN) will revert to prior pay rate. - Contact Human Resources for further information.
Lateral Moves	When an employee moves to another position with the same grade.	Can utilize money on a vacant position up to 15% over minimum of the grade or employee's current salary, if higher.	Can utilize money on a vacant position up to 15% over minimum of the grade or employee's current salary, if higher.	Oracle ERP workflow required.	Contact HR for additional requirements.

Compensation

Salary/Position Changes

Type	Description/Policy	Pay +	Pay –	Approval Process	Additional Information
Shift Transfer	- Current employee is transferred to a different shift with a higher pay grade. - Viewed as lateral move.	Cannot exceed max of pay grade or budgeted amount on the position.	N/A	Oracle -ERP workflow required.	
Reclassification / <u>Conversion</u>	A change in one or more positions which impacts the organization chart of the department or elected office as a result of one of the following: 1. A position conversion is a significant change (defined as 40% or more) to the job description that includes the addition or deletion of significant duties and/or responsibilities. Will include title, grade, and/or FLSA status change. If the conversion results in a position change that is not consistent with the original intent of the position, it will be reviewed by the Budget Office. 2. A minor reclassification (less than 40%) cannot occur outside of the Salary Study process, with the exception of changes that are due to turnover in a key position (elected/appointed official, department head or director) or a change to FLSA status as determined by HR. 3. Submission of reclassification request through the budget software or HR Sharepoint, as determined by the type of request with back-up documentation. A position can only be reviewed for reclassifications during the annual budget, or between November 1st and May 1.	Civilian positions: Minimum of the pay grade or up to 10% above current salary as determined appropriate during the approval process. L and C chart: Minimum of the pay grade or up to same step of current employee's tenure if slot is filled.	Maximum decrease to the minimum of the new pay grade.	Human Resources will review all reclassification requests and recommended changes will be placed on the Commissioners Court agenda for approval. *May require a public hearing	Support documentation required: Current job description(s), current ORG chart, proposed job description, proposed ORG chart and justification for review (i.e. turnover, added duties, etc.).

- 15% maximum annual (budget year) increase per employee.
 - Includes retention, and merit, ~~re-organization, and reclassification.~~
 - ~~Does not include promotion, career ladder advancement, re-organization, or salary study changes.~~
 - Reclassifications will be reviewed by HR on a case-by-case basis regarding inclusion in the annual increase maximum.
- ~~Multiple pay changes cannot be processed within the same pay period.~~
- Salary changes processed in the HRIS-ERP system may result in a nominal rounding variance.

County Longevity Pay

(Excludes Sheriff's Office Commissioned Deputies – Law Enforcement and Corrections)

County longevity pay is based on an individual employee's length of service with Williamson County. Service time with other entities is not recognized.

- County longevity is paid biweekly and begins with the pay period following the completion of five years of employment.
- Full-time employees will accrue the following per pay period:
 - \$24.00 per pay period after five years of employment
 - \$48.00 per pay period after ten years of employment
 - \$72.00 per pay period after fifteen years of employment
 - \$96.00 per pay period after twenty years of employment
 - \$120.00 per pay period after twenty-five years of employment
- ~~Part-time employees will no longer be eligible for County longevity effective November 18, 2016.~~
- Part-time, temporary, and seasonal employees are not eligible for County longevity.

Statutory Peace Officer Longevity Pay

Exclusive to Sheriff's Office Commissioned Deputies – Law Enforcement and Corrections

Section 152.074, Texas Local Government Code, provides for longevity pay to eligible commissioned deputies of the Williamson County Sheriff's Office ("the Sheriff's Office"). Commissioned deputies of the Sheriff's Office accrue longevity in accordance with Section 152.074(a), Texas Local Government Code, at the rate of \$5 per month for each year of service with the Sheriff's Office (up to a maximum of 25 years). Statutory Peace Officer Longevity Pay only applies to commissioned deputies in both the law enforcement and corrections bureaus of the Sheriff's Office. Calculation of years of service includes all years of service as a commissioned deputy with the Sheriff's Office regardless of any gaps in service.

Statutory Peace Officer Longevity Pay begins following the completion of one year of employment with the Sheriff's Office as a commissioned deputy.

The provisions for Sheriff's Office Longevity Pay are set by state statute and are subject to change by legislative amendment. Should any terms in this [policy](#) section and [Texas Local Government Code](#) Section 152.074 conflict, the provisions of Section 152.074 Texas Local Government Code shall control.

Statutory Peace Officer Longevity Pay is paid bi-weekly. Unless otherwise specified, any provisions in this manual pertaining to County Longevity Pay are not applicable to Statutory Peace Officer Longevity Pay.

Statutory Prosecutor Longevity Pay

Chapter 41, Texas Government Code, provides for longevity pay to eligible assistant district attorneys and assistant county attorneys ("assistant prosecutors"). Prosecutor Longevity Pay is available only to the extent the County receives funding from the state comptroller, as provided by Section 41.255(d), Texas Government Code. See Chapter 41 for the complete terms and conditions for Prosecutor Longevity Pay.

Assistant prosecutors are eligible for Prosecutor Longevity Pay if the assistant prosecutor:

1. is a full-time employee on the last day of the state fiscal quarter;
2. is not on leave without pay on the last day of the state fiscal quarter; and
3. has accrued at least four (4) years of lifetime credit not later than the last day of the month preceding the last month of the state fiscal quarter.

The provisions for Prosecutor Longevity Pay are set by state statute and are subject to change by legislative amendment. Should any terms in this section and Chapter 41 conflict, the provisions of Chapter 41, Texas Government Code, shall control.

Prosecutor Longevity Pay is paid quarterly, subject to receipt of the funds from the state comptroller. Employees receiving Prosecutor Longevity Pay may also be eligible for County Longevity Pay based on its requirements.

Compensation

Tenure Pay Scale Compensation Policies

Positions will be included on the Tenure Pay Scale as determined appropriate by the Human Resources Department and the Elected/Appointed Official. Approval by Commissioners Court is required. All policies below are contingent on available budget or available position budget, depending on the time of year. ~~Years of service are based on continuous service (with no break of more than 90 days as a regular employee in an approved tenure pay scale position in the Sheriff's office, the offices of the County Attorney or District Attorney, or in any Constable's office. Employees transferring between these departments may receive credit for their current step based on available budget and the approval of the hiring department and/or Commissioners.~~

Tenure Salary/Position Changes

- Funding is approved by the Commissioners Court during the annual budget process.

Type	Policy	Pay + Pay –	Approval Process	Additional Documentation
Annual Step/Tenure Progression	Employees in tenure positions move from one step to the next on the first day of the first full pay period in October of each year, subject to funding by the Commissioners Court. Employees with less than six (6) months of service as of the first full pay period in October will advance to the next step after six (6) months of service at Williamson County. Step/tenure progression ends at the top step of each position rank.	See Tenured Pay Chart	<u>ERP workflow required for initial six-month step increase.</u> <u>Annual batch step increases processed by HR.</u>	May be required
Promotion	When a current employee is promoted to a higher-ranking position, the tenured grade step is based on years of service, provided budget availability.	See Tenured Pay Chart	<u>Oracle ERP workflow required</u>	May be required
Demotion	When a current employee is demoted to a lower ranking position, the tenured grade step is based on years of service.	See Tenured Pay Chart	<u>Oracle ERP workflow required</u>	May be required
Transfer from Law Enforcement to Corrections	Law enforcement officers who transfer from the law enforcement division to the corrections division will be placed at the pay increment corresponding to their time of continuous tenured service (with no break of more than 90 days in both corrections and law enforcement with Williamson County, if the proper Corrections certification is obtained.)			

Compensation

Tenure Salary/Position Changes

- Funding is approved by the Commissioners Court during the annual budget process.

Type	Policy	Pay + Pay –	Approval Process	Additional Documentation
Filling a Vacancy	All personnel newly hired from outside Williamson County for positions subject to tenure chart at the first pay increment for the position for which they are hired, unless they qualify for prior service credit.	Credit for Prior Service may apply. See Prior Service Credit.	Oracle-ERP workflow required	Must submit Law Enforcement State Licensing documentation to the Human Resources Department. Funding must be available.
Prior Service Credit	- Qualified law enforcement applicants and current officers can receive prior service credit. - Law Enforcement State Licensing must be submitted and verified prior to start date. - Prior service credit is granted at original date of hire, when an existing employee receives a promotion or interdepartmental transfer. - Delayed receipt of out-of-state licensing documentation may be accepted by the department and submitted for HR and Commissioners Court approval of prior service credit salary adjustment; soonest effective date is the pay period following court approval.	Maximum amount for external hire is current funding on vacant position.	Law Enforcement State Licensing verification required	Law Enforcement State Licensing verification required

Certification Pay	Certification pay will be paid to non-elected commissioned peace officers and eligible corrections officers (County Jail) who hold a full-time, active-duty position in a law enforcement or corrections capacity with the County. Payment for an entire fiscal year beginning on October 1st will be based on the level of certification held as of September 15th of the preceding fiscal year. For new hires, certification pay will be paid based on certification level at the date of hire. Certification pay does not transfer with an individual employee who leaves a corrections officer position to accept a law enforcement position, nor does it transfer with an individual employee who leaves a law enforcement position to accept a corrections officer position except when the corrections officer position is that of a Bailiff.	• Law enforcement officers: \$50 per month for Intermediate Certification; \$100 per month for Advanced Certification; \$150 per month for Masters Certification. This pay must be added into the regular rate of pay when calculating overtime. • Corrections officers: \$50 per month for intermediate certification; \$100 per month for Advanced Certification; \$150 per month for Masters Certification. • This pay must be added into the regular rate of pay when calculating overtime. • Certification pay may move with the employee to accommodate promotions/position changes within the department.	Oracle-ERP workflow required	Must submit a TCOLE document to the Human Resources Department. Funding must be available. <u>Subject to budget funds availability.</u>
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Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment

Williamson County strives to be an employer of choice and endeavors to provide an optimal work environment and experience for County employees, free of discrimination and harassment.

Non-Discrimination

Protections against discrimination provided to employees under state and federal law are detailed in the table below. These protections and the expectation of compliance apply to all employees and officials, regardless of their position. Contact Human Resources for more information.

Employment Law	Coverage	References
Title VII, Civil Rights Act (1963)	Prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin.	View EEOC Know Your Rights: Workplace Discrimination is Illegal poster here
Civil Rights Act (1991)	Provides amendments to 1963 Act to strengthen civil rights laws and deter unlawful harassment and discrimination in the workplace.	
Equal Pay Act (EPA)	Protects against sex-based wage discrimination for performance of substantially the same work in the same establishment.	- The EPA is an amendment within the FLSA, under enforcement of the EEOC - View EEOC information on Equal Pay and Compensation Discrimination here - View FLSA Employee Rights poster here - See related policies in Employment and Compensation sections within this policy manual
Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)	Establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and youth employment standards.	
Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)	Provides protection against discrimination in employment for employees 40 years of age or older.	See information on age discrimination on the Department of Labor (DOL) website here
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1990) Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA, 2008)	Prohibits discrimination in recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, and compensation based on candidate or employee disability. Requires employers make reasonable accommodation to the known limitations of otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities, unless the accommodation will cause the employer an undue hardship.	- Information and resources can also be found at ADA.gov - A Reasonable Accommodation Request Form may be submitted online here
Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP Act)	Under the FLSA, the Department of Labor (DOL) established that eligible nursing workers are entitled to reasonable break time and a private space to pump at work for up to one year after their child's birth. Protects the nursing worker from penalties in performance metrics and evaluations for lactation breaks.	- Designated space may not be a bathroom, and must be shielded from view and free from intrusion - Non-exempt employees may not perform work if clocked out for their break - View PUMP Act Protections here

Employment Law	Coverage	References
Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA)	Protects individuals against employment discrimination based on genetic information, such as genetic test results and family medical history.	View a fact sheet on GINA here
Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair (CROWN) Act	Prohibits discrimination in employment, education, and housing based on hair texture or protective hairstyles associated with race.	See information on the Crown Act at the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) website here
Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act (USERRA)	Protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service.	- View USERRA poster here - See Military Leave policy section for guidance on paid military leave activation - See FMLA Military Exigency and Caregiver policy sections related to deployment or servicemember injury of a qualifying family member
The Texas Whistleblower Act	Provides protection for public employees who report violations of law by their employer. An employer may not suspend, terminate, or take other adverse personnel action against a public employee in retaliation to a report under the Act.	- See Texas Legal Code, Chapter 554 Protection for Reporting Violations of Law - Visit www.whistleblowers.gov

Anti-Harassment

Harassment is prohibited by law and is not tolerated by Williamson County. Prompt and appropriate action will be taken in response to complaints, reports or knowledge of violations of this policy.

Anti-Harassment	
Definition of Harassment	Harassment is defined as repeated, unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity, or pregnancy), national origin, age (40 and older), disability, or genetic information (including family medical history), or in retaliation for filing a charge or participating in an investigation or proceeding under one of the above-mentioned employment laws. Actions that constitute harassment may include any unwelcome conduct that belittles, shows hostility, or ridicule, when such conduct is so severe or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance and creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.
Sexual Harassment	Sexual harassment is prohibited and is an unlawful employment practice in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when: - Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment. - Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. - Off-duty actions may constitute sexual harassment.

Examples of Sexual Harassment	• Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, sexual comments or suggestive or lewd remarks. • Physical assaults or other physical conduct of a sexual nature, including unwanted hugs or touches. • Sexual displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, including derogatory or pornographic posters, pictures or drawings.
Other Types of Harassment	• Verbal: includes insults, slurs, name-calling, offensive remarks, jokes, and profanity. • Visual: can consist of sending or displaying offensive images or messages. • Physical: blocking movement, threats of harm, intimidating gestures, or assault.
Employee Responsibility	Each official, department head, supervisor, and employee has the responsibility to maintain a work environment free of such harassment and to report or file a complaint as soon as possible. Officials and employees involved in a harassment situation are required to cooperate in any investigation that occurs.
Harassment Reporting	Employees who believe they have been sexually harassed should report their complaint immediately. Verbally inform one of these individuals: • Their supervisor • The next level of management above their supervisor • The Human Resources Department All harassment complaints received by any elected official, department head, or supervisor must be immediately reported to Human Resources. All complaints will be investigated. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
Disciplinary Measures	Where an investigation reveals that allegations of unwelcome harassment are true, appropriate remedial action, including discipline, will be taken. All disciplinary measures will be implemented promptly and shall be commensurate with the person's conduct. The remedies vary depending on the entire facts and circumstances found by the investigation.
Retaliation	Retaliation against public employees who report official wrongdoing, including harassment, is prohibited. An employee who reports a violation of the law to an appropriate law enforcement authority cannot be wrongfully suspended or terminated, or otherwise discriminated against or harassed by the County or an Elected Official.

Employee Responsibilities

Professional Conduct		
Type	Policy	
Tobacco Free Workplace Policy	Williamson County is a tobacco free workplace. The use of tobacco products (e.g., cigarettes, cigars, pipes, snuff, chew, etc.) and Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) (e.g., vapor, e-cigarettes, etc.) is prohibited within all Williamson County premises and vehicles. Employees who violate this policy are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.	
Drug Free Workplace Policy	Williamson County is committed to maintaining a safe, healthful, and productive workplace. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance, illegal drug, or alcoholic beverage is prohibited in the workplace. An employee who is convicted of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace shall notify their elected official, appointed official, or department head and Human Resources no later than five (5) days after such conviction. Adherence to this policy is a condition of employment and employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Information regarding the available drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation can be obtained from the County's Employee Assistance Program (EAP). In compliance with Federal and State laws pre-employment, random and post-accident drug and/or alcohol testing may be required for potential or current employees in positions that are mandated by law. Additionally, drug and/or alcohol testing may be required for positions identified as safety sensitive or for reasonable suspicion. Reasonable suspicion includes the report of observation of drug/alcohol use or the suspicion of such, determined by the employee's supervisor. The supervisor must then consult with the Human Resources Department. Definitions: • "Illegal drugs" include, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, phencyclidine (PCP), opioids, and amphetamines. • "Controlled substances" include schedules I through V of 21 U.S.C. § 812.	
Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy	Refusal	Refusal to submit to a drug or alcohol test, failure to cooperate, or tampering or interfering with the collection process may result in immediate termination of employment.
	Positive Results	
	Employees with a positive test shall be immediately removed from duty, may be placed on administrative leave, and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination, if determined appropriate based on factors related to the matter (i.e. safety concerns, job performance, etc.). A blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.04 or greater is considered a positive alcohol test, however, employees may be prohibited from working if they have a BAC of 0.02 or greater.	
	Pre-Employment	An applicant with a confirmed positive drug test will not be hired and cannot be considered for employment for a period of one year after the confirmed positive result.
	Random	Positions that have an impact upon the safety of others may be subject to random drug testing. Please contact the Human Resource Department for a list of safety-sensitive positions subject to random drug testing.
	Reasonable Suspicion	Williamson County reserves the right to require an employee to undergo a drug and/or alcohol test if reasonable suspicion exists that the employee has unlawfully used a controlled substance, illegal drug, and/or is working while under the influence of alcohol.

	Second Chance Program	In limited circumstances, at the discretion of an Elected Official or Department Head and in consultation with the Human Resource Department, an employee may be granted the opportunity to maintain employment after a positive test result under the following restrictions: <u>First Offense</u> – An employee with a confirmed positive random or a confirmed positive reasonable suspicion drug/alcohol test may be placed on administrative leave and will be required to attend drug/alcohol counseling/treatment at their own expense and provide documentation of completion. Failure to attend and successfully complete counseling/treatment may result in immediate termination of employment. Once documentation is provided, a determination of continued employment will be made by the Department and Human Resources. If re-instated, the employee will be subject to random testing on a frequent basis. <u>Subsequent Offenses</u> – Further positive test results will result in immediate termination. <u>Post-Accident</u> – Any employee with a confirmed post-accident drug/alcohol test will be terminated immediately and not eligible for the Second Chance Program.
	<i>If an employee feels that they may have a drug or alcohol problem, they may contact Human Resources or the Employee Assistance Program for information on available resources.</i>	

Professional Conduct

Type	Policy
Arrest/Criminal Conviction	Employees are required to report arrests, convictions and changes in the status of any criminal proceedings immediately to their supervisor and department head or elected official. Failure to notify the appropriate authority may result in immediate termination.
Intimate and Personal Relationships	Intimate and Personal Relationships between a Supervisor and a Supervisee are at high risk of being or becoming unwelcomed and perceived or experienced by the Supervisee and other subordinate employees as harassment, bullying, favoritism, or unfavorable actions. Such relationships are addressed in the Standards for Professional Conduct: Intimate and Personal Relationships policy.
Attendance	Employees are expected to be at work on time and to complete their scheduled shifts per department attendance policies, approved shift assignments, and/or office hours. Employees who miss three consecutive shifts without notification will be separated from employment and considered to have resigned without notice.
Outside Employment	Outside employment is acceptable, as long as it is outside the hours the employee is scheduled to work for the County. Also, as long as such employment does not violate state laws concerning abuse of office or employment, interfere with normal duties, and does not constitute a breach of ethics or conflict of interest.
Solicitation	Persons not employed by Williamson County may not solicit or distribute literature in the workplace at any time for any purpose. Williamson County recognizes that employees may have interests in events and organizations outside the workplace; however, may not solicit or distribute literature concerning these activities during working time. (Working time does not include lunch breaks, or any other periods in which employees are not on duty.) In addition, the posting of written solicitations is limited to County bulletin boards. An employee should check with the department head or elected official for approval. Solicitations using electronic systems, including County email, are prohibited and subject to the Acceptable Use Policy.
Gifts/Gratuities	The Texas Penal Code Section 1.07(a)(41) and Texas Penal Code 36 include specific definitions and details regarding gifts, gratuities and bribery for public servants. A public servant means a person elected, selected, appointed, employed, or otherwise designated as one of the following (even if they have not yet qualified for office or assumed duties): • An officer, employee, or agent of government. • A juror or grand juror. • An arbitrator, referee, or other person who is authorized by law or private written agreement to hear or determine a cause or controversy. • An attorney at law or notary public when participating in the performance of a government function. • A candidate for nomination or election to public office. • A person who is performing a governmental function under a claim of right, although they are not legally qualified to do so. It is the responsibility of the employee, officer, or agent of the government to read and understand all aspects of the Texas Penal Code Section 1.07 and Texas Penal Code 36 that relate to gifts, bribery and acceptance of honorarium.
Political Activity	Employees are encouraged to vote and to exercise other responsibilities of citizenship consistent with state and federal law and these policies. Employees are not required to contribute to any political fund or render any political service to any person or party. Employees will not be dismissed, suspended, demoted, or otherwise prejudiced for refusing to do so. Employees may <u>not</u>: • Use official authority or influence to interfere with, or affect the result of, an election or nomination for office. • Directly or indirectly coerce, attempt to coerce, command, or advise a local or state officer (or employee) to pay, lend, or contribute anything of value to a party, committee, organization, agency, or person for a political purpose. County employees, except elected officials, may not participate in political activities while on County duty. Employees are expected to remove County uniforms and identification, including rank and/or title, before participating in a political activity. In addition, no County-owned property, vehicle, building, and/or office may be used for displaying campaign materials or for conducting any partisan political activity. This section does not apply to the use of the Courthouse, Courthouse grounds or County buildings when used for the purpose of political announcements approved by Commissioners Court.

Employee Responsibilities

Discipline

Discipline may include both corrective action and more conclusive measures, up to and including termination. The appropriate level of discipline will be determined based on the facts of the disciplinary violations. Below are some examples of violations of workplace conduct:

- Insubordination
- Conduct unbecoming of a County employee
- Abuse of sick leave
- Violence in the workplace
- Poor attendance
- Theft
- Falsification of records
- Harassment
- Discrimination
- Retaliation
- Conflict of interest
- Infraction of County or department policy
- Improper use of County technology

This list is not all inclusive

Social Media

While Williamson County encourages employees to enjoy and make good use of your off-duty time, certain activities may become a problem if they affect their work. An employee's online presence can reflect on Williamson County. The lines between public and private, personal and professional information are blurred in this context. Be aware that comments, posts, or actions captured via digital or film images can affect the image of Williamson County. If an employee is posting to personal networking sites and speaking about job-related content or about the County, the employee should identify him/herself and use a disclaimer to make it clear that the views are not reflective of the views of County. Subject to the restrictions below, generally, employees may use personal social media any way they choose. With these goals in mind, employees must follow these rules in their use of social media, both on and off duty:

- Employees are prohibited from publishing any personal information about themselves, another employee of Williamson County, applicants, or an associate of Williamson County in any public medium (print, broadcast, digital, or online) in any format (written, video or image) that:
 - Has the potential or effect of involving themselves, co-workers, or Williamson County in any kind of dispute or conflict with other employees or third parties.
 - Interferes with the work of any employee.
 - May create a harassing, demeaning, or hostile working environment for any employee.
 - Disrupts the smooth and orderly flow of work within the office, or the delivery of services to Williamson County's taxpayers or customers.
 - Harms the reputation of Williamson County among its taxpayers or in the community at large.
 - States falsities or is defamatory of others and the County.
 - Reveals information that should be treated as confidential (by law) and/or information regarding the personal or private conduct, health information, and affairs of that person and interaction with other people that is unrelated to the person's job performance or official duties for Williamson County is personal information.
- Workplace personal conduct standards, including but not limited to equal opportunity, anti-harassment and anti-discrimination, apply at all times. This prohibits posts containing obscene or sexually explicit language, images, acts and statements. Other forms of postings that ridicule, malign, disparage or otherwise express bias against any race, religion, disability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or any other protected class of individuals are also prohibited.
- Employees may not use County equipment or facilities for non-work-related activities or business including social media. Personal social media activities should not be conducted while working or on the clock.
- Conducting oneself in such a way that his/her actions and relationships with others could become the object of gossip in the office, or causing unfavorable publicity for Williamson County in the community, is prohibited.
- If an employee creates a personal blog, they must provide a clear disclaimer that the views expressed in the blog are theirs alone, and do not represent the views of Williamson County. All information published on any blog(s) or other posting(s) should comply with local, state, and federal law. This also applies to comments posted on other social networking sites, blogs and forums.
- The Commissioners Court strongly recommends all County Departments/Offices abide by the Social Media Policy above.
- Any violations of this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employee Responsibilities

Grievance Policy and Procedure

Summary

This guidance does not alter the employment-at-will relationship in any way. Final decisions on grievances will not be precedent setting or binding on future grievances, unless they are officially stated as County policy. When appropriate, the decisions will be retroactive to the date of the employee's original grievance.

Procedure for Employees in Elected Office Departments

For employees in offices of Elected Officials, the grievance process defined by the Elected Official should be followed. Elected Officials are the final appeal level for their respective departments.

Procedure for Employees Under Civil Service in the Sheriff's Office

For procedures to follow in the event of a grievance by an employee under Civil Service within the Sheriff's Office, see below:

- Please refer to the Civil Service Commission Rules for matters that fall under its jurisdiction.
- For grievances related to all other employment matters, please refer to the Sheriff's Office Grievance procedures.

Procedure for Employees in Non-Elected Office Departments

Employees may file a grievance at any time and cannot be retaliated against for the filing of the grievance. Employees are encouraged to discuss any issues with their supervisors/managers prior to filing a grievance.

An informal grievance is presented verbally. The first step in the informal grievance procedure:

- Attempt to resolve the grievance by an informal conference with the Supervisor.
- However, if the official or department head is the wrongdoer in instances of harassment, retaliation, or potential whistle blower activity the employee should immediately contact the Human Resource department.
- If the informal conference does not result in a satisfactory resolution of the problem, the formal grievance steps should be followed.

Procedure in the Event of a Salary Grievance by an Elected Official

- See Chapter 152, Sec. 152.014 Local Government Code Informal Grievances

Employee Responsibilities

Grievance Policy and Procedure

Formal Grievances

The steps for a formal grievance are as follows:

1. Must be in writing, signed and presented to the supervisor of the employee submitting the grievance, within 20 business days after the alleged issue occurred. A statement of the specific corrective action requested must be included in the written grievance. Grievance may be emailed to their supervisor, however, a copy must be printed, signed, and dated and given to their supervisor.
 - In the event that it would be inappropriate to address the grievance with said supervisor, such as when the supervisor is the wrongdoer, the employee should go to the Appointed Official/Department Head.
2. If the Appointed Official/Department Head is the wrongdoer in instances of harassment, retaliation, or potential whistleblower activity, the employee should contact Human Resources. The grievance will be investigated by Human Resources and they will meet with the parties involved, and propose a resolution to the employee within 20 business days. After being presented with a written and signed grievance, the supervisor will:
 - Immediately notify the Department Head and the Human Resource Department.
 - Meet with the employees involved and other people necessary to gather the facts.
 - Attempt to resolve the grievance with the employee.
 - Communicate the proposed resolution in writing to the employee and copy the Appointed Official/Department Head and Human Resources within 20 business days after the receipt of the grievance.
3. If the employee filing the grievance does not receive a written resolution from the supervisor within 20 business days, from the date the grievance was filed or is not satisfied with the proposed resolution, then:
 - They must file a written appeal, within ten business days, with the Appointed Official/Department Head along with a copy to the Human Resource Department.
4. The Appointed Official/Department Head will review the facts and the file, and may investigate the charges personally or through a designee.
 - The person(s) conducting the investigation may meet with the parties involved.
 - The Appointed Official/Department Head will respond in writing to the employee within 20 business days of the date the appeal was received.
5. If the Appointed Official/Department Head is appointed by the Commissioners Court, Juvenile Probation Board, or District Judges, and the employee who submitted the grievance does not receive a written resolution from the Appointed Official/Department Head within 20 business days of the date the grievance was appealed, (or if unsatisfied with the Appointed Official's/Department Head's proposed resolution)
 - A written appeal must be filed within ten business days, with the appropriate appointing authority (i.e., Commissioners Court, Juvenile Probation Board, Elections Board, Animal Shelter Board, or District Judges) through the Human Resource Department.
6. The appropriate appointing authority will then review the facts and the file and conduct an investigation, if deemed appropriate, before deciding. The appropriate appointing authority's decision is final. Longer intervals to facilitate investigation or fact-finding on behalf of the County may be appropriate depending upon the grievance and may increase the 20 business days response time, accordingly.

For additional policy information contact the Human Resources Department
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512-943-1533