DAWSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Employee Handbook

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Welcome to Dawson County 8

Section I: Rules 9

Purpose 9
Applicability 9
Administration 9
Departmental Operating Rules and Regulations 9
Publication 10
Amendments to Rules and Regulations 10
Standards of Conduct 10
Rule 1: Nondiscrimination 11
1.1: Nondiscrimination Statement 11
1.2: Workplace Environment 11
1.3: Equal Employment Opportunity and Harassment 11
1.3.1: EEO Policy 11
1.3.2: Definition of Harassment, Discrimination and/or Improper Conduct 12
1.3.3: Discriminatory Harassment 12
1.3.4: Sexual Harassment 13
1.3.5: Complaint Procedure 14
Rule 2: Management/Administrative Procedures 15
2.1: Channel of Communication 15
2.2: Purchasing 16
2.3: Time-Swapping/Shift-Swapping 16
2.4: Payroll Records 16
2.5: Other Employment 16
2.6: Workers' Compensation 17
2.7: Voting Rights 17
Rule 3: Work Standards and Discipline 17
3.1: Work Standards 17
3.1.1: Performance 18
3.1.2: Attendance 18
3.1.3: Personal Conduct 18
3.1.4: Progressive Discipline 20
3.1.5: Appearance 24
3.2: Attitude and Behavior 24
3.3: Insubordination 25
3.4: Drug and Alcohol-Free Work Place 25
3.5: Safe Work Practices 36
3.6: Seat Belt Policy 37
3.7: Violence and Weapons 37
Rule 4: Ethical and Behavioral Expectations 37
4.1: Code of Ethics for Public Service 37
4.2: Tobacco Use 38
4.3: Use of County-Owned Equipment or Manpower 38
4.4: Criminal Charges against an Employee 39

4.5: Disclosure of Information 39
4.6: Political Activity Rule 40
4.6.1: Seeking Elective Office 40
4.6.2: participation in local political campaigns 40
4.7: Solicitation of Contributions 41
4.8: Surrender of Property 42
4.9: Rewards or Gifts 42
4.10: Lending or Borrowing Money 42
4.11: Falsifying Records 42
4.12: Personal Enterprise on County Time 42

Section II: Regulations 42

Regulation 1: Employment 42
Purpose 42
1.1: Recruitment 43
1.1.1: Filling Vacancies 43
1.1.2: Minimum Qualifications 43
1.1.3: Appointments 44
1.1.4: Reclassification 44
1.1.5: Promotion 44
1.1.6: Transfer 44
1.1.7: Public Announcement of Job Vacancies 45
1.1.8: Applications 45
1.1.8.1: Forms 45
1.1.8.2: Denial 45
1.1.8.3: Security Clearance 46
1.1.8.4: Active Status 46
1.1.8.5: Disqualification 46
1.1.9: Investigation of Candidate's History 47
1.1.9.1: Interviews 47
1.1.10: Examinations and Other Requirements 48
1.2: Employment Status 49
1.2.1: Working Test Period 49
1.2.2: Regular Status 49
1.2.3: Temporary Status 49
1.2.4: Time Limited Status 49
1.2.5: Acting Capacity Status 49
1.3: Working Test and Regular Status 49
1.3.1: Duration 50
1.3.2: Extensions 50
1.3.3: Rights 50
1.3.4: Active Work Status 50
1.3.5: Demotion 50
1.3.5.1: Demotion for Cause 51
1.3.5.2: Voluntary Demotion 51
1.3.6: Transfer/Promotion during Working Test Period 51

1.3.7: Separation during Working Test 51
1.4: Separation 51
1.4.1: Resignation 51
1.4.2: Abandonment of Job 52
1.4.3: Layoff/Reduction in Force 52
1.4.3.1: Reasons for Layoff/Reduction in Force 52
1.4.3.2: Order of Layoff 53
1.4.3.3: Special Cases 53
1.4.3.4: Notice of Layoff to Employees 53
1.4.3.5: Demotion in Lieu of Layoff 53
1.4.4: Disability 54
1.4.5: Loss of Required Certification or License 54
1.4.6: Retirement 54
1.4.7: Death 54
1.5: Termination 55
1.5.1: Pre-Termination Hearing Procedures 55
1.5.2: Procedures of Job Abandonment 56
1.5.3: Recommendation of Re-Employment 56
1.6: Employment of Relatives (Nepotism) 56

Regulation 2: Pay Practices 57
2.1: Attendance 57
2.1.1: Warning and Review 58
2.2: Attendance Records 58
2.3: Flex Time 58
2.4: Working from Home 58

Regulation 3: Leave Time Regulations 58
3.1: Holidays 58
3.1.1: Eligibility 59
3.2: Personal Leave 59
3.2.1: Request for Personal Leave 60
3.2.2: Sick Leave 60
3.2.3: Certification by Physician 60
3.2.4: Maximum Allowable Accumulation 60
3.2.5: Payment of Unused Personal Leave 61
3.2.6: Minimum Periods of Personal Leave Time 61
3.2.7: Emergencies While Out on Personal Leave 61
3.2.8: Personal Leave/No Reinstatement 61
3.2.9: Personal Leave Transfer 61
3.2.9.1: Description 61
3.2.9.2: Leave Recipient 61
3.2.9.3: Limitations on Leave Donations 62
3.3: Leave of Absence with Pay 62
3.3.1: Standard Approval Procedure 62
3.3.2: Military Leave 62
3.3.3: Jury Duty 63

3.3.4: Funeral Leave 64
3.3.5: Workers' Compensation 64
3.3.6: Disabilities (not covered by workers' compensation) 64
3.3.7: Maternity Leave 64
3.3.8: Request for Leave to Observe Religious Holidays 65
3.4: Leave of Absence without Pay 65
3.4.1: Standard Approval Procedure 65
3.4.2: Family and Medical Leave Act 65
3.5: Other Considerations Regarding Absence without Pay 71
3.5.1: Failure to Return to Work at the Expiration of Approved Leave without Pay 71
3.5.2: Return to Work Before the Expiration of Approved Leave without Pay 71
3.5.3: Personal Leave during Approved Leave without Pay 72
3.5.4: Working Elsewhere During Approved Leave 72
3.5.5: Continuation of Health Benefit Coverage During Approved Leave without Pay 72
3.5.6: Pay Increases during Approved Leave without Pay 72
3.6: Administrative Leave 72
3.6.1: Paid Administrative Leave 72
3.7: Hazardous Weather 73
3.7.1: Leave Options during Hazardous Weather 73
3.7.2: Critical Positions during Hazardous Weather 73
3.8: Hazardous Weather Process 73

Regulation 4: Position Level Classification Plan Overview 73
4.1: Revisions to Classification Plan 74
4.2: Departmental Responsibility 74

Regulation 5: Compensation Overview 74
5.1: Amendments 74
5.2: Promotion 74
5.3: Demotion 74
5.4: Transfers 75
5.5: Re-Appointment 75
5.6: Acting Capacity and Temporary Pay 75
5.6.1: Acting Capacity 75
5.6.2: Temporary Vacancy 75
5.6.3: Duration of Temporary Assignment 76
5.6.4: Authorization 76
5.6.5: Appeal Procedure 76
5.7: Salary Reduction 76
5.8: Approval of Actions Affecting Compensation 76
5.9: Compensation for Overtime Hours Worked 76
5.10: Maximum Work Hours 77
5.11: Overtime Limits 78
5.12: Attendance Record Keeping 78

5.13: Part-Time Employees 78

Regulation 6: Employee Relations 78
6.1: Grievance Claim 79
6.2: Grievance and Appeals 79
6.2.1: Grievance Statement 79
6.2.2: Informal Grievance Resolution 79
6.2.3: Formal Grievance Procedure 80
6.2.4: Formal Grievance Procedure Timing 80
6.2.4.1: Department Level 80
6.2.4.2: General Management Level 80

Regulation 7: Department Policy 80
7.1: Personnel Records 81
7.1.1: Public Inspection 81
7.2: Destruction of Records 81
7.3: Application Release 81
7.3.1: Information to be Released 82
7.3.2: Information required to be Withheld 82
7.4: Terminated Employee Reference and Release of Information Policy 82
7.4.1: Terminated Employee Reference Policy 82
7.4.2: Terminated Employee Reference Policy Rationale 82
7.4.3: Recommendation of Re-Employment 83
7.5: Administrative Inquiry and Review 83
7.6: Official Bulletin Boards 83

Regulation 8: Information Technology 83
8.1: Acceptable Use 83
8.2: General Use and Ownership 84
8.3: Security and Proprietary Information 84
8.4: Unacceptable Use 85
8.4.1: System and Network Activities 85
8.4.2: Email and Communications Activities 86
8.5: Personal Communication Devices and Voicemail Policies 87
8.5.1: Issuing Policy 87
8.5.2: Voicemails 87
8.6: Loss and Theft 87
8.7: Personal Use 88
8.8: PCD Safety 88
8.9: Guidelines on Anti-Virus Process 88

Section III: Miscellaneous 89
1.1: Parking 89
1.2: Office Assignment 89

Section IV: Definitions 90

Exhibit A- Leave Request Form 93

Exhibit B- Timesheet 94

Exhibit C- Request for Outside Employment 95

Exhibit D- Social Media Policy 96

Exhibit E- Dawson County Vehicle Policy 100

Exhibit F- Dawson County Return to Work Policy 103

Exhibit G- Dawson County Appearance Policy 106

WELCOME TO DAWSON COUNTY

This handbook has been prepared to provide you with an overview of Dawson County's policies, benefits, and rules and provides important information about the County, as well as guidelines for your employment experience with us in an effort to foster a safe and healthy work environment. This Handbook highlights County policies, procedures, practices, and benefits and is intended to provide general information about the policies, procedures, benefits, and regulations governing employees of the County and is not intended to be an express or implied contract. The guidelines presented in this handbook are not intended to supplant sound management, judgment, and discretion.

It is not possible to anticipate every situation that may arise in the workplace or to provide information that answers every possible question. In addition, circumstances will undoubtedly require that policies, practices, and benefits described in this handbook change from time to time. Accordingly, the County may supplement, rescind, or revise any provision of this handbook from time to time, as it deems necessary, or appropriate.

No business is free from day-to-day problems, but we believe these personnel policies, procedures, and practices will help resolve problems. All employees must work together to make the County a viable, healthy, and fiscally sound organization to provide a satisfactory working environment that promotes genuine concern and respect for all employees and citizens. If any statement in this handbook is not clear to you, then please contact the Human Resources Department for clarification.

This Handbook is not intended to and does not create an employment contract between Dawson County and its employees. Your employment is for no specific period of time, and this Handbook does not limit your right or Dawson County's right to terminate your employment at any time for any reason or no reason. The employment at will relationship exists for all employees, unless otherwise specified by state law.

For a more detailed understanding, please visit the County intranet site located at **https://mail.dawsonCounty.org/intranet** and review the applicable procedure or policy in question.

This handbook supersedes any and all prior policies, procedures, and handbooks of the County.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

SECTION I: RULES

PURPOSE

These rules are set forth to ensure that employees of Dawson County are treated equitably and to ensure that the citizens of the County benefit from the work of a productive and competent staff. Any violation of these rules may subject the employee to discipline up to and including termination in accordance with the provisions of these rules and regulations, federal and state law, and County ordinances. The following rules shall be known as general rules and shall apply to each and every employee of Dawson County, Georgia.

APPLICABILITY

This Employee Handbook is intended to apply to employees of Dawson County other than employees of elected constitutional officers and other offices under the direction of officers other than the county manager authorized by law. The broad application of this Handbook will ensure that all employees of Dawson County are treated equally. Moreover, the provisions contained in this Handbook establish uniform procedures for handling employment situations that facilitate efficiency and productivity.

ADMINISTRATION

This Employee Handbook shall be administered by and under the direction of the County Manager. However, powers and duties designated to the County Manager in this Handbook may be delegated by the County Manager to Department Directors, who may further delegate such authority to subordinates.

If, at any time during the operation of this Employee Handbook, the position of County Manager is vacant, the Human Resources Director or any interim official designated by the Dawson County Board of Commissioners will be responsible for administration of the Employee Handbook until the County Manager position is filled by the Board of Commissioners.

DEPARTMENTAL OPERATING RULES AND REGULATIONS

Departmental Operating Rules and Regulations (sometimes referred to as "Standard Operating Procedures" or "SOPs"), not in conflict with this Handbook, may be established and used by any Department Director. All such Departmental Operating Rules and Regulations and subsequent amendments thereto adopted pursuant to this Section shall be submitted to the County Manager for

maintenance in the County Manager's office. The Board of Commissioners has no involvement with the creation, administration, or enforcement of any Departmental Operating Rules and Regulations established by any Elected Official. In the event that a conflict arises between an employee's conduct or performance required by Departmental Operating Rules and Regulations and the conduct or performance required by this Policy Manual, then the rule or regulation requiring the higher standard of conduct or performance shall control.

PUBLICATION

Rules and regulations enacted by the Board of Commissioners of Dawson County shall be published, and a copy made available to employees through the use of the County's intranet. Each Department Head shall ensure every employee has access to a computer to view the County intranet site.

AMENDMENTS TO RULES AND REGULATIONS

These rules and regulations may be amended from time to time. Amendments will be communicated to employees in a timely fashion preferably within ten (10) Business Days of the change.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

These rules are standards of conduct and are not all-inclusive. These rules and regulations are merely a guideline. The level of discipline used, such as reprimand, Suspension or termination, will be determined by the frequency and/or severity of the violation and other circumstances and the employee's work history with the County. The disciplinary action taken is subject to discretion to grant a lesser penalty or clemency for any particular case or violation. Such action does not imply cancellation of a rule, but is recognition of an unusual or particular circumstance. Egregious acts of misconduct justify termination even if no progressive discipline has been previously applied. The County's Progressive Discipline Policy is set forth within Rule 3.1.4.

RULE 1: NONDISCRIMINATION

1.1: NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

No discrimination shall be exercised, threatened or promised against or in favor of any eligible Applicant or employee due to age, color, disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, disability, genetic information, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, uniformed service status, or any other legally protected category. Dawson County's personnel programs shall, at all times, be conducted in accordance with the Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 2000 et seq.). Additionally, Dawson County intends to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.).

Dawson County will not discriminate against qualified individuals on the basis of a disability in consideration of any terms and conditions of employment or in admission and access to programs, services, and activities. The County may provide reasonable accommodation to enable an otherwise qualified employee to perform the essential requirements of his/her job. Discrimination based on a disability should be reported to the Human Resources Director.

1.2: WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

Dawson County is committed to ensuring that all employees enjoy a work environment free from intimidation, harassment, and violence. These issues are discussed in more detail below. If you have any concerns regarding your workplace environment, report those concerns to the Human Resources Director.

1.3: EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND HARASSMENT

1.3.1: EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Dawson County is an equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of Dawson County to provide an equal employment opportunity to qualified persons without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, uniformed service status, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions or any other legally protected category. This policy relates to all phases of employment, including, but not limited to, recruitment, placement, Promotion, transfer, reduction in force, separation, training, compensation, and benefits. All decisions regarding hiring, placement, Promotion, transfer, Demotion, termination, or any other term or condition of employment will be based upon the qualification and performance of the employee or prospective employee.

In addition, Dawson County will not discriminate against any qualified employee or Applicant on the basis of a physical or mental disability. Dawson County will strive to provide reasonable accommodations to assist disabled individuals to perform essential job functions, as long as the accommodation does not cause the County undue hardship.

If you have any concerns regarding Dawson County's equal employment opportunity policies, report those concerns to the Human Resources Director. Please refer to Rule 1.3.4 for procedures for reporting harassment, discrimination or other unlawful treatment.

1.3.2: DEFINITION OF HARRASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND/OR IMPROPER CONDUCT

Harassment, discrimination and/or improper conduct consists of misconduct that includes unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based upon a person's protected status, such as sex, color, race, religion, national origin, age, disability genetic information, uniformed service status, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions or any other protected group status as provided for by law. The County will not tolerate conduct that impacts tangible job benefits, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

All employees, Supervisors, and Elected Officials/Department Directors are subject to the terms and provisions of this Rule, and are to avoid any behavior or conduct that could be interpreted as discriminatory or sexual harassment as set forth below. All employees, Supervisors, and Elected Officials/Department Directors have a responsibility to inform an individual whenever the individual's behavior is unwelcome, offensive, in poor taste, or inappropriate and to report harassment as set forth herein.

1.3.3 DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT

It is Dawson County's policy to maintain a working environment free of any and all harassment, including harassment based on a person's race, color, national origin, religion, sex/gender, disability, age, veteran status, citizenship, sexual orientation, genetic information, uniformed service status, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions or other protected group status. To assist in preventing or eliminating any such unwelcome harassment, Dawson County will not tolerate any form of harassment or unlawful discrimination by or against its employees, Supervisors, and Elected Officials/Department Directors.

All employees, Supervisors, and Elected Officials/Department Directors are expected to avoid any behavior or conduct that could reasonably be interpreted as harassment. Any form of harassment related to an individual's race, color, national origin, religion, sex/gender, disability, age, veteran status, citizenship, sexual orientation, genetic information, uniformed service status, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions or other protected group status, is a violation of this Regulation and will be treated as a disciplinary matter. For purposes of this regulation, the term "discriminatory harassment" shall be construed consistent with applicable law and may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

(i) Offensive remarks, comments, jokes or slurs pertaining to an individual's race, color, national origin, religion, sex/gender, disability, age, veteran status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or genetic information, uniformed service status,

pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions other protected group status;

(ii) Offensive pictures, drawings, posters, photographs, reading materials, computer monitors, or other tangible items, or communications including e-mail, that are reasonably offensive or that reasonably exploit an individual's race, color, national origin, religion, sex/gender, disability, age, veteran status, citizenship, sexual orientation, genetic information, uniformed service status, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions or other protected group status;

(iii) Threatening reprisals based on an employee's race, color, national origin, religion, sex/gender, disability, age, veteran status, citizenship, sexual orientation, genetic information, uniformed service status, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions or other protected group status; or

(iv) Conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance and/or conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

1.3.4: SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of harassment and will be treated in accordance with the express terms of this rule. Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature when:

(i) Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment;

(ii) Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used, either in part or in full, as the basis for employment decisions; or

(iii) The conduct has the purpose or the effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's job performance or when such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

For purposes of this Rule, the term "sexual harassment" shall be construed consistent with applicable law and may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

(i) Sexual assaults, including rape and molestation, or attempts or threats to commit such acts;

(ii) Unwanted intentional physical contact of a sexual or suggestive nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, kissing, brushing, or poking of another person's body regardless of the gender of the individuals involved;

(iii) Offensive sexual remarks, sexual advances or requests for sexual favors regardless of the gender of the individuals involved;

(iv) Threatening reprisals for an employee's refusal to respond to requests for sexual

favors;

(v) Disciplining or retaliating against any individual in any way because he or she has resisted, reported or complained about sexual harassment;

(vi) Preferential treatment, or the promise of preferential treatment, for engaging in sexual conduct;

(vii) Offensive pictures, drawings, posters, reading materials, calendars, photographs or other physical objects, or communications, including e-mail, that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic;

(viii) Any conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance and/or conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment; or

(ix) Suggesting or inferring to any employee, Supervisor, Elected Official/Department Director (or Applicant for any such position) that his or her employment, advancement, or treatment will be affected in any way by entering into (or refusing to enter into) any form of personal or sexual relationship.

1.3.5: COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

All employees are responsible for helping to ensure that Dawson County avoids any form of unlawful treatment. If you feel that you have experienced, witnessed or have been notified of harassment, discrimination or unlawful treatment (by a reliable source), then you should notify immediately (preferably within 24 hours) the Department Head and/or Human Resources Department. The County forbids retaliation against anyone who has made a complaint.

(i) Investigation will be as timely and as confidential as possible.

Incidents reported by anyone pursuant to this Rule will be handled in a timely manner, and as confidentially as possible. Due to the nature of the investigation process, however, Dawson County cannot guarantee confidentiality. Information reported by any individual pursuant to this Rule will not be unnecessarily released to third parties or to any person not involved in the investigation or involved in the conduct forming the basis of the complaint. Upon conclusion of the investigation, any such information will only be released to the extent required by law. No person involved in the investigation shall discuss the complaint or investigation with any person outside of the investigation process. This provision is intended to protect the confidentiality of anyone who files a complaint, to encourage the reporting of all incidents of harassment, and to ensure the fair treatment of all parties involved.

(ii) Investigation by duly appointed agent.

Upon receiving a complaint of harassment pursuant to this policy, Dawson County will conduct an investigation into the allegations. The investigation will be conducted by the Human Resources Director, unless an alternate arrangement has

been made with the applicable Department Director. If the complaint involves an individual in the Human Resources Department, the investigation shall be conducted by the County Manager or his/her designee.

(iii) Intent and purpose of the investigation.

The intent of the investigation is to obtain further information about the events or conduct complained of, to enable the person(s) named in the complaint to tell his or her side of the story, to determine whether harassment has in fact occurred, and to develop an appropriate resolution. Anyone making a complaint pursuant to this Rule may be asked to put his or her complaint in writing. The person to whom the complaint is made, or the person or persons investigating the complaint, may take notes and may request the complainant to sign those notes. All employees, Supervisors, and Elected Officials/Department Directors are expected to fully cooperate with any investigation of a complaint of harassment. Failure to cooperate will be justification for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

(iv) No reprisal against Complainant.

No individual will be retaliated against for reporting a violation of this Rule or for cooperating with an investigation of a complaint of harassment. However, intentional or malicious false accusations of misconduct could have a serious effect on an individual who has been falsely accused. Individuals falsely accusing another of misconduct will be disciplined based on the extent of the false accusation, up to and including termination.

(v) Notification of belief that investigation is not being handled properly.

If, at any time, anyone feels that his or her complaint is not being handled properly, he or she should immediately contact the Human Resources Director, the County Manager, or the applicable Department Director.

The County recognizes that intentional or malicious false accusations of misconduct can have a serious effect on innocent men and women. Individuals falsely accusing another of misconduct will be disciplined in accordance with the nature and extent of his/her false accusation. The County encourages any employee to raise questions he/she may have regarding misconduct or this policy, with his/her immediate Supervisor, a higher-level manager, or the Human Resources Department.

RULE 2: MANAGEMENT/ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

2.1: CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION

The chain of command (Supervisor, Department Head, County Manager or Elected Official) must have the opportunity to resolve any employee concerns or disputes. If the employee is not satisfied with the results by following the chain of command, the employee may present his or her concern

to the County Manager or appropriate Elected Official. At any point when following the chain of command, the employee, Supervisor, or Department Head may call upon the County Manager/Elected Official to assist in mediation of the problem. In the Fire and EMS Departments, due to an established internal chain of command, only an officer with the rank of Captain or above is permitted to call on the County Manager to assist in conflict resolution.

2.2: PURCHASING

No employee may buy or charge any goods or services or any amount to the account of Dawson County unless they follow the procedures established through the County Purchasing regulations established by the Board of Commissioners. Normally, a purchase order must be issued prior to purchase. An exception can be made under genuine emergency conditions, and then such purchase must be confirmed as soon as possible with a proper purchase order. In addition, under no circumstances shall any employee buy or charge any goods or services or any amount to the account of Dawson County for personal use. (The County's procurement ordinance and related policies are available at www.dawsoncounty.org)

2.3: TIME-SWAPPING/SHIFT-SWAPPING

Dawson County does not allow time or shift swapping between employees unless all shift Supervisors involved previously authorize the swap. Shift swapping is the practice of trading work shifts. Time or shift swaps without authorization are grounds for disciplinary action.

2.4: PAYROLL RECORDS

Falsifying payroll records to show an individual is present when he/she is/was not present is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

2.5: OTHER EMPLOYMENT

No employee may engage in any paid employment or outside business, or in the conduct of a profession, during the hours for which the employee is employed to work for the County or outside of work hours that interferes with the efficient performance of his/her duties and/or presents a conflict of interest while employed by Dawson County. If outside employment creates a conflict of interest, the employee will be expected to resign one of the positions. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide evidence from the secondary employer that he/she is covered under the secondary employer's workers' compensation policy or that such insurance is not required under Georgia law. Furthermore, secondary employers may be required to provide certificates of insurance demonstrating sufficient general liability coverage in addition to Georgia workers' compensation coverage when applicable. The employee must also obtain approval of the appointing authority, or designee, before accepting outside employment. (See Exhibit C). Any approved outside employment must be reported in writing to the Human Resources Director prior to commencing any outside employment.

2.6: WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Any employee who sustains an on-the-job injury must, at the time of the injury or as soon as possible thereafter, notify his/her Supervisor. The Supervisor shall immediately file the WC-1/First Report of Injury with the Human Resources Department. If the injury necessitates the employee's absence from work, the employee may elect to take the first 7 Working Days as sick Leave or personal Leave, and if the employee so elects, then the employee shall sign documents evidencing such election. If the nature of the injury necessitates an absence longer than seven (7) calendar days, the County's workers' compensation insurance carrier shall determine if the employee is eligible for further compensation. Eligible employees will receive workers' compensation benefits. A fraudulent claim is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

For more information on the County's workers' compensation Leave program, please refer to Regulation 3.3.5.

2.7: VOTING RIGHTS

No employee shall be given or refused employment, suspended or discharged because of his/her vote or failure to vote in any primary or election. Employees are encouraged to exercise their individual right to vote. Federal regulations now provide for advance voting during the week prior to each election, and employees are encouraged to take advantage of advance voting so that the County is not overburdened with absences on Election Day. Employees may contact the Elections Department regarding the location of polls for purposes of advance voting.

Each employee may, upon at least twenty-four hours prior notice to his/her Supervisor, take necessary time off from employment without loss of pay to vote in any municipal, county, state, or federal primary or election for which the employee is qualified and registered to vote. Such time off to vote shall not exceed one (1) hour. Any time off taken to vote pursuant to this Section must be approved by the applicable Supervisor and will not be charged against the employee's Personal Leave.

RULE 3. WORK STANDARDS AND DISCIPLINE

3.1: WORK STANDARDS

These rules and regulations are designed to express work standards, or what Dawson County expects from each employee. In brief, your County Government depends on you to do your best and to be on the job regularly. Your employer and fellow employees expect you to be responsive and to cooperate with others in a spirit of teamwork.

Violation of established work standards, depending on frequency and severity, may result in such disciplinary actions as reprimand, Suspension, Demotion and/or termination. Work standards violations requiring Supervisor intervention and possible disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

3.1.1: PERFORMANCE

Performance is defined as unsatisfactory job performance resulting in inefficiency or ineffectiveness; unsatisfactory work practices or procedures; lack of cooperation with directives from Supervisors; negligence in carrying out duties; disregard for safety and security rules of the Department; and job abandonment.

3.1.2: ATTENDANCE

Excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness including but not limited to partial days absences; failure to keep Supervisor properly informed concerning absences or tardiness; unauthorized time swapping and/or shift swapping; falsifying of attendance or time records.

3.1.3: PERSONAL CONDUCT

In general, conduct that interferes with the operations of Dawson County, brings discredit to Dawson County, or is deemed inappropriate by Supervisors, co-workers, or the public is not tolerated. Examples of conduct that is not permitted, and will subject the individual involved to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination, include, but are not limited to:

(a) Insubordination or uncooperative attitude, including, but not limited to, disrespect to a Supervisor, a higher ranking employee or official, co-worker, or the public, and failure to follow the lawful orders of a Supervisor;

(b) Failure to do work at an acceptable level of competence;

(c) Excessive tardiness, excessive absenteeism, unexcused absences, and absences when the employee does not have accrued Personal Leave or Sick Leave to accommodate the absence;

(d) Conviction of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude, if the conduct leading to such conviction is job related and the disciplinary action is consistent with business necessity;

(e) Theft, abuse or misuse of County property or vehicles, violation of traffic laws while driving a County vehicle, failure to report damage or destruction of County property to a Supervisor, loaning property or equipment of the County without permission or proper authority;

(f) Willfully giving false statements to Supervisors, officials, or the public;

(g) Violation of County ordinances, administrative regulations, provisions of this Handbook, or Departmental rules;

(h) Consumption or distribution or possession of alcoholic beverages or illegal

drugs or abuse of prescription drugs or over-the-counter medication in a manner that violates the Dawson County Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace policies;

(i) Acts during duty hours which are incompatible with public service;

(j) Use of profane or abusive language or discourteous treatment of the public or other employees;

(k) Consumption of alcoholic beverages or use of illegal, prescription, or over-the-counter drugs outside work hours in such a manner as to adversely affect attendance or job performance;

(l) Falsification or destruction of official records or documents, or use of official position for personal benefit, profit, or advantage;

(m) When duly and properly called as a witness before any County board, appeals board, state or federal judicial or administrative tribunal, and when before such tribunal, failing to answer truthfully any question concerning performance of official duties with the County;

(n) Failure to report an occupational injury or accident during the shift on which it occurred;

(o) Absence due to incarceration;

(p) Use of any form of physical abuse of the public, Supervisors, or other employees, or making threats to the public, Supervisors, or other employees;

(q) Violating any lawful official regulation or order or failing to obey any proper directive made and given by a superior officer;

(r) Disgraceful or dishonest conduct;

(s) Careless or negligent with the monies or other property of the County;

(t) Failure to pay or make reasonable provisions for future payment of debt to such an extent that such failure is detrimental to the work relationship;

(u) Use or threatening of use, or attempt at use of personal or political influence to secure employment benefits, including but not limited to, Promotion, Leave of Absence, transfer, change of pay rate, or character of work;

(v) Taking for personal use from any person any fee, gift, or other valuable thing in the course of work or in connection with it, when such gift or other such valuable thing is given in the hope or expectation of receiving a favor or better treatment than that afforded other persons based upon the Code of

Ethics for Government Service. See O.C.G.A. § 45-10-1;

(w) Violating established security procedures during the Examination process or obtaining information, through unauthorized or illegal means, which provides an unfair advantage on the Examination;

(x) Failure to acquire a valid license, registration, or certification when such license, registration, or certification is required and specified in the specifications for the class to which the position occupied by the employee is classified;

(y) Wasted time, inefficiency, and/or loitering during working hours;

(z) Violation of any provisions of the Code of Ethics for Government Service, this Handbook, or the applicable Departmental SOP;

(aa) Release of confidential information learned as a result of employee's position without specific approval of the applicable Department Director, Constitutional Officer or the County Manager;

(bb) Lending money or borrowing money from another County employee who makes a practice of loaning money and charging interest to employees; and/or

(cc) Babysitting or keeping children in the employee's assigned work area.

3.1.4: PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

Whenever possible, Department Directors should provide employees with an opportunity to correct problematic behavior or poor performance. All Supervisors are encouraged to follow specific steps of progressive discipline. However, depending upon the nature of the employee's misconduct, poor performance, and/or length of employment, the use of progressive discipline shall be discretionary. Thus, while this Rule sets forth available mechanisms for discipline, certain steps may be skipped in a disciplinary process depending upon the nature of the employee's misconduct, poor performance, working test period status and/or length of employment. To the extent that progressive discipline is being utilized, when an employee engages in different types of misconduct or poor performance, each incident can provoke increased discipline, even if the incidents of misconduct or poor performance are in different areas or unrelated to other previous incidents. The mechanisms for progressive discipline may include, but are not limited to, verbal reprimand, written reprimand, Suspension without pay, Demotion, and Dismissal. While there are five steps identified in this Rule, this Rule should not be construed to require five incidents of misconduct or poor performance prior to Dismissal being an appropriate disciplinary sanction. Moreover, other forms of discipline not detailed in this Rule may be utilized in the discretion of the applicable Supervisor. All disciplinary actions shall be reduced to writing and forwarded to the Human

Resources Director for maintenance in the employee's personnel file. All such disciplinary actions shall remain in the employee's personnel file.

Verbal Reprimand

A verbal reprimand is an oral Notice of a policy violation, mistake, inefficiency, misconduct, poor performance, or other factors that may adversely influence an employee's ability to carry out his/her duties and responsibilities. Any Supervisor may verbally reprimand a subordinate employee at any time. Verbal reprimands may affect the employee's employment status, particularly if corrective action is not taken by the employee. All verbal reprimands should be documented in the employee's personnel file and shall be signed by the Human Resources Director to acknowledge receipt.

Written Reprimand

A written reprimand is a written Notice of a policy violation, mistake, inefficiency, misconduct, poor performance, or other factors that may adversely influence an employee's ability to carry out duties and responsibilities. Any Supervisor may reprimand in writing a subordinate employee at any time. Written reprimands are required to be shown and explained to the employee who will acknowledge receipt of same by his/her signature. If the employee refuses to sign, the same shall be noted. If the employee feels the written reprimand to be unjust, he/she must so state in writing giving the reasons, which must be done within five calendar days. An original copy of the reprimand, with the employee's response, if any, must be forwarded to the Human Resources Director to be placed in the employee's personnel file. The Human Resources Director will sign the written reprimand to acknowledge receipt. A written reprimand may be presented on a form adopted by the applicable Department or available from the Human Resources Department, or the written reprimand may be in letter or memo form.

Suspension Without Pay

The County Manager, a Department Director, or his/her respective designee, as applicable, may, by written Notice to the employee, suspend an employee without pay. Any such Notice of Suspension must be forwarded to the Human Resources Director to be placed in the employee's personnel file. The Human Resources Director will sign the Suspension Notice to acknowledge receipt. An employee who is suspended for any reason may not utilize Personal Leave so as to be compensated during the Suspension without pay period.

An employee may be suspended in the following manner:

(a) <u>Disciplinary Suspension</u>

In an attempt to correct unacceptable behavior and/or work performance issues, an employee may be suspended for a specified period of time without pay. All such disciplinary Suspensions for a specified period of time shall be stated in hours, rather than days or shifts. The total period of any Suspension without pay for disciplinary purposes shall not exceed 120 hours.

An employee in the position of exempt status may be suspended without pay in increments of the equivalent of one or more full days imposed in good faith for violation of workplace rules. Non-Exempt employees may be suspended without pay in consecutive full or partial day increments.

(b) Suspension Pending a Court Decision

An employee shall be suspended indefinitely without pay at the discretion of the County Manager or the applicable Department Director, or his/her respective designee, when awaiting trial on criminal charges, the nature of which would impede or undermine the employee's ability to satisfactorily perform his/her job. The employee will be given the opportunity to demonstrate that the criminal charges should not subject him/her to Suspension from employment with the County. Thereafter, the County will make a determination on whether said Suspension is job related and consistent with business necessity.

In the alternative, if the employee's actions and/or the criminal charges are such that it is not in the best interest of the County for the employee to remain in the County workforce, the County Manager or the applicable Department Director, or his/her respective designee, as applicable, may elect to terminate the employee upon Notice of the criminal charges or at any time thereafter. The employee will be given the opportunity to demonstrate that the criminal charges should not subject him/her to Dismissal from employment with the County. Thereafter, the County will make a determination on whether said Dismissal is job related and consistent with business necessity.

If the County does not elect to terminate the employee during the pendency of criminal charges, upon receipt of Notice from the employee that the criminal matter has been resolved by Dismissal, plea, or trial, the County Manager or the applicable Department Director, or his/her respective designee, shall make a determination as to whether the employee shall be reinstated and whether any such reinstatement shall be with or without loss of pay. If an employee is fully exonerated of all criminal charges, the employee shall be reinstated without loss of pay, privileges, benefits, or status retroactive to the date of Suspension.

(c) Suspension Pending Drug/Alcohol Testing

An employee shall be suspended without pay immediately upon being required to submit to a reasonable suspicion drug or alcohol test. The total period of any Suspension without pay shall be for an indefinite period of time, which shall conclude upon completion and receipt of the drug or alcohol test and any applicable confirmation tests.

An employee who initially tests positive for drugs or alcohol pursuant to any other type of drug or alcohol testing (such as workers' compensation testing, return to duty testing, post-accident testing, and/or random testing) shall be immediately suspended without pay pending any applicable confirmation of the positive test results. The period of Suspension shall be for an indefinite period of time, which period shall end upon completion and receipt of any applicable confirmation tests.

Suspension During Investigation/Paid Administrative Leave

A Suspension during an investigation is referred to as Administrative Leave. Designation of such an absence from the workplace as "Administrative Leave" is to prevent any possible stigma against an employee during a period of Administrative Leave.

Demotion

The County Manager or the applicable Department Director or his/her respective designee may by written Notice to the employee, demote an employee for disciplinary purposes. When an employee is demoted to a lower Grade, the employee's salary will decrease by that percentage difference between the minimum salary for his/her former position and the minimum salary applicable to his/her new position. Employees will be subject to a working test period upon Demotion. All Demotions must be approved in writing by the County Manager.

Dismissals

An employee may be dismissed or terminated from employment with Dawson County for disciplinary purposes.

Immediate Dismissal, in the absence of progressive discipline, may be necessary in certain circumstances. The following list includes some, but not all, offenses that may be grounds for immediate Dismissal:

(a) Theft;

(b) Falsification of documentation and/or other acts of dishonesty;

(c) Fighting or other physical violence or threats of violence;

(d) Wrongful or negligent destruction of Dawson County property;

(e) Conviction of a felony or other offense that, in the opinion of the County, conflicts with and/or undermines the employee's performance of his/her job duties. The employee will be given the opportunity to demonstrate that the conviction should not exclude him/her from employment with the County. Thereafter, the County will make a determination on whether said termination is job related and consistent with business necessity;

(f) Possession of firearms, Weapons, or explosives on Dawson County property without the express consent of the County Manager, or as otherwise allowable pursuant to applicable law(s);

(g) Use, possession, sale, or testing positive for alcohol or illegal drugs on Dawson County property or while on duty, and/or failure to submit to testing for same;

(h) Use, possession, sale, or testing positive for prescription or over-the-counter drugs that lead an employee to be unfit for duty;

(i) Falsification of an employment application or other information for the purposes of obtaining employment or any benefits from Dawson County;

(j) Violation of safety rules that endanger lives or safety and/or any conduct that endangers lives or safety;

(k) Violation of the Dawson County's anti-harassment, non-discrimination, and/or internet use policies;

(l) Unreported or unauthorized absences of three consecutive Working Days;

(m) Unauthorized and repeated tardiness; and

(n) Gross insubordination.

3.1.5: APPEARANCE

All personnel are expected to present the highest professional standards of personal hygiene and appearance while performing their duties and while representing Dawson County in an official capacity. The provisions of this policy are applicable to all Dawson County employees, including temporary and contracted employees. (See Exhibit G)

3.2: ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR

County employees must conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner. Employees

shall not use inflammatory, provocative or profane language, sexual slurs, racial slurs, and shall not demonstrate an unresponsive attitude or be disrespectful to the public or fellow employees.

3.3: INSUBORDINATION

Insubordination includes but is not limited to failure to follow rules, policies, ordinances, professional practices, and willful failure to follow directives by Supervisors or management. Any employee who manifests resistance - verbal, physical or otherwise - towards a Department Head or Supervisor shall be subject to immediate Suspension and/or discharge.

3.4: DRUG AND ALCOHOLFREE WORK PLACE

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Dawson County is committed to maintaining a work environment free from the adverse impact of employee drug and alcohol abuse. Employee drug and alcohol abuse constitutes a direct threat to the lives and property of the employees and citizens of the County and to the public health, safety, and welfare of all persons in the County.

Dawson County does not and will not tolerate any employee's possession, sale, distribution, consumption or presence in the body of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs while on County property and/or on County business at any time.

This Rule is intended to comply with federal regulations and state laws that mandate pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, random, and post-accident testing of certain positions of employment, and to further the objective of protecting the persons and property of the County's employees, citizens and the general public. This Rule will be strictly enforced against all employees. To the extent that this Rule and any results from a fitness for duty test conflict, the most strenuous provision favoring a drug and alcohol free workplace shall govern.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE PROHIBITED FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

This Rule applies to all employees. This Rule applies to off-site lunch periods or breaks when an employee is scheduled to return to work, as well as to County Premises. Visitors, vendors, and contractors are governed by this Rule to the extent they are on County Premises or in County vehicles and will not be permitted to conduct business if found to be in violation of this Rule.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE PROHIBITED ON COUNTY PREMISES

Substance and alcohol use by Dawson County employees during assigned working hours on County Premises, or otherwise while on County business is prohibited. This shall include the use of illegal substances, the abuse of prescription medications and over-the-counter medications, and the use of or abuse of alcohol.

As used herein, "County Premises" includes all property, facilities, land, platforms, buildings, structures, fixtures, installations, parking lots, and vehicles, whether leased or used by Dawson County government or its officials, managers, Supervisors, employees, or other agents. This definition also includes locations other than County headquarters and offices, including all other locations of County-sponsored recreational, social, or educational events, and any place where a

Dawson County employee is located while traveling to or from such location in the course and scope of his duties on behalf of the County, including an employee's own vehicle when the employee is using it on County business, or when the vehicle is parked on County property. This definition shall not be interpreted to imply that the County assumes or accepts responsibility for any wrongful, tortious, negligent or criminal acts of any person whom it employs when such person is not acting pursuant to a County Supervisor's instruction in furtherance of the County's business, nor shall it constitute a waiver of any immunity which Dawson County or its officials or employees might have under federal, state or local laws or ordinances.

IMPAIRMENT

Drug and alcohol abuse on or off County Premises is entirely inconsistent with fitness for duty and as such shall constitute an impairment. Dawson County prohibits employees from being at work, on County Premises, operating County equipment, or operating any other equipment or vehicles on County business while impaired due to any illegal drug(s), legally obtained drug(s), or alcohol.

PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

(a) Illegal Drugs or controlled substances

(i) "Illegal drug(s) or controlled substance(s)" means any drug or substances the law prohibits individuals from manufacturing, dispensing, using, consuming, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling, or otherwise transferring, including, without limitation, all drugs listed as controlled substances under Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia. This definition encompasses any measurable amount of any drugs or controlled substances such as amphetamines, cannabinoids, cocaine, phencyclidine (PCP), methadone, methaqualone, opiates, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, propoxyphene or other drugs made unlawful under federal or state laws, or a metabolite of any such substances, "look-alikes," "designer drugs" having the same or similar psychotropic effects, unauthorized alcoholic beverages, marijuana, hallucinogens (whether natural or synthetic), inhalants, unauthorized prescription drugs, or authorized drugs which are not prescribed for a verifiable medical condition and/or are not used in strict accordance with this Rule and with the prescribing physician's instructions, or any other substances that are mood-altering, mind or consciousness-affecting, or which are likely to have an effect upon a person's perceptions, sensations, thought processes, self-awareness, emotions, or other mental or physiological or psychological reactions or behavior. It also includes urinaid or other substances, natural or synthetic, of a similar nature or purpose designated or used to alter a urine specimen or to conceal illicit chemical substances or their metabolites in an initial screening test.

(ii) Dawson County prohibits employees from manufacturing, dispensing, using, consuming, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling or otherwise transferring any illegal drug(s) or controlled substance(s) while on the job, on call, on County Premises, while operating County equipment or vehicles, or while operating any

other equipment or vehicle while on County business.

(iii) An employee is impaired due to the influence of illegal drug(s) or controlled substance(s) if such employee's drug test results indicate the presence of an illegal drug or controlled substance in an amount that constitutes a positive test under accepted scientific standards.

(b) Legally Obtained Drugs

(i) A "legally obtained drug" includes prescription drugs and over-the-counter drugs. A "prescription drug" means any substance that is attainable only by lawful prescription from a physician. "Over-the-counter" medication includes any substance that does not require a prescription, but which has the capacity to affect a person physically, mentally, or emotionally or which could otherwise affect a person's ability to perform.

(ii) Employees must not be on the job, on call, on County Premises, operating County equipment or vehicles, or operating any other equipment or vehicle while on County business while impaired due to any drug, legal or illegal, that renders the employee unfit for duty. An employee is "unfit for duty" if, in the County's opinion, the employee's use of legally obtained drugs jeopardizes his or her ability to work safely and efficiently. An employee who is using legally obtained drugs must notify his or her immediate Supervisor of any and all symptoms and probable adverse side effects that may render him or her unfit for duty. An employee's failure to so notify the County constitutes grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including, termination. If any employee's medically required use of legally obtained drugs renders the employee unfit for duty and, in the opinion of the County, a temporary alternative job assignment is not available, the employee will be considered unfit for duty.

(iii) Employees using legally obtained drugs while on the job shall do so in strict accordance with physician and/or manufacturer's directions. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the prescribing physician of the duties required by the employee's position and to ensure that the physician approves the use of the prescription medication while the employee is performing his or her duties.

(iv) The abuse and/or inappropriate use of legally obtained drugs while on the job, on call, on County Premises, while operating County equipment or vehicles, or while operating any other equipment or vehicle while on County business shall be prohibited and is a disciplinary matter. Job performance or attendance deficiencies resulting from abuse and/or inappropriate use shall be cause for disciplinary action.

(c) Alcohol

(i) "Alcohol" includes any beverage or substance containing alcohol manufactured for the primary purpose of personal consumption. Dawson County prohibits employees from using, consuming, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling, or otherwise transferring alcoholic beverages on the job, on call, on County premises, while operating County equipment or vehicles, or while operating any other equipment or vehicles while on County business.

(ii) No employee shall use alcohol while on the job, on call, on County Premises, while

operating County equipment or vehicle, or while operating any other equipment or vehicle while on County business. In addition, no employee shall use alcohol within four hours of reporting for duty. Violation of these provisions is prohibited and subjects the employee to discipline, up to and including termination.

(iii) Dawson County also prohibits employees from being on the job, on call, on County Premises or operating County equipment or vehicles, or operating any other equipment or vehicles on County business while under the influence of alcohol. An employee is "under the influence of alcohol" if, based upon the employees' speech statements, behavior, conduct, appearance, or odor, the County reasonably believes the employee is under the influence of alcohol in a manner that is adversely affecting the employee's behavior. An employee is also under the influence if an evidential breath test indicates a result of 0.02 percent or higher. An employee is further considered under the influence of alcohol if he has been arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol any County equipment or vehicles, or any other equipment or vehicles while on County business.

WHEN TESTING IS REQUIRED

(a) Pre-Employment/Post-Offer Testing

All Applicants for positions of employment with Dawson County, will be tested for drugs after a conditional offer of employment has been extended. Drug tests must also be performed on all seasonal and shift employees in Safety Sensitive or CDL positions returning to employment with the County after six months of absence from employment. No such Applicant/new hire or such seasonal or shift employee shall report to duty or be allowed to report to duty until the results of the drug test are obtained. Any such Applicant/new hire or seasonal or shift employee described above who refuses a pre-employment/post-offer drug test(s) or who tests positive, shall not be extended a final offer of employment and will not be considered for any subsequent employment for a period of at least two years. The Applicant will, however, be afforded the opportunity to contest the test results as set forth in this Rule.

(b) Random Testing

All employees who are required to hold a commercial driver's license (hereinafter referred to as "CDL" or "CDL positions") and employees in Safety Sensitive Positions shall be subject to random testing as follows:

(i) Tests will be ordered on a random, unannounced basis from the pool of identified CDL and Safety Sensitive employees.

(ii) A random selection method and test rates as adopted by the Human Resources Director will be used to select employees, thereby allowing each employee an equal chance of being tested each month. Random selection test rates are subject to change as determined by the Human Resource Director.

(iii) An employee's name will remain in the pool after being selected so that every employee will have an equal chance of being tested each time selections are made. Therefore, it is possible that any CDL or Safety Sensitive employee, who is randomly selected for testing, may be randomly selected again during the same year.

(c) After-Care Testing

Persons in CDL and Safety Sensitive Positions returning to work from an approved treatment program for drug or alcohol abuse may be subject to unannounced testing at the discretion of the Department Director for a period of six months following the employee's return to work.

(d) Return to Duty Testing

All employees in Safety Sensitive or CDL positions who are absent from work for more than thirty days, for any reason, shall be tested for drugs immediately upon returning to work and before performing any job duties.

(e) Position Testing

Employees who are transferred, reclassified, promoted, or demoted from a non-CDL/non-Safety Sensitive Position into a CDL or Safety Sensitive Position will be tested for drugs before performing any job duties in the new position.

(f) Reasonable Suspicion

All employees will be subject to testing when there is reasonable suspicion that the employee has used drugs or misused alcohol in violation of this Rule. Any employee who is required to take a reasonable suspicion test will be immediately suspended without pay pending the results of the test and confirmation of the results, if applicable.

(i) Any Supervisor who has received training in the signs and symptoms of drug and alcohol use and impairment may require an employee to undergo a reasonable suspicion test(s) for drugs or alcohol. A reasonable suspicion test may be required based upon, but not limited to the following:

(1) the personal observation of the employee's job performance, appearance, behavior, speech, or odor by the trained individual creating a reasonable suspicion that the employee has used drugs or alcohol in violation of this Rule;
(2) personal observation of the employee by another individual who has fully disclosed the observation to the trained Supervisor;
(3) observation of the employee by a nurse or physician engaged in the treatment or evaluation of a work related injury who has disclosed such observations to the County; or
(4) information from a law enforcement agency received by the County.

Additionally, any untrained Supervisor may require a reasonable suspicion test(s) for drugs or alcohol when a trained Supervisor or the Human Resources Director has reviewed the underlying facts and agrees that reasonable suspicion exists to require a test.

(ii) Specific and objective facts indicating that an employee's drug or alcohol use may have caused or have been a contributing factor to an on-duty Motor Vehicle accident will give rise to a reasonable suspicion test(s) for drugs or alcohol. The following facts, if present, may independently or collectively, depending upon the circumstances, give rise to reasonable suspicion:

(1) The appearance, behavior, speech or odor of the employee immediately prior to or after the accident;
(2) The employee left the scene or attempted to leave the accident scene without legal authority or permission to do so, or failed to report the accident to the appropriate individual or otherwise attempted to keep appropriate persons from learning about the accident or the extent of the accident;
(3) The employee acted contrary to a safety rule, established safety practice or otherwise engaged in demonstrably unsafe behavior for which there is no reasonable explanation;
(4) The employee was arrested or received a traffic citation;
(5) The employee or any other person received medical attention as a result of the accident; and
(6) The employee has been involved, as a contributing factor, in a pattern of repetitive on-duty accidents whether or not they involved actual or potential injury.

Notwithstanding the foregoing factors indicating reasonable suspicion of drug or alcohol use due to involvement in an on-duty Motor Vehicle accident, it is the policy of the County to administer drug and alcohol tests to any and all employees involved in any of the accidents described in paragraph (g) below.

(iii) Specific and objective facts indicating that an employee's drug or alcohol use may have caused or been a contributing factor to an on-duty accident involving the use of heavy machinery will give rise to a reasonable suspicion test(s) for drugs or alcohol. The following facts, if present, may independently or collectively, depending on the circumstances, give rise to reasonable suspicion:

(1) the appearance, behavior, speech or odor of the employee immediately prior to, or after, the accident;
(2) the employee left the accident scene or attempted to leave the accident scene without legal authority or authorization to do so, or failed to report the accident to the appropriate individual or otherwise

attempted to keep appropriate persons from learning about the accident or the extent of the accident;

(3) the employee acted contrary to a safety rule, established safety practices or otherwise engaged in demonstrably unsafe behavior without a reasonable explanation;

(4) the employee or any other person received medical attention as a result of the accident; and

(5) the employee has been involved as a contributing factor in a pattern of on-duty accidents whether or not they involved actual or potential injury.

Notwithstanding the foregoing factors indicating reasonable suspicion of drug or alcohol use due to involvement in an on-duty accident involving the use of heavy machinery, it is the policy of the County to administer drug and alcohol tests to any and all employees involved in any of the accidents described in paragraph (g) below.

(g) Post-Accident Testing

Alcohol and drug test(s) should be completed within eight hours of an accident resulting in any of the events described below. This testing is to be performed in addition to any drug or alcohol test(s) ordered by law enforcement authorities. It is the responsibility of the immediate Supervisor to ensure the involved employee or individual reports immediately for testing. Failure to do so can result in disciplinary action taken against the Supervisor and/or employee up to and including immediate termination.

Drug and alcohol testing must be performed within policy guidelines when any employee, while operating a County vehicle, transit vehicle or heavy machinery is involved in an accident that results in: (1) a fatality; or (2) a citation issued to the employee; or (3) an injured person requiring immediate medical treatment away from the scene; or (4) damage to County or personal property; or (5) damage to a vehicle to the extent that it is towed away.

(h) Post-Workplace Injury Testing

Alcohol and drug tests should be completed within eight hours of any workplace injury. The involved employee must report immediately for testing, or be subject to immediate termination.

PERSONS SUBJECT TO TESTING

(a) CDL Employees

Employees who are required to possess a CDL license as a job requirement are subject to all testing provisions of this Rule, including, but not limited to, pre-employment, post-accident, reasonable suspicion, random testing, position testing, return to duty and follow-

up testing. CDL employees will be tested based on procedures in compliance with the U.S. Department of Transportation's Transportation Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs regulations set forth in 49 CFR Part 40 ("DOT Guidelines").

(b) Safety Sensitive Employees

Safety Sensitive employees occupy positions where a lapse of judgment or impaired physical/mental ability in performing any essential job function could reasonably result in a significant threat of harm to the employee, fellow employees, citizens, inmates, or others. Safety Sensitive Positions include, but are not limited to, those which, as a part of the essential job functions, require: operation of a County vehicle two (2) or more times during a normally scheduled workweek of that position; the performance of law enforcement duties as a POST-certified law enforcement officer; possession of a firearm; providing emergency medical, rescue, or fire suppression services; interacting with incarcerated persons or persons on probation for drug charges; direct involvement in the enforcement of drug laws; direct involvement, access to, handling of or testing of illegal drugs that have been seized, confiscated by or taken into custody by law enforcement; the performance of duties essential to drug interdiction; primarily operating motorized equipment, heavy machinery or heavy equipment or the maintenance of Motor Vehicles, motorized equipment, heavy machinery or heavy equipment and are not otherwise designated as a CDL position subject to DOT Guidelines; or the performance of duties which directly affect public health or safety.

Safety Sensitive employees are subject to all testing provisions of this Rule, including, but not limited to, pre-employment, post-accident, reasonable suspicion, random, position testing, return to duty and follow-up testing. Safety Sensitive employees will be tested based upon procedures in compliance with DOT Guidelines.

(c) All Employees

Employees are subject to certain provisions of this Rule including, post-accident, reasonable suspicion, and position testing. Employees not holding a CDL or Safety Sensitive Position shall be drug tested via non-DOT drug testing guidelines.

(d) Job Applicants

All Applicants are subject to pre-employment testing after a conditional offer of employment has been extended.

(e) Employees in Offices of Elected Officials

Employees in the offices of Elected Officials are subject to the testing provisions contained in this Rule, unless the Elected Official has adopted a more stringent drug and alcohol workplace policy specific to his or her Department.

PROCEDURES FOR TESTING

(a) Whenever a drug or alcohol test(s) is to be performed under this Rule, the Department Director or his/her designee shall be notified of the circumstances necessitating the test(s) as soon as possible.

(b) Alcohol screening will be conducted using a federally approved evidential breath-testing device or the use of a swab/saliva test performed by an approved independent medical facility.

(c) All drug tests, regardless of the purpose for the test, shall be performed as a Panel 5 test for the following five drugs or classes of drugs: (1) Marijuana metabolites; (2) Cocaine metabolites; (3) Amphetamines; (4) Opiate metabolites; and (5) Phencyclidine (PCP).

(d) All drug tests shall be administered and accounted for by an approved laboratory and/or medical facility that is operating in compliance with the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Testing will involve an initial screening test(s) and confirmation of positive tests by gas chromatography/mass spectrometry (GC/MS) analysis. Tests will be certified, to the fullest extent possible under the circumstances, by a laboratory approved by the DHHS.

(e) All positive test results for drugs will be interpreted by a physician approved by the County as a medical review officer ("MRO") before the results are reported to the County. Prior to notifying the County, the MRO will make reasonable efforts to contact the employee for the purpose of allowing the employee to offer an alternative medical explanation for the positive test result. If the MRO is able to contact the Applicant or employee and determines there is a legitimate medical explanation for the positive test, the result will be communicated as negative to the County. The MRO's inability to contact the Applicant or employee before providing test results to the County will not void the test results or make the test results unusable in any subsequent disciplinary action. An Applicant or employee who fails to respond to an inquiry by the MRO within forty-eight hours of such inquiry shall have waived his/her opportunity to offer an alternative medical explanation for the positive test result or to request confirmation testing. Because the employee is present for interpretation of an alcohol test, the procedure concerning prior notification by the MRO is not applicable.

(f) Upon notification by the MRO of a confirmed positive result for drugs, the employee may request, within five calendar days of such notification, that the remaining portion of his/her specimen undergo a second confirmation test at his/her expense at a DHHS laboratory of his/her choice. If the test conducted by the laboratory selected by the employee is negative for the presence of drugs, a third test

may be made at the County's sole expense at a separate DHHS facility of its own choosing. The results of the third facility will be determinative. If the results from the third facility are negative, all prior positive tests will be disregarded and shall not be the basis for any disciplinary or adverse action. This option of a confirmation test is contingent upon there being enough of the specimen remaining to allow for a confirmation test.

(g) The County will make reasonable efforts to notify the employee in writing of a positive drug test within five days from the date it receives the test results. Because the results of a breath alcohol test are immediately available, this provision will not apply to alcohol tests conducted in such a manner.

(h) Any employee ordered to be tested based upon reasonable suspicion, shall be immediately removed from duty, escorted to the testing facility, and taken home (unless other suitable arrangements have been made to transport the employee). Under no circumstances will the employee be allowed to drive himself or herself home. The employee shall be suspended without pay pending the results of the test and any confirmation tests, if applicable. If the positive test is explained or negated by the MRO and/or subsequent confirmation testing, the employee shall be reinstated with back pay and the Suspension without pay will be expunged from the employee's personnel file.

(i) In the event that it is not reasonable under the circumstances to conduct an alcohol test based on a breath test, the County reserves the right to test for the presence of drugs or alcohol by a blood test analysis. If this procedure is used, the County will make reasonable efforts to notify the employee of the results within ten days after the results are received. A MRO will not be used when a blood test for alcohol is conducted.

CONSENT FOR TESTING

Prior to date of hire, all employees and job Applicants will be provided a consent form consenting to any and all frequency of drug and/or alcohol test(s) set forth in this Rule and permitting the release of test results to the employer and/or the medical review officials. Signed consent forms are kept on file by the Human Resources Department and are enforceable for the duration of employment.

Any employee subject to drug and alcohol testing under this Rule who refuses to submit to a drug and alcohol test as required herein shall be subject to termination. Employees who refuse to be escorted or fail to appear at the designated collection site to take the test when so directed or as required by this Rule shall also be subject to termination.

Refusal can include an inability to provide a sufficient urine specimen, breath or saliva sample without a valid medical explanation, as well as a verbal declaration, obstructive

behavior, or physical absence resulting in the inability to conduct the test.

ARRESTS/INDICTMENTS/CONVICTIONS FOR DRUG OR ALCOHOL RELATED OFFENSES

An employee must report his/her arrest, indictment and/or conviction for violation of a criminal drug statute (including any drug or alcohol offenses under local, state or federal law, including but not limited to any drug or alcohol offenses enumerated in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated) whether the violation occurs in or outside the workplace or on or off duty, to his/her immediate Supervisor or Department Director. An employee must report such an arrest, indictment or conviction as soon as possible, but in no event later than 72 hours after such arrest, indictment and/or conviction. The term "conviction" as used in this Policy means a plea of guilty or a finding of guilt (including a plea of nolo contendere and regardless of treatment as a first offender under Georgia law), imposition of a sentence, or both, by any judicial body charged with a responsibility to determine violations of the federal or state criminal drug statutes. The County will make a determination at that time whether the arrest, indictment and/or conviction causes a temporary or permanent disqualification from holding that position, or constitutes grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

An employee who violates this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

SEARCHES

All County-issued equipment, property and facilities, including but not limited to, desks, lockers, and vehicles (collectively "Materials") are subject to inspection at any time and for any reason. No employee shall have any privacy interest whatsoever in any County-issued Materials. No personal property may be searched unless the owner of the property has consented or a search is otherwise legally permissible. If an individual is asked to submit to a search, and refuses, that individual will be considered insubordinate and will be subject to discipline, up to and including, termination.

If a search uncovers evidence of employee wrong doing, illegal activity, or employee violations of County rules or policies, the evidence may be used to support disciplinary actions up to, and including, termination. In cases involving suspected illegal activities, the evidence may be turned over to the proper legal authorities.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All reports of test results for drug and alcohol, searches, or any employee referral to, or participation in an assistance program or treatment program for addictive disorders, will be maintained in strict confidence. Any person authorized to have access to such confidential information, who, without authorization, discloses it to another person shall have engaged in gross misconduct and be subject to severe disciplinary action, up to and including, termination. The confidentiality of such information shall not apply to any use by or communication to the Dawson County attorneys, or where the information is relevant to the

County's defense in an administrative or civil action. Such information may also be disclosed to the extent required by any federal, state or local law, statute, ordinance or regulation.

DISCIPLINE

(a) Immediate Suspension

An employee who tests positive for drugs or alcohol shall immediately be relieved from duty, placed on Suspension without pay, and sent home pending disciplinary action. If the positive test is explained or negated by the MRO and/or subsequent confirmation testing, the employee shall be reinstated with back pay and the Suspension without pay will be expunged from the employee's personnel file.

(b) Disciplinary Action

An employee who violates any provision of this Rule is subject to discipline, up to and including termination. If terminated, the employee will not be eligible for rehire.

(c) Immediate Termination

The following reasons shall be presumed to result in immediate termination of an employee:

(i) Manufacturing, dispensing, using, consuming, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling, or otherwise transferring an illegal drug(s) or controlled substance(s) while on the job, on call, on County Premises, while operating County equipment or vehicles, or while operating any other equipment or vehicles on County business.

(ii) Operating County motorized equipment while unfit for duty due to the use of drugs and/or alcohol.

(iii) Conviction for violation of any drug law.

(iv) Refusing to consent to or to take a drug or alcohol test pursuant to this Rule.

(v) Failure to appear at the designated collection site to take a drug or alcohol test when so directed or as required by this Rule.

(vi) A confirmed positive test for drugs or alcohol.

3.5: SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Standard safety procedures as established by the County, State, Federal (OSHA) and/or various departments shall be adhered to at all times. Violation of safety regulations such as performing work in an unsafe manner or failure to use required safety equipment is grounds for discipline or

termination. Anything creating a threat to employees, co-workers or the general public is grounds for discipline or termination.

3.6: SEAT BELT POLICY

The use of seat belts is required by the driver and passengers in all County vehicles equipped with seat belts while said vehicle is in motion on roads and highways. It is also required that seat belts be used for off-road vehicles such as tractors, road graders, and heavy equipment, or any piece of County equipment equipped with a seatbelt. Noncompliance will result in disciplinary action. (See Exhibit E)

3.7: VIOLENCE AND WEAPONS

The County believes in maintaining a safe and healthy workplace, in part by promoting open, friendly, and supportive working relationships among all employees. Violence or threats of violence have no place in the workplace. Violence is not an effective solution to any problem. Neither threats of violence nor fighting will be tolerated. Employees are strictly prohibited from bringing any Weapons, including knives, pistols, rifles, stun guns, mace, etc., to the worksite or office in the course and scope of their employment with the County. A person with a valid Weapons-carry license, as the terms "Weapon" and "Weapons-Carry License" are defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-11-125.1(5) and (6), may carry a Weapon into a County building or portion of a building when the building or portion thereof is open for business except if ingress to the building or portion of the building is restricted or screened by security personnel. Knives required for job duties or personal pocket knives with blades of less than three inches are acceptable.

The paragraph above shall have no application to County elected or appointed officials, constitutional officers and their respective employees, and any other County officer or agent for whom an exemption is authorized by law.

Employees are expected to immediately report to their Supervisor any violation of this policy. Any employee found threatening another employee, fighting, and/or carrying Weapons to the worksite will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

RULE 4: ETHICAL AND BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

4.1: CODE OF ETHICS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

It is the policy of the Dawson County Board of Commissioners to uphold, promote, and demand the highest standards of ethics from all of its employees. County employees shall conduct themselves in accordance with the Code of Ethics for Government Service (O.C.G.A. § 45-10-1):

There is established for and within the state and for and in all governments therein a code of ethics for government service which shall read as follows:

--CODE OF ETHICS FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICE--

Any person in government service should:

I. Put loyalty to the highest moral principles and to country above loyalty to persons, party, or government department.

II. Uphold the Constitution, laws, and legal regulations of the United States and the State of Georgia and of all governments therein and never be a party to their evasion.

III. Give a full day's labor for a full day's pay and give to the performance of his duties his earnest effort and best thought.

IV. Seek to find and employ more efficient and economical ways of getting tasks accomplished.

V. Never discriminate unfairly by the dispensing of special favors or privileges to anyone, whether for remuneration or not, and never accept, for himself or his family, favors or benefits under circumstances which might be construed by reasonable persons as influencing the performance of his governmental duties.

VI. Make no private promises of any kind binding upon the duties of office, since a government employee has no private word which can be binding on public duty.

VII. Engage in no business with the government, either directly or indirectly, which is inconsistent with the conscientious performance of his governmental duties.

VIII. Never use any information coming to him confidentially in the performance of governmental duties as a means for making private profit.

IX. Expose corruption wherever discovered.

X. Uphold these principles, ever conscious that public office is a public trust.

4.2 TOBACCO USE

Consistent with the public health concerns addressed by the adoption of the Georgia Smokefree Air Act of 2005, the County's policy is to provide tobacco-free environments for our employees, customers, and the general public. Tobacco use of any kind is prohibited inside our office, inside any County vehicle, and on our worksites.

Employees are also responsible to inform all those working on our job sites of this tobacco-free policy, and report to their Supervisor any violation of this policy.

4.3: USE OF COUNTY-OWNED EQUIPMENT OR MANPOWER

No employee shall take any County-owned vehicle, County supplies or equipment or County-paid manpower for personal use. Employees shall only use supplies or equipment in the manner authorized by the Department Head. Emergency use is authorized in the cases of sickness or injury. Emergency use is to be reported as soon as possible. See also Exhibit E-Dawson County Vehicle Policy.

4.4: CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE

Employees must notify their immediate Supervisor of any arrests or convictions within three Business Days of the incident.

An employee shall be suspended indefinitely without pay at the discretion of the County Manager or the applicable Department Director, or his/her respective designee, when awaiting trial on criminal charges, the nature of which would impede or undermine the employee's ability to satisfactorily perform his/her job. The employee will be given the opportunity to demonstrate that the criminal charges should not subject him/her to Suspension from employment with the County. Thereafter, the County will make a determination on whether said Suspension is job related and consistent with business necessity.

In the alternative, if the employee's actions and/or the criminal charges are such that it is not in the best interest of the County for the employee to remain in the County workforce, the County Manager or the applicable Department Director, or his/her respective designee, as applicable, may elect to terminate the employee upon Notice of the criminal charges or at any time thereafter. The employee will be given the opportunity to demonstrate that the criminal charges should not subject him/her to Dismissal from employment with the County. Thereafter, the County will make a determination on whether said Dismissal is job related and consistent with business necessity.

If the County does not elect to terminate the employee during the pendency of criminal charges, upon receipt of Notice from the employee that the criminal matter has been resolved by Dismissal, plea, or trial, the County Manager or the applicable Department Director, or his/her respective designee, shall make a determination as to whether the employee shall be reinstated and whether any such reinstatement shall be with or without loss of pay. If an employee is fully exonerated of all criminal charges, the employee shall be reinstated without loss of pay, privileges, benefits, or status retroactive to the date of Suspension.

A conviction of a felony or a crime of moral turpitude may be grounds for Dismissal.

4.5: DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

County employees, by reason of their position, may at times have protected confidential or privileged information. Employees are prohibited from releasing such information without specific approval of their Department Head or the County Manager.

Protected confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following: matters of a

technical nature, such as computer software, product sources, product research and designs; and matters of a business nature, such as customer lists, customer contact information, associate information, on-site program and support materials, candidate and recruit lists and information, personnel information, placement information, pricing lists, training programs, contracts, sales reports, sales, financial and marketing data, systems, forms, methods, procedures, and analyses, and any other proprietary information, whether communicated orally or in documentary, computerized or other tangible form, concerning the County's or its customers' operations and business.

Employees should ensure that any materials containing confidential or proprietary information are filed and/or securely stored before leaving work areas each day. During the Workday, employees should not leave any sensitive information lying openly visible or unguarded.

Dawson County is a public entity and is subject to the Georgia Open Records Act. Therefore, any request for information should be forwarded to the employee's Elected Official or the Dawson County Clerk for appropriate handling. The employee should not release any information but refer such requests as stated herein.

If you have any questions about this policy, consult your Supervisor or the County Manager.

4.6: POLITICAL ACTIVITY RULE

Employees of the County are encouraged to exercise their right to vote, but no employee shall make use of County time or equipment to aid a political candidate, party or cause; or use a County position to influence, coerce or intimidate any person in the interest of a political candidate, party, or cause.

4.6.1: SEEKING ELECTIVE OFFICE

Any County employee seeking elective office within Dawson County shall, upon declaring candidacy, which is defined as the day the employee files documents with the County Registrar seeking such office, either resign or submit a request in writing to the County Manager or appropriate Elected Official for a Leave of absence without pay from the date of his/her announcement through the duration of the campaign or the announcement of election results.

If elected to office, the employee shall be separated from the County the day after the election upon the written request and approval of the County Manager, Board of Commissioners, or appropriate Elected Official. Nothing in this section shall prevent an employee from fully exercising those rights to participate in political activities granted by the laws of the State of Georgia or the laws of the United States of America.

4.6.2: PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

An employee may not:

- Be involved in any political activity which would constitute a conflict of interest, i.e. using an employee's title or affiliation with the County in any way including County property, equipment or time; including participation in any aspect of any local political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for office within Dawson County, including municipal and/or County government offices; or

- Knowingly solicit, accept, or receive political contributions from any person to be used in support of or opposition to any candidate for election within Dawson County including municipal and/or County government offices; or

- Use, or promise to use, directly or indirectly, any official authority or influence, whether possessed or anticipated, to secure or attempt to secure for any person, a job or other advantage for the purpose of influencing the vote or political action of any person.

No employee shall be hired, promoted, favored, or discriminated against with respect to employment because of his/her political opinions or affiliations.

Employees may engage in the political process. However, an employee violating this section shall be subject to Dismissal.

4.7: SOLICITATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Fundraisers:

Employees are prohibited from soliciting funds for any purpose from the public or from other County employees while on duty or during work hours, except such charitable causes as are approved in advance by the County Manager or authorized Elected Official.

All employees are prohibited from soliciting funds from the public at any time while wearing a County uniform except such causes specifically approved in advance by the County Manager, Board of Commissioners, or authorized Elected Official.

Employees of the County should not solicit anything of value from any person or organization with those which the County has a current or potential business relationship.

Employees of the County should not accept any item of value from any party in exchange for or in connection with a business transaction between the County and that other party.

If you are faced with and are unsure how to handle a situation that you believe has the potential to violate this code of ethical conduct, notify your Supervisor or the County Manager. Violations of this code may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

For the safety, convenience, and protection of all employees, the County prohibits external solicitation and distribution of non-County materials on County property or at County job sites at all times.

4.8: SURRENDER OF PROPERTY

If an employee is suspended or discharged, he/she shall return to his/her Department Head, all items of equipment including uniforms owned by the County. The County reserves the right to seek reimbursement for equipment that is returned in damaged condition or that is not returned upon an employee's separation.

4.9: REWARDS OR GIFTS

No employee shall accept any gift, favor or reward other than a regular salary as provided for by law for any service rendered as an employee of Dawson County, unless the gift is of incidental value and not given in response to a solicitation and not in exchange for a business purpose. Gifts to entire Departments or work groups may be received upon approval of the County Manager or authorized Elected Official.

4.10: LENDING OR BORROWING MONEY

No employee shall lend money or borrow money from another County employee who makes a practice of loaning money and charging interest to employees.

4.11: FALSIFYING RECORDS

No employee shall in any way falsify County records. Such records include, but are not limited to, payroll, purchasing, payment approval, receiving or inventory records. Falsifying records may result in Dismissal.

4.12: PERSONAL ENTERPRISE ON COUNTY TIME

County employees are strictly prohibited from pursuing outside business activity on County time. Secondary income sources, such as mass mailing services, etc., are not to interfere with primary business hours. Government time or property is not to be used for personal gain of any kind, in order to avoid any appearance of impropriety.

SECTION II: REGULATIONS

REGULATION I: EMPLOYMENT

PURPOSE

The purpose of establishing the following employment practices is to assure fair treatment of

Applicants and employees without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, uniformed service status, political beliefs, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions or any other legally protected category.

All employees of the County, regardless of their classification or position, are employed on an at-will basis, which means that each employee's employment is terminable at the will of the employee or the County at any time, with or without cause and with or without Notice. No officer, agent, representative, or employee of the County has any authority to enter into any agreement with any employee or Applicant for employment on other than an at-will basis. Furthermore, nothing contained in the policies, procedures, handbooks, manuals, job descriptions, application for employment, or any other document of the County shall in any way create an express or implied contract of employment or an employment relationship on other than an at-will basis.

1.1: RECRUITMENT

Recruitment of candidates for hire by Dawson County shall be planned to meet the immediate and long range needs of the County. The County Manager and Department Head will use information such as turnover, budgeted positions, and future Departmental needs. Recruitment efforts shall be directed to ensure that all segments of the public and staff have the opportunity to apply and be considered for positions.

1.1.1: FILLING VACANCIES

All vacancies will be filled according to the policies set forth in this Regulation, regardless of whether the vacant position exists as a result of a newly created position or whether an existing position has been vacated. Newly created positions must have approval by the Board of Commissioners prior to commencement of recruitment efforts when funding of said position was not approved in any previous or existing budget. Vacancies may be filled by Promotion, transfer, reinstatement, probationary Appointment or temporary Appointment. The County Manager/Department Head shall use various methods of publicity and media to provide Notice of vacancies to as many qualified persons as possible and to assure obtaining qualified Applicants. Vacancies shall be announced publicly for a minimum of 14 calendar days. Job Vacancy Notices shall be posted on the Human Resources bulletin board in Dawson County and sent to all Departments in the County.

1.1.2: MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

All positions shall be open only to persons who meet such minimum requirements as are listed on the Job Description. Such requirements may include, but are not limited to, the following: experience, education, training, skills, and other qualifications that are desired or normally required to perform the duties and any responsibilities. The County Manager or his/her designee will review all

applications to ensure that the Applicants meet Minimum Qualifications. Applicants who fail to meet Minimum Qualifications may be denied the opportunity to proceed further in the hiring process and will otherwise be ineligible for consideration.

1.1.3: APPOINTMENTS

The County recognizes two types of Appointment procedures that apply to initial Appointments and to Promotions and transfers into a vacant position; internal competitive and open competitive Appointment procedures. Employees who report directly to the County Commission or are appointed by the County Manager may, but are not required to, engage in a competitive recruitment process.

1.1.3.1: INTERNAL COMPETITIVE

It will be the County's policy and preference to promote and transfer from within whenever possible. If a satisfactory pool of qualified Applicants is available internally, then the internal competitive process will be followed and only current employees will be eligible for consideration. Announcements of such vacancies shall be made within the involved Department or on a countywide basis depending upon the nature of the Vacancy.

1.1.3.2: OPEN COMPETITIVE

Open competitive Appointment procedures are the normal practice of the County. When a Vacancy occurs, the Vacancy will be announced publicly in accord with Section 1.1.6. The County will fill the Vacancy by selecting the best qualified Applicant using appropriate screening methods as determined by the County Manager/Department Head.

1.1.4: RECLASSIFICATON

Appointment of a current employee to a new position, for which a Vacancy is not created by reclassifying the incumbent, may be authorized by the County Manager as a direct Appointment.

1.1.5: PROMOTION

A Vacancy in a higher position in the Classification Plan may be filled as far as practical by Promotion from a lower class. Each candidate must meet the minimum requirements for the position.

1.1.6: TRANSFER

A Vacancy may be filled by the transfer of an employee from another comparable position subject to internal competitive procedures. A transfer of an employee from one Department to another Department shall have the acknowledgment of both appointing authorities concerned and the County Manager.

1.1.7: PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS OF JOB VACANCIES

Public announcements of vacancies shall specify the job title, general duties to be performed, minimum and/or necessary qualifications, final date on which applications will be received, a statement that Dawson County is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and that applications are subject to public disclosure under the Georgia Open Records Law.

1.1.8: APPLICATIONS

Applications must be completed in full and are available on the County website, intranet and at the Dawson County Government Center Human Resources Department located at 25 Justice Way, Suite 2233, Dawsonville, GA 30534.

1.1.8.1: FORMS

Applications shall be made on the form prescribed by the Human Resources Department or the County Manager and may be supplemented by a resume. The Human Resources Director shall be custodian of all applications. Applications shall be completed in full and will require information covering training, experience, education and other job-related information. Any data required for equal opportunity purposes or other legal purposes shall be obtained on documents to be kept separately from the application form. Applications shall be signed by the Applicant attesting to the truth of all statements contained in the application form. Untruths, misrepresentations, or material omissions made by an Applicant on his/her application shall be grounds for rejection of the application, or if the Applicant has been hired prior to the County learning of the discrepancy, it shall be grounds for termination. Any Applicant found to have submitted an application containing untruths, misrepresentations, or material omissions shall be unqualified from consideration for employment with Dawson County. Incomplete applications may be returned to the Applicant with a Notice to complete and return to the appropriate Department (by mail or in person) on or before the established closing date. The County shall have no obligation, however, to detect an incomplete application and notify an Applicant prior to the Vacancy being filled. Incomplete applications may be completed or revised and re-submitted, however, there is no guarantee that the Vacancy will remain open during such process.

1.1.8.2: DENIAL

No individual shall be denied the right to file an application for employment for

any open position. Certain classified positions may be regarded as open for continuous recruitment of qualified Applicants, while other positions may be classified as closed until such time as there is an announced Vacancy.

1.1.8.3: SECURITY CLEARANCE

Employment in areas such as Public Safety and Finance and Parks and Recreation where the public has a compelling interest in the security of property and life may require a more detailed background check. Applicants for these positions may be asked to supply additional personal information beyond the County's standard background check that would not be needed in other areas of employment.

1.1.8.4: ACTIVE STATUS

Applications will be active for a period of not more than six (6) months with the exception of Public Safety applications. Public Safety applications will remain active for a period of twelve (12) months from the date of receipt and/or completion of any Examination requirement(s).

1.1.8.5: DISQUALIFICATION

The Human Resources Director or a designated representative may reject any application or refuse to examine an application or, upon Examination may disqualify an Applicant when it has been determined that:

- The application was not received on or before the closing date established for receiving application.
- The application was not filed on the prescribed form.
- The Applicant does not possess one or more of the requirements as specified in the job classification or public announcement.
- The Applicant does not reply to, or return, a telephone inquiry within two days.
- The Applicant falsified statements, practiced deception or did not complete pertinent information on the application form.
- The Applicant is physically or mentally unable to perform the duties of the position as may be determined by a physician.
- The Applicant has been convicted of a criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, or sale of a controlled substance, dangerous drug, or marijuana. Such Applicant shall be given the opportunity to demonstrate that the conviction should not exclude him/her from consideration

for the position he/she seeks with the County. Thereafter, the County will make a determination on whether exclusion of the application is job-related and consistent with business necessity.

- The Applicant has been convicted of a crime involving a violent crime such as assault with a deadly Weapon, aggravated assault, or murder. Such Applicants shall be automatically rejected. Such Applicant shall be given the opportunity to demonstrate that the conviction should not exclude him/her from consideration for the position he/she seeks with the County. Thereafter the County will make a determination on whether exclusion of the application is job related and consistent with business necessity.

- Applicants convicted of any other crime will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- The Applicant has used (or attempted to use) political pressure, gratuity, bribery, or any other consideration of value to secure an advantage in the Examination for employment.

- The Applicant fails to comply with County drug and alcohol policies.

- The Applicant was unable to successfully pass a pre-employment drug screening and/or background check or does not have an acceptable Motor Vehicle Record and would be required to use County vehicles. See Motor Vehicle Policy.

- The Applicant is not eligible for employment in the United States.

- The Applicant was previously employed by Dawson County and was dismissed for cause, resigned not in good standing, resigned in lieu of termination, or is otherwise not currently eligible for re-employment.

1.1.9: INVESTIGATION OF CANDIDATE'S HISTORY

The Human Resources Director or his/her designee may investigate an Applicant's employment, training, educational, criminal, credit and driver's history to verify the statements contained in the application. Any employee appointed through fraud by misrepresentation or withholding of any information contained in the job application is subject to discharge from County service. An employee dismissed for such fraud shall be ineligible for re-hire by County.

1.1.9.1 INTERVIEWS

Upon initial review and removal of Applicants from consideration that are rejected

in accordance with the standards set forth above, the Human Resources Director shall make available the remaining applications to the applicable Department Director for further consideration, which may include conducting personal interviews with those remaining Applicants. The Human Resources Director or his/her designee will assist the applicable Department Director to the extent requested in the interview and selection process.

1.1.10: EXAMINATIONS, VERIFICATION OF REFERENCES AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

The County Manager may use or approve any job-related selection methods that will maximize reliability and objectivity. The selection procedures shall measure education and/or experience, structured oral Examinations, and physical fitness.

Examinations shall be practical in nature, rated impartially and constructed to reveal the candidate's capacity for the particular class or position, his/her background, related knowledge, skills, and abilities.

The Human Resources Director or the Department Director shall verify the references and past employment of at least the top candidate prior to making any job offer unless a legitimate reason can be provided to the County Manager regarding why such reference verification is unnecessary.

Eligibility Verification Requirements:

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 13-10-90, *et seq*., the County must verify employment eligibility of all newly hired employees. These employees must complete Form I-9 and provide legal documentation of citizenship and/or work status as set forth on the form. Within three Business Days of hire, the County's Human Resources Department electronically verifies accuracy of the employee's social security number and other documentation through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security verification system. The employee will be promptly notified of a non-confirmation of their information and will be provided a referral letter. Once notified, the employee has ten Business Days to notify the County of his/her decision regarding whether to contest the finding. If the employee does not provide such Notice or chooses not to contest the tentative non-confirmation, the County may immediately terminate such employee. If the employee chooses to contest the tentative non-confirmation, it is the employee's responsibility to visit the Social Security Administration Office or Department of Human Services (as applicable) within eight federal government Business Days to discuss and begin to resolve the discrepancy. The County may not terminate, suspend, delay training, withhold pay, lower pay or take any other adverse action against the employee based on the employee's decision to contest the tentative non-confirmation or while his or her case is still pending with the Social Security Administration or Department of Human Services. On the tenth federal government Business Day after the date of the referral letter, the County may make a second inquiry to the Social Security

Administration or Department of Human Services (as applicable) database for an updated case status. If the database shows a final non-confirmation or that the employee failed to report to the Social Security Administration or Department of Human Services (as applicable) within the required time, this will result in immediate termination. If any portion of this process as set forth changes pursuant to Georgia or federal law, the processes and guidelines of such law will govern.

1.2: EMPLOYMENT STATUS

1.2.1: WORKING TEST PERIOD

A working test Appointment is an initial Appointment to a position with the County contingent upon the satisfactory completion of the working test period, which consists of the first six months, unless otherwise specified.

1.2.2: REGULAR STATUS

An employee given a working status Appointment becomes a regular status employee and given official Appointment upon satisfactory completion of the working test period.

1.2.3: TEMPORARY STATUS

A temporary Appointment is an initial Appointment by the County Manager to a position for a designated period of time not to exceed six (6) months.

1.2.4: TIME LIMITED STATUS

A time-limited Appointment is an initial Appointment by the County Manager to a position established for special programs or projects normally anticipated as being longer than six (6) months but not regular and continuing in nature.

1.2.5: ACTING CAPACITY STATUS

An employee may serve in an acting capacity if appointed by the County Manager only in a position that has been approved by the BOC via the position control listing and is vacant or temporarily unmanned. Such Appointment shall normally not exceed ninety (90) days unless specifically stated otherwise.

1.3: WORKING TEST AND REGULAR STATUS

The working test period shall be considered an integral part of the selection

process. All employees appointed, transferred or promoted to a position in the County's service shall be required to satisfactorily complete the working test period prior to achieving regular status and the Department Director shall notify the HR Director of satisfactory completion of working test period.

1.3.1: DURATION

The first six (6) months of service in a position to which an employee has been appointed shall be defined as the working test period. If the working test employee's performance has not been adequately proficient and the Department Head or designee believes that it could be upgraded during an extension of the probationary period, the Department Head or designee may request an extended working test period of not more than six (6) months.

1.3.2: EXTENSIONS

The working test period may be extended in accord with Section 1.3.1 with the recommendation of the Department Head and the Human Resources Director with the approval of the County Manager or authorized Elected Official. Working test period extensions shall be considered only when extenuating circumstances exist or it is believed that an employee deserves the additional working test period for purposes of improvement.

1.3.3: RIGHTS

Working test employees are not covered by progressive discipline or due process procedures. However, Supervisors are to apprise employees of their status during the working test period.

1.3.4: ACTIVE WORK STATUS

Only time in active work status shall be counted toward completion of the working test period. An employee in working test status who is absent on Leave without pay, on workers' compensation or disability Leave, shall be required to complete the amount of time on the job specified for the class to which he/she is appointed.

1.3.5: DEMOTION

A reduction of a regular or working test employee to a position of a lower class is a Demotion. A lower class means a job classification having a lower maximum salary than the job classification in which the individual is presently employed. A Demotion may be made for cause or may be made on a voluntary or involuntary

basis, provided the employee meets the qualifications for the position to which he/she is being demoted.

In the event of a Demotion, the Department Head must give written notification to the employee(s) being demoted of the action being taken and the reason for the Demotion.

An employee who is reclassified by Demotion shall have his/her salary reduced at the discretion of the Department Head. The new reduced rate of pay may not exceed the maximum pay for the employee's new job classification.

1.3.5.1: DEMOTION FOR CAUSE

A regular or working test employee may be demoted because of unfitness to perform assigned duties, negligence or inefficiency in performing duties, or for misconduct, insubordination or other justifiable cause.

1.3.5.2: VOLUNTARY DEMOTION

If, for personal or other reasons, a regular or working test employee prefers to be assigned to a position of a lower class, the Department Head may make such a voluntary Demotion. The employee must indicate his/her knowledge and approval of the Demotion by his/her signature in the explanation block of the Personnel Action Form.

1.3.6 TRANSFER/PROMOTION DURING WORKING TEST PERIOD

A transferred or promoted employee shall be subject to a working test period for the first six months in the new position. If it is determined that the employee is unsuitable for the position, the Department Director may return the employee to the position previously occupied if it is vacant. If not vacant, the Department Director may attempt to place the employee in a comparable position for which the employee meets the requirements. If such placement is not feasible, the employee may be placed in Layoff status and may be considered for placement when a suitable position becomes available. This action can be taken without the employee's right of appeal to the Board of Commissioners.

1.3.7: SEPARATION DURING WORKING TEST

At any time during a working test period, an employee may be separated from his/her position under the system without the right of appeal or hearing.

1.4: SEPARATION

An employee may be separated from the service of Dawson County by any of the

following methods:

1.4.1: RESIGNATION

An employee shall submit to his/her Supervisor written Notice of Resignation at least fourteen (14) calendar days in advance of the date of Resignation. Immediately upon receipt of such Notice of Resignation, the Supervisor shall forward the same to the Department Head or designee and then to Human Resources. Failure to comply with this regulation shall be entered on the service record of the employee and may result in a denial of re-employment.

1.4.2: ABANDONMENT OF JOB

An employee shall be considered to have abandoned his/her position when any of the following occur: (1) an employee is absent without Notice to the Department Director or his/her designee for three or more consecutive Working Days; (2) an employee is absent for three or more consecutive Working Days after providing Notice, but without having any available Leave time; or (3) an employee is absent for three or more consecutive Working Days without receiving approval for the absences. An employee may not be deemed to have abandoned his/her position if the employee has provided Notice to the Department Director and the employee demonstrates a serious medical condition supported by medical documentation to the satisfaction of the County. Such status of non-abandonment, however, could change at any time in the discretion of the County depending on the length of the absence from the position and other circumstances.

For purposes of this paragraph, a "Working Day" is defined as the regular hours for County employees. The employee shall be deemed to have abandoned his/her position and to have resigned as of the end of the third Working Day. The Human Resources Director should be notified immediately of any employee who has resigned as a result of abandonment of the position.

1.4.3: LAYOFF/REDUCTION IN FORCE

Lay-off is defined as a reduction in force that may result in the separation of employee(s) due to abolishment of a position, a shortage of funds or work, a need to increase efficiency, or a material change in the duties or organizational unit of the Department. No lay-offs shall be made for the purpose of dismissing an employee for incompetence, misconduct, or for other reasons, except as included in this Regulation. The lay-off does not reflect discredit upon the service of the employee. A lay-off can be recommended by the Board of Commissioners, the County Manager, and/or the Human Resources Director. Any lay-off must be approved by the County Manager prior to becoming effective.

1.4.3.1: REASONS FOR LAYOFF/REDUCTION FORCE

The County reserves the right to have a reduction in force due to:

A. Economic reasons- shortage of funds, materials or work;
B. Abolishment of a position;
C. Material changes in the duties of a job or the organization; and/or
D. Any other related reason that does not reflect dissatisfaction with the employee.

1.4.3.2: ORDER OF LAYOFF

Prior to the lay-off, the affected Department Director shall make recommendations to the County Manager who shall consider job performance, work records, employee evaluation ratings, and length of service in determining which employees shall be laid-off. If it is found that two or more persons in the Department in which the lay-off is to be made have equal job performance, records, and/or ratings as determined by review of employee records and evaluation ratings, the order of lay-off shall be based upon seniority. No Full-time Employee shall be laid-off while another person is employed on a temporary or part-time basis in a position within the same Job Description if the employee is willing to accept the temporary or part-time work. In evaluating employees for purposes of a lay-off, care should be taken to accurately evaluate all employees. An employee shall not be laid-off based on race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, political affiliation, disability, or any other category protected by federal and/or state law.

1.4.3.3: SPECIAL CASES

Should a Department Director determine that the retention of a certain employee is essential to the effective operation of the Department because of the fact that such employee possesses special skills or abilities, and should the Department Director wish to retain such employee in preference to another with a higher rating or seniority, then the Department Director shall submit a written request to the County Manager. Such notification shall set forth in detail the specific skills and abilities possessed by the employee and the reasons why such employee is essential to the effective operation of the Department. With the approval of the County Manager, the individual may be retained to the detriment of the higher ranking employee.

1.4.3.4: NOTICE OF LAYOFF TO EMPLOYEES

Employees to be laid-off shall be notified in writing by the Department Head at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the effective date of the Layoff. As an alternative, the employee may be laid-off without Notice of 14 days if at least 14

days of separation pay is provided.

1.4.3.5: DEMOTION IN LIEU OF LAYOFF

Prior to lay-off and in an effort to avoid separation of employment, the County Manager may direct Lateral Transfers or Demotions as necessary to place employees into positions for which they are qualified rather than lay them off. Lateral Transfers or Demotions in accordance with this Regulation will be effective unless the employee elects in writing to be laid off. Written Notice of said election from the employee must be received by the County Manager within three calendar days after the employee has received Notice of a Lateral Transfer or Demotion.

1.4.4: DISABILITY

Dawson County will comply with the requirements of the American Disabilities Act (ADA).

If an employee suffers from a condition or physical or mental disability that prevents him/her from performing the essential functions of the position or is otherwise unfit for duty such that the employee cannot perform the essential functions of the position, even with reasonable accommodation or in the absence of an available reasonable accommodation, the employee is subject to Dismissal for inability to perform the job.

1.4.5: LOSS OF REQUIRED CERTIFICATION OR LICENSE

Any employee who is unable to do his/her job adequately because of the loss of a necessary license or other requirement may be suspended without pay until such license or required certification is obtained. An employee is responsible to maintain necessary certification(s). The license or certification should be acquired within a reasonable length of time as stated by the Department Head or the employee will be dismissed. In lieu of Suspension, an employee may be eligible for a non-disciplinary Demotion to a lower class position if such position is available within the Department and if the employee is qualified to perform the work. Such Demotions will be accompanied by a salary reduction. The County Manager must approve exceptions to this provision.

1.4.6: RETIREMENT

The retirement of an employee shall consist of the voluntary separation of an employee who has met the requirements under the provisions of the applicable pension plan.

1.4.7: DEATH

Separation shall be effective as of the date of the death of the employee. All compensation due to such employee as of the effective date of separation shall be paid to the beneficiary of the employee; the surviving spouse of such employee or to the estate of such employee as may be determined by law or by the applicable executed documents in the personnel folder of such employee.

1.5: TERMINATION

Following consultation with Human Resources and once the recommendation to terminate an employee is made, the Department Head shall prepare all separation documents. These documents must be completed and signed by the Department Head preferably no later than the effective date of the termination or as soon as possible thereafter. It is the Department Head's responsibility to keep an inventory on all equipment issued to the employee and request the return of these items upon termination.

1.5.1: PRE-TERMINATION HEARING PROCEDURES:

The Department shall perform the following functions before issuing a Notice of Termination:

a) determine the precise reason for termination;

b) review previous documentation of warnings and employee counseling relevant to the reason for termination;

c) review the case with the County Manager when appropriate.

If termination remains appropriate after such review, then a pre-termination meeting attended by the Department Director, HR Director and employee shall proceed as follows:

Pre-Termination Meeting:

A. Advise employee that the County intends to terminate him/her and offer the employee an opportunity to respond to the reasons for Dismissal prior to being discharged.

B. Consider employee's response.

C. If appropriate, proceed with termination; if not, proceed with warning, Suspension, or other disciplinary action.

D. Advise employee of appeal rights.

NOTE: The above-mentioned procedure is also used if an employee is suspended without pay.

1.5.2: PROCEDURES FOR JOB ABANDONMENT

An employee who is absent from work for three (3) consecutive working days without notifying their immediate Supervisor or Department Head, will be considered as having voluntarily abandoned his/her job. The following procedure shall be utilized in all cases of job abandonment:

(i) The Department Director will review the case with the Director of Human Resources and, when appropriate, the County Manager.

(ii) The Department Director will send a letter advising the employee that he or she will be deemed to have voluntarily abandoned his/her job unless a response is received from him/her within five (5) Working Days after sending the letter.

(iii) If the employee responds, the Department Director will provide the employee the opportunity to respond and provide a justification for the unexcused and unreported absences.

(iv) If no response is received within five (5) days after the initial letter, the Department Director will provide the employee with separation paperwork advising the employee that he/she has been deemed to have voluntarily resigned his/her position with Dawson County.

1.5.3: RECOMMENDATION OF RE-EMPLOYMENT

In every instance other than death or retirement, upon the separation of a regular employee from a position, the Department Head shall specify on the Personnel Action Form or an attachment whether the employee's performance has been sufficiently satisfactory for him/her to be considered for re-employment. An answer of "no" disqualifies the employee from further Appointments under the system provided it is supported by the reasons for such an answer. The employee has the right to appeal the disqualification, as provided in Regulation 7 of these rules.

1.6: EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES (NEPOTISM)

Employees who are family members are prohibited from working in the same chain of command to avoid family members supervising other family members or members of the same family reporting to the same Supervisor. This ensures effective supervision, internal discipline, security, safety, and positive morale in the workplace and avoids the potential for problems of favoritism, conflicts in loyalty, discrimination, and appearances of impropriety or conflict of interest.

When two family members work in the same chain of command, one of the members must seek a position to transfer out of the same reporting chain of command. Chain of command is interpreted as direct supervision or the Supervisor who completed the Performance Appraisal of the individual.

Family members include an employee's parent, child (natural, adopted, or legal guardianship), spouse, domestic partners, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchildren and step-relationships within the preceding categories.

Human Resources shall investigate reports of nepotism and take appropriate action. Employees are required to disclose changes in their personal situations which may be covered by this procedure. Furthermore, Supervisors or managers may inquire about the family relationship between employees to determine the appropriateness of the working relationship under this policy.

The County Manager shall have the right to waive the provision of this nepotism section if rare and critical skills are required for both positions.

REGULATION 2: PAY PRACTICES

2.1: ATTENDANCE

Each employee is important to the overall success of our operation. When you are absent, someone else must do the job. Consequently, employees are expected to report to work on time at the scheduled start of the Workday. Reporting to work on time means that you are ready to start work, not just arriving at work, at the scheduled starting time.

The County depends on its employees to be at work at the times and locations scheduled. Excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The determination of excessive absenteeism will be made at the discretion of the County and in view of documented policies. Absence from work for **three consecutive working days** without properly notifying your Supervisor will be considered a voluntary Resignation. After two days absence, the employee may be required to provide documentation from a physician to support an injury or illness related absence, and to ensure that the employee may safely return to work.

If expected to be absent from the job for an approved reason (e.g., paid time off or a Leave of absence), notify your Supervisor of the upcoming absence as far in advance as possible. If you unexpectedly need to be absent from or late to work, you must notify your Supervisor prior to the start of the scheduled Workday and provide the reason for the absence or tardiness. If the Supervisor is not available, you must contact the County's main office prior to the start of the scheduled Workday. Leave a number where you may be reached so that the Supervisor can return the call. Failure to properly contact your Supervisor will result in an unexcused absence for disciplinary purposes. An attendance record is a part of the overall performance rating. Attendance may be included during the review and may be considered for other disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Where possible, medical and dental appointments should be scheduled around assigned

work hours; otherwise, they may be considered absences without pay. If unable to schedule an appointment before or after a shift, you are required to talk to the Supervisor to make special arrangements.

2.1.1: WARNING AND REVIEW

It is the right of the employee to utilize accrued sick time. However when the Supervisor is of the opinion occurring absences and tardiness is affecting service, production, or the morale of others, disciplinary action may be taken.

An employee whose punctuality or absenteeism is considered unacceptable should be counseled and advised in a corrective interview that continued absenteeism and/or tardiness will result in further discipline up to and including termination.

The determination of the amount of absenteeism constituting an attendance problem is dependent upon the circumstances and judgment of the Department Head.

2.3: ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Each Supervisor shall be responsible for monitoring and reporting the attendance of all employees in his/her work section. Attendance records shall be reported to the Department Head's office and updated on a regular basis.

2.4: FLEX TIME

Dawson County recognizes the need to balance time between work and home and to assist employees with their time management. Flex time or a work schedule that is adjusted on a day to day basis is allowed at the discretion of the Supervisor and Department Head. If time is flexed to include an entire day, the Department Head must approve the adjusted schedule.

2.5: WORKING FROM HOME

Dawson County employees as a general rule may not work from home unless there are extenuating circumstances such as inclement weather, emergency etc. Permission to work from home requires Department Head approval and if approved, permission is given only for the immediate need and not on a continuing basis.

REGULATION 3: LEAVE TIME REGULATIONS

3.1: HOLIDAYS

The County usually observes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Presidents Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving and the day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
- One floating holiday taken at the employee's discretion with the Supervisors' approval

The holiday schedule is subject to approval by the Board of Commissioners and is reviewed annually.

3.1.1: ELIGIBILITY

In order to qualify for holiday pay, employees are required to work the day before and the day after a holiday unless the employee is off on approved personal or sick Leave. Holidays that occur during approved personal or sick Leave shall not be charged against personal or sick Leave. Holidays that occur while the employee is on medical Leave, workers' compensation or personal Leave of more than 30 calendar days are not paid as holidays.

A Full-time Employee who is required to work or called in to work shall receive payment for the eight (8) hours of holiday pay, plus the regular rate of pay for hours actually worked. Holiday hours are not considered time worked for overtime purposes.

Part-time and Temporary Employees are not eligible for paid holidays.

3.2: PERSONAL LEAVE

The purpose of personal Leave is to provide paid time away from work for vacation, doctor or dental appointments, family sickness, hazardous weather conditions, and other events that may occur during an employee's scheduled work day.

All Full-time Employees are entitled to accrue personal Leave. Part-time and/or Temporary Employees are not eligible for personal Leave.

Department and division units may establish a more restrictive policy regarding usage of personal Leave time due to operating necessities.

Employees shall accrue personal Leave upon completion of each biweekly pay period. Full-time Employees will accrue personal Leave as follows:

Months of Service	80 Hour Employee	Per Pay Period	84 Hour Employee	Per Pay Period	96 Hour Employee	Per Pay Period
0 – 24	**80**	**3.08**	**84**	**3.23**	**96**	**3.69**
25 – 60	**100**	**3.85**	**105**	**4.04**	**120**	**4.62**
61 - 120	**140**	**5.38**	**147**	**5.65**	**168**	**6.46**
120+	**160**	**6.15**	**168**	**6.46**	**192**	**7.38**

3.2.1: REQUEST FOR PERSONAL LEAVE

A request for Leave shall be submitted to an employee's immediate Supervisor via completing the Leave Request Form or by a Department Head approved method. Leave may be taken only after an employee has completed six months of full-time service and received approval by their Supervisor. (See Exhibit A)

3.2.2: SICK LEAVE

An employee may use accrued sick Leave in the event of personal illness, serious illness of a spouse, dependent child, or parent who has a serious health condition and is in need of continuous short-term care. The employee shall report an illness prior to his/her scheduled work time. If not possible, he/she must report the tardiness or absence within thirty (30) minutes after the time he/she is scheduled to have reported to work; otherwise, the absence, or tardiness, will be without excuse and unpaid. Department and division units may establish a more restrictive policy due to operating necessities.

Full-time Employees will accrue sick Leave as follows:

Months of Service	80 Hour Employee	Per Pay Period	84 Hour Employee	Per Pay Period	96 Hour Employee	Per Pay Period
0 – 60	**40**	**1.54**	**42**	**1.62**	**48**	**1.85**
61+	**50**	**1.92**	**53**	**2.04**	**60**	**2.31**

3.2.3: CERTIFICATION BY PHYSICIAN

A medical certificate signed by a licensed physician may be required by Department Heads to substantiate a request for sick Leave for any period of absence consisting of three (3) or more consecutive Workdays or shifts, to support a request for sick Leave during a period when the employee is on a personal Leave/vacation, on Leave of any duration, or if absence from duty recurs frequently or habitually, provided the employee has been notified or warned that a certificate will be required.

3.2.4: MAXIMUM ALLOWABALE PERSONAL AND SICK LEAVE ACCUMULATION

Personal Leave is to be used within the calendar year of accumulation by December 31 with a maximum carryover of 80, 84, or 96 hours as appropriate for the number of work hours per pay period. Department Heads can recommend to the County Manager additional carryover for their employees with unusual circumstances that keep them from taking their annual personal Leave.

Unused sick Leave can be accrued and banked with a maximum of 1,000 hours.

3.2.5: PAYMENT OF UNUSED PERSONAL AND SICK LEAVE

Upon separation, an employee who provides a minimum of two (2) weeks of Notice will receive payment for all accrued personal Leave time. In addition, if the employee has been employed for a minimum of five (5) consecutive years, payment for accrued sick time will be made.

Employees who are terminated will not receive payments for unused sick or personal Leave regardless of tenure, unless approved by the County Manager.

3.2.6: MINIMUM PERIODS OF PERSONAL AND SICK LEAVE TIME

Personal Leave Time (sick or personal) may be taken for periods of not less than one (1) hour and is subject to administrative review.

3.2.7: EMERGENCIES WHILE OUT ON PERSONAL LEAVE

Employees on personal Leave are subject to recall in cases of County emergency.

3.2.8: PERSONAL LEAVE/NO REINSTATEMENT

The County does not reinstate sick or personal Leave for employees being re-hired. Accrual rate will begin upon re-hire date, not original hire date.

3.2.9: PERSONAL LEAVE TRANSFER

3.2.9.1: DESCRIPTION

Participation in the Leave transfer program is strictly voluntary. Any Full-time County Employee may donate personal Leave time directly to any other Full-time County Employee who has a personal or family medical emergency and who has exhausted his/her available Leave time. A personal Leave recipient may receive a maximum of 160 hours of donated personal Leave at any one time for each

personal/family medical emergency. However, any unused donated Leave must be returned to the Leave donor(s) when the personal/family medical emergency ends.

3.2.9.2: LEAVE RECIPIENT

A potential Leave recipient's Department Head must determine that a Full-time Employee's absence from work without available paid personal Leave because of a personal/family medical emergency will be at least 24 hours. An employee may receive donated personal Leave when it has been determined that the need is a personal/family medical emergency situation. In addition, it is the Department Head's responsibility to verify with the Human Resources Department that the recipient has exhausted their accrued personal Leave time and that the donor has an appropriate amount of Leave time available to accommodate the requested transfer hours without exceeding the limitation stated. The Department Head reserves the right to limit the amount of Leave transferred to an employee if the transfer presents a hardship to the Department or affects the Department's ability to perform their duties.

3.2.9.3 LIMITATIONS ON LEAVE DONATIONS

In any given year, an employee may donate not more than 40 hours of accrued of personal Leave during that year.

3.3: LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITH PAY

3.3.1: STANDARD APPROVAL PROCEDURE

Any Leave of absence must be approved by the Department Head and Human Resources and is subject to final approval by the County Manager or authorized Elected Official.

3.3.2: MILITARY LEAVE

An employee who is a member of the National Guard and Reserves, an organized military reserve of the United States, or any employee who is otherwise engaged in the performance of military duty, will be allowed Leaves of Absence with pay not to exceed thirty Working Days during any calendar year to attend training camps upon presentation of orders pursuant to such training. Such Leaves shall not be charged to Personal Leave and may be intermittent in nature.

In addition, any employee who is called up to active duty in any branch of the military service of the United States will be allowed Leaves of Absence and maintenance of rights and benefits consistent with state and federal law upon presentation of orders pursuant to such active duty.

All Military Leave time shall be counted towards all seniority rights and towards eligibility of FMLA Leave.

Dawson County shall comply with the applicable State of Georgia law and federal law for public employees concerning Military Leave. Employee must comply with the same laws when he or she seeks to return to work following military service.

An employee who has engaged in military service must, in order to be entitled to the reemployment rights set forth in federal and state law, submit an application for reemployment according to the following schedule:

1. *If service is less than 30 days (or for the purpose of taking an Examination to determine fitness for service)* – the employee must report for reemployment at the beginning of the first full regularly scheduled working period on the first calendar day following completion of service and the expiration of eight hours after a time for safe transportation back to the employee's residence.

2. *If service is for 31 days or more but less than 181 days* – the employee must submit an application for reemployment with Human Resources no later than fourteen days following the completion of service.

3. *If service is over 180 days* – the employee must submit an application for reemployment with Human Resources no later than ninety days following the completion of service.

4. *If the employee is hospitalized or convalescing from a service-connected injury* – the employee must submit an application for reemployment with Human Resources no later than two years following completion of service.

An employee reinstated after military service lasting ninety-one days or more will be promptly reemployed in the following order of priority:

(i) In the job the employee would have held had he or she remained continuously employed, or a position of equivalent seniority, status, and pay so long as the person is qualified for the job, or can become qualified after reasonable efforts by the County to qualify the person; or

(ii) If the employee cannot become qualified for the position in (i), in the employee's pre-service position so long as he or she is qualified for the job or could become qualified after reasonable efforts by the County; or

(iii) If the employee cannot become qualified for the position in either (i) or (ii), in any other position, which is the nearest approximation of (i) for which the employee is qualified.

3.3.3: JURY DUTY

An employee called for jury duty or subpoenaed as a witness will be excused from work upon presentation of a court Notice to his/her immediate Supervisor. The employee will be paid his/her normal pay provided he/she submits evidence of the amount received from the court. The combination of jury duty pay and actual hours worked is not to exceed forty (40) hours per week in the case where an employee chooses to catch up on work after hours unless authorized by the Supervisor or Department Head. The jury duty stipend is not deducted from the employee's pay (See O.C.G.A. 15-12-1 *et seq*.).

3.3.4: FUNERAL LEAVE

Funeral Leave of up to 24 paid hours will be granted for an employee absent from work as a result of the death of a spouse, parent or guardian, child, brother, sister, stepmother or father, stepchild, stepsister or brother, grandparent or other relative living in the employee's household. A maximum of 8 hours of paid funeral Leave will be granted to an employee absent from work as a result of the death of another Immediate Family member listed in the County's nepotism section to include in-laws. If possible, an employee should notify their Supervisor of a life threatening illness in the family.

3.3.5: WORKERS' COMPENSATION

An employee who is temporarily disabled because of injury or illness sustained during the course and scope of his/her duties is is generally covered by the Georgia Workers' Compensation Act. An employee receiving workers' compensation income benefits may use personal or sick Leave to supplement the workers' compensation benefits. Under Georgia Law, employees are required to select a treating physician from the employer's posted Panel of Physicians for medical treatment relating to his/her on-the-job injury. The name, address and phone number for each panel physician is available to each employee and is posted on official County bulletin boards.

3.3.6: DISABILITIES (NOT COVERED BY WORKERS' COMPENSATION)

An employee who becomes disabled shall be allowed to use accrued Leave accumulations. After all Leave has been exhausted, further extension of Leave without pay must be specifically authorized by the Department Head after consultation with the County Manager.

3.3.7: MATERNITY LEAVE

Maternity Leave is afforded to employees pursuant to, and governed by, the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") and those provisions set forth in the following Section. Maternity Leave shall be granted to employees upon written request filed by the employee at least ten regularly scheduled Working Days prior to the effective date (unless emergency conditions prohibit the filing of such prior Notice, in which case, it shall be filed as soon as possible). Time for beginning Maternity Leave shall be when the employee, with the approval of her doctor, deems she is no longer able to carry out the duties and responsibilities of her position. Time for termination of Maternity Leave shall be governed by the FMLA when applicable time provided thereunder has elapsed.

An employee on Maternity Leave must utilize any available Paid Leave during any period of Maternity Leave to run concurrent with the FMLA Leave. Upon expiration of any paid Leave, the remainder of FMLA Leave, if any, shall be unpaid.

3.3.8: REQUEST FOR LEAVE TO OBSERVE RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

An employee, upon request to the applicable Department Director at least seven days in advance shall be given priority consideration for Leave from work for observance of religious holidays not already provided for as a holiday. Any paid Leave for such religious holiday observance shall be charged to accrued Personal Leave as available to the employee at the time of the holiday observance. A request by an employee for time away from work to observe religious holidays shall not be denied, unless the duties performed by the employee are urgently required and the employee, in the judgment of the applicable Department Director, is the only person available who can perform the duties. However, a request by an employee for time away from work to observe a religious holiday may be denied if the employee does not have enough accrued Personal Leave to accommodate the Leave request or an undue hardship would in fact result from granting such request.

3.4: LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY

3.4.1: STANDARD APPROVAL PROCEDURE

All Leaves of absence without pay must be recommended by the Department Head and is subject to final approval by the County Manager or authorized Elected Official.

3.4.2: FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

(a) Statement of Policy

Pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA"), 29 U.S.C. § 2601, *et seq.*, employees may be eligible to take up to twelve weeks (or up to twenty-six weeks of Military Caregiver Leave to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness) of unpaid Leave during any twelve month period for one or more of the following:

(i) The birth, adoption or placement of a child;

(ii) The serious medical condition of a parent, spouse, or child;

(iii) A serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her job to include qualified injuries or illnesses that existed prior to military active duty and were aggravated by service while on active duty in the Armed Forces;

(iv) Qualifying Exigency Leave is available to eligible employees who are family members of a covered military member to take FMLA Leave to address the most common issues that arise when a covered military member is on covered active duty or called to covered active duty; or

(v) Military Caregiver Leave is available to eligible employees (defined as the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of an injured or ill servicemember or veteran) to care for the covered servicemember. Eligible employees are entitled to twenty-six work weeks of Leave during a single twelve month period to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness.

(b) Rolling Twelve Month Period

For purposes of this Section, a "twelve-month period" means a rolling twelve months measured backward from the date the employee uses any FMLA Leave. If the policies set forth in this Handbook conflict or come into conflict with the FMLA as it presently exists or is amended from time to time, the provisions contained in the FMLA shall control.

(c) Eligibility

Eligible employees as defined by the FMLA shall be entitled to Leave, provided such Leave is within the conditions and limitations provided in the FMLA.

(d) Request for Leave

It shall be the responsibility of the employee to ensure that the appropriate forms required by the Human Resources Director are timely submitted to the Human Resources Director or his/her designee in order to request Leave pursuant to the FMLA. Failure to submit an application and required supporting documentation for

Leave pursuant to the FMLA within a reasonable period of time prior to the requested effective date of the Leave, when the reason for the Leave is foreseeable, may constitute grounds for denial of the request. Upon receipt of a request for Leave and a completed medical certificate pursuant to the FMLA, the Human Resources Director shall respond in writing with approval or denial of the Leave within three Working Days. An approval should specify the terms and conditions of the Leave. If a request is denied in whole or in part, the response of the Human Resources Director will specify the reasons for the denial and shall include a Notice of the right to appeal consistent with this Section.

(e) Concurrent Utilization of Paid Leave

An employee requesting Leave pursuant to the FMLA is required to utilize all accrued Personal Leave available as part of the twelve week (or twenty-six workweeks to care for an injured or ill servicemember over a twelve month period) Leave period. If the available paid Leave for the employee is less than twelve working weeks, the additional weeks of Leave necessary to obtain the twelve work weeks of Leave available under the FMLA shall be provided without compensation. In any event, any combination of Personal Leave, and/or unpaid Family and Medical Leave shall not exceed twelve weeks. However, Family and Medical Leave to care for an injured or ill servicemember shall not exceed twenty-six weeks over a twelve month period. Personal Leave must be used concurrently with FMLA Leave. FMLA requests will be retroactively dated to the beginning of the current Personal Leave in the event that the paid Leave is commenced prior to the request for FMLA Leave.

(f) Concurrent Workers' Compensation and FMLA Leave

An employee qualifying for Workers' Compensation Leave must run any requested FMLA Leave concurrently with that of all concurrent and/or intermittent Workers' Compensation Leave.

(g) Intermittent Leave or Reduced Schedule Leave

Leave for childbirth, adoption, or foster care may not be taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule. Leave for a serious health condition of a qualifying family member (parent, spouse, child) or of the employee may not be taken on an intermittent basis or on a reduced Leave schedule unless medically necessary. The taking of any Leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule basis shall reduce the total amount of FMLA Leave that has been approved for the eligible employee according to the actual hours of Leave taken. For example, if an eligible employee takes ten hours of Leave intermittently over twenty Business Days, the employee's bank of available FMLA Leave will be reduced only by ten hours and not by twenty days.

If an eligible employee requests intermittent or reduced schedule Leave that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, the Human Resources Director

may require the employee to transfer temporarily to an available equivalent position for which the employee is qualified that better accommodates recurring periods of absence.

(h) Spouses Employed by Same Employer

In any occasion in which a husband and wife are eligible for Leave under the FMLA and are both employed by Dawson County, the aggregate number of work weeks of Leave to which both may be entitled may be limited to twelve work weeks during any twelve month rolling period, in the case where Leave is taken for childbirth, adoption, foster care, or to care for a sick parent (as "parent" is defined at 29 C.F.R. § 825.122(c)).

In any occasion in which a husband and wife are eligible for Leave under the FMLA and are both employed by Dawson County, the aggregate number of work weeks of Leave to which both may be entitled will be limited to twenty-six work weeks during any twelve month rolling period, in the case where Leave is taken to care for a covered injured or ill servicemember.

(i) Foreseeable Leave

In any case in which the necessity for Leave under the FMLA is foreseeable, the employee shall provide the Human Resources Director with written application for the requested Leave and certification no less than thirty days before the date the Leave is to begin, with the exception of Maternity Leave which will be granted to employees upon written request filed by the employee at least ten regularly scheduled Working Days prior to the effective date (unless emergency conditions prohibit the filing of such prior Notice, in which case, it shall be filed as soon as possible).

In a case where the necessity for Leave is based on planned medical treatment, the employee shall make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment so as not to disrupt unduly the operations of the employer, subject to the approval of the health care provider and shall provide the Human Resources Director with at least thirty days Notice before the date the Leave is to begin, except that if the date of the treatment requires Leave to begin in less than thirty days, the employee shall provide such Notice as is practicable.

(j) Certification of Serious Health Conditions

An eligible employee who requests Leave for a serious health condition of the employee or a qualifying family member shall submit certification from an appropriate health care provider to the Human Resources Director when requesting Leave.

Certification shall be sufficient if it states:

(i) the date on which the serious health condition commenced;

(ii) the probable duration of the treatment or condition;

(iii) the appropriate medical facts within the health care provider's knowledge; and

(iv) the estimated amount of time the employee needs to care for the qualifying family member or a statement of the extent to which the employee is unable to perform the essential functions of the employee's position.

(k) Certification of Serious Health Conditions-intermittent Leave

An eligible employee who requests intermittent Leave for a serious health condition of the employee or a qualifying family member shall submit certification from an appropriate health care provider to the Human Resources Director when requesting Leave.

Certification shall be sufficient if it states:

(i) If an employee requests Leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis for planned medical treatment of the employee's or a covered family member's serious health condition, information sufficient to establish the medical necessity for such intermittent or reduced schedule Leave and an estimate of the dates and duration of such treatments and any periods of recovery;

(ii) If an employee requests Leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis for the employee's serious health condition, including pregnancy, that may result in unforeseeable episodes of incapacity, information sufficient to establish the medical necessity for such intermittent or reduced schedule Leave and an estimate of the frequency and duration of the episodes of incapacity; and

(iii) If an employee requests Leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis to care for a covered family member with a serious health condition, a statement that such Leave is medically necessary to care for the family member, as described in 29 C.F.R. §§ 825.124 and 825.203(b), which can include assisting in the family member's recovery, and an estimate of the frequency and duration of the required Leave.

(l) Certification of Qualifying Exigency for Military Family Leave

Dawson County requires certification of the qualifying exigency for Military Family Leave. The employee must respond to such a request within fifteen days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of Leave. This certification will

be provided using the United States Department of Labor Certification of Qualifying Exigency for Military Family Leave.

(m) Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of Covered Servicemember for Military Family Leave

Dawson County requires certification for the serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember. The employee must respond to such a request within fifteen days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of Leave. This certification will be provided using the United States Department of Labor Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of Covered Servicemember.

(n) Accruals and Benefits during FMLA Leave

An employee on unpaid FMLA Leave shall not be entitled to the accrual of any seniority or employment benefits during the period of unpaid FMLA Leave, including but not limited to, the accrual of Personal Leave. The employee, while on paid FMLA Leave, is entitled to accrue Personal Leave during the periods of paid FMLA Leave. For the purposes of pension or retirement plans, any period of FMLA Leave will be treated as Continuous Service for the purposes of vesting and eligibility to participate.

FMLA time will not be counted as part of an employee's working test period, but will be added to the remaining working test period, extending the ending date of the working test period.

During any period of Leave, Dawson County will maintain any health insurance provided by Dawson County to the employee for the duration of the Leave at the level and under the conditions coverage would have been provided if the employee had continued in employment continuously for the duration of such Leave. If, however, the employee fails to return from Leave after the period of Leave to which the employee is entitled has expired and the employee fails to return for a reason other than the continuation, recurrence, or on-set of a serious health condition or other conditions beyond the control of the employee, Dawson County may recover the premium(s) that the County may have paid for maintaining coverage for the employee during the period of Leave. If the employee is unable to return to work because of the continuation, recurrence, or on-set of a serious health condition, the Human Resources Director may require that the employee provide a certification of such circumstance.

During any period of Leave, Dawson County will continue to make available to the employee coverage for health insurance for dependents and other supplemental insurance, provided however, that the employee pays all premiums owed on a monthly basis. Failure to pay such premiums on a timely basis each month will result in coverage for health insurance for dependents and supplemental insurance being terminated. Employees will be required to execute a form with the Human

Resources Department identifying the premiums for which the employee is responsible prior to the commencement of the Leave.

None of the above and foregoing limits the accrual of seniority or Personal Leave time for those on Workers' Compensation Leave that runs concurrently with FMLA Leave.

(o) Appeals of Denials

In the event that the Human Resources Director denies in whole or in part a request for Leave pursuant to the FMLA, an employee has the right to appeal that decision consistent with the following procedures.

Any such appeal from an employee must be filed within three Working Days following receipt of the denial decision from the Human Resources Director. The written Notice of appeal shall include the request for the Leave and all supporting documentation provided to the Human Resources Director. The appeal shall be filed with the County Manager who has the authority to amend or reverse the decision of the Human Resources Director. Failure of the employee to appeal within three Working Days shall result in forfeiture of any further right of appeal of a denial.

The County Manager shall review the record of the appeal and shall, within five Working Days, issue a final determination. The decision of the County Manager, as applicable, shall be final.

(p) Return to Duty from FMLA Leave

As a condition for return to duty, the employee may be required to provide certification from the employee's health care provider that the employee is able to resume work. Upon expiration of the period of Leave pursuant to the FMLA, the employee shall be returned to his/her former position or a position of equal Grade and pay, provided that the employee has complied with the terms of the Leave and reported for return of duty at the appropriate time. While the employee shall be restored to a position of employment without loss of employment benefits accrued prior to the date on which the Leave commenced, the employee shall have no greater rights than those in effect prior to the commencement of the Leave.

3.5: OTHER CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY

3.5.1: FAILURE TO RETURN TO WORK AT THE EXPIRATION OF APPROVED LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Failure of an employee to return to work at the expiration of approved Leave shall be considered absent, without Leave, constituting grounds for disciplinary action up to and including Dismissal.

3.5.2: RETURN TO WORK BEFORE THE EXPIRATION OF APPROVED LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

An employee granted a Leave of absence that wishes to return to work before the Leave period has expired shall be required to notify his/her immediate Supervisor. Upon approval of the Department Head, the employee shall be permitted to return to work.

3.5.3: PERSONAL LEAVE DURING APPROVED LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

An employee will not earn sick or personal Leave during the time that the employee is on Leave without pay.

3.5.4: WORKING ELSEWHERE DURING APPROVED LEAVE

An employee, while on an authorized Leave-of-absence without pay may not seek part-time or full-time employment elsewhere without the prior approval of the employee's Department Head.

3.5.5: CONTINUATION OF HEALTH BENEFIT COVERAGE DURING APPROVED LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

An employee on personal Leave (not FMLA) for more than one month is required to pay the employee COBRA contribution rate in order to continue health benefits.

3.5.6: PAY INCREASES DURING APPROVED LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Pay increases scheduled during the Leave time will be held until the employee returns to work.

3.6: ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

3.6.1: PAID ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

A Department Director or the County Manager, or their respective designee, with notification to the Human Resources Department, may place an employee on Paid Administrative Leave when an employee is being investigated by Dawson County for possible misconduct or by a law enforcement agency for possible violation of a criminal law or in any instance where it is considered to be in the interest of Dawson County and/or the employee.

The purposes of Administrative Leave are to provide an investigatory opportunity and/or to relieve the employee of his/her duties when it is deemed in the best interest

of the County and the employee. Designation of the Leave as "Paid Administrative Leave" is to prevent any possible stigma against an employee during a period of Administrative Leave. Notice of the conclusion of the Administrative Leave period shall be provided in writing to the employee by the applicable Supervisory official with copies of the written Notice provided to the Human Resources Director. Upon conclusion of the Administrative Leave period, and provided that no disciplinary action is taken as a result of the Administrative Leave period, the employee's personnel file shall be documented to reflect that the investigation concluded favorably for the employee.

3.7: HAZARDOUS WEATHER

3.7.1: LEAVE OPTIONS DURING HAZARDOUS WEATHER

If hazardous weather conditions make it unduly hazardous for an employee to report to his/her place of work or the employee arrives late or leaves early, the Department Head and/or Supervisor will discuss with the employee which of the following actions will be selected:

1. Making up the time lost from work at a time scheduled by the Department Head;
2. Using accrued personal Leave;
3. Allow the employee to work from home if applicable.

NOTE: When unable to report to work due to weather conditions, employees shall notify their Supervisor as soon as possible.

3.7.2: CRITICAL POSITIONS DURING HAZARDOUS WEATHER

Certain positions require mandatory coverage because they provide a critical County service such as Fire, EMS, Public Works, and other designated Departments and individuals. The Department Head may wish to provide transportation to assure proper staffing of services.

3.8 HAZARDOUS WEATHER PROCESS

During times of hazardous or inclement weather, the County Manager will contact the Director of Public Works and the Director of EMA to determine road conditions. If the County Manager determines the office is to be closed for inclement weather, the County Manager will contact his direct reports by phone and the direct reports will contact their direct reports etc. throughout the chain of command. The County Manager will make the determination.

REGULATION 4: POSITION LEVEL CLASSIFICATION PLAN OVERVIEW

A job classification or position level is used to determine the County's pay structure which is administered through the County's budget process. Every position is assigned a salary level and salary range that is based on the position description written and submitted by the Department Head. Key factors in the evaluation process involve but are not limited to:

1. Required job knowledge and education level;
2. Level of responsibility, accountability and authority;
3. Degree of supervision required and exercised and level of independence expected;
4. Character of work performed;
5. Type and amount of training required; and
6. Level of experience for proper performance.

4.1: REVISIONS TO CLASSIFICATION PLAN

Revisions to the Classification Plan may be made by the Board of Commissioners to reflect new or changed conditions or work practices within the classified service.

4.2: DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Department Heads are responsible for submitting to the County Manager or designee new job descriptions for all affected positions each time a section or division is substantially reorganized or major changes in duties or responsibilities occur for any job. The Human Resources Department shall be responsible for maintaining an official copy of the all position descriptions.

REGULATION 5: COMPENSATION OVERVIEW

The Compensation Plan for Dawson County is at the sole discretion of the Board of Commissioners.

5.1: AMENDMENTS

The Board may amend the proposed Compensation Plan in any way deemed appropriate and shall formally approve the plan. The Compensation Plan shall take effect following final approval by the Board. Any subsequent change in the Compensation Plan shall be submitted to the Board for review and approval.

5.2: PROMOTION

Promotion is the advancement of an employee from a job within one class to a job in another class having a higher salary range.

5.3: DEMOTION

An employee who is reclassified by Demotion shall have his/her salary reduced. Exceptions to this provision must be approved by the County Manager or authorized Elected Official.

5.4: TRANSFERS

A transfer is a reassignment of a regular employee to another comparable job within the service of Dawson County. The employee to be transferred must meet the Minimum Qualifications of the position transferring into. The job to which the transfer is made may be within the same class as the job currently held by the employee, or it may be of a different class, provided the salary Grades are the same. Transfers may be interdepartmental or intradepartmental and must be approved by the Department Head(s) and the County Manager or designee.

An employee transferred in accordance with the provisions of these rules shall be placed on working test status. In the case of transfers to positions in a higher class, this will be deemed a Promotion and as such the new position must be posted internally.

5.5: RE-APPOINTMENT

An employee who is re-appointed may have his/her salary placed at any step of the range applicable to the job to which he/she is appointed, provided that it is not a higher step than that at which he/she was paid at the time of his/her termination.

5.6: ACTING CAPACITY AND TEMPORARY PAY

At times, an employee may be required by the Department Head to fill a temporarily vacated position due to termination, temporary disability, or Leave of absence. If the position to be filled is of a higher Grade and is anticipated to last longer than two weeks, the employee is entitled to a salary increase as long as the employee is filling the position.

5.6.1: ACTING CAPACITY

The employee working in an acting capacity shall be expected to fully perform all the normally assigned duties of the position on a temporary basis until the incumbent returns to their assigned position or a full-time replacement is appointed.

5.6.2: TEMPORARY VACANCY

A temporarily vacant position is an authorized position in the current year budget that has been temporarily vacated due to termination, disability, or Leave of absence, and is required to be staffed by a Full-time Employee.

5.6.3: DURATION OF TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT

An employee required to temporarily perform in a higher-level job classification and perform the actual duties normally assigned to the duly authorized vacant position for a period of 14 consecutive Working Days or more, will receive a temporary pay increase.

5.6.4: AUTHORIZATION

A Personnel Action Form shall be completed and approved by the Department Head or authorized Elected Official on any employee placed in an acting capacity; and the same procedure shall be followed upon the discontinuation of the employee's functioning in this status. The employee serving in an acting capacity will be provided a copy of the Personnel Action Form authorizing the additional pay.

5.6.5: APPEAL PROCEDURE

An employee who believes he/she is serving in an acting capacity and should be receiving additional compensation shall notify in writing his/her immediate Supervisor. If not satisfied with the decision of the Supervisor, the employee shall appeal the decision by the following chain of command up to and including appealing to the County Manager.

5.7: SALARY REDUCTION

All salary reductions shall correspond with the approved salary table.

5.8: APPROVAL OF ACTIONS AFFECTING COMPENSATION

The Board of Commissioners shall have, through the budgetary procedures, final authority in all matters concerning the Compensation Plan. The County Manager has authority over individual salaries and operates within the parameters of the BOC approved Compensation Plan.

5.9: COMPENSATION FOR OVERTIME HOURS WORKED

(a) Classification as Exempt or Non-Exempt

All employees will be classified as either "exempt" or "non-exempt" according to the Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA") and its governing regulations. These classifications are established by the County based upon the prevailing law and the actual duties and compensation earned by each employee. The County is not required to compensate employees who are exempt under the FLSA for overtime work. In contrast, the County is obligated to compensate employees who are deemed non-exempt under the FLSA for overtime work and does so according to the FLSA and the policies set forth herein. It is the expressed intent of Dawson County to strictly comply with the FLSA with regard to overtime payment.

(b) Approval and Recording of Overtime Hours Worked

All overtime work performed must have prior approval of the Department Director. In addition, all overtime hours worked must be recorded by the employee during the pay period in which the employee performed the work. No employee should be subjected to being requested by a Supervisor to work overtime without allowing the employee to record and receive compensation for overtime hours worked. If any employee has concerns about the overtime compensation practices occurring in his/her Department, the employee should immediately advise the Human Resources Director or the County Manager.

(c) Rate of Overtime Compensation

Non-exempt employees who perform overtime work shall be paid in wages at the rate of one and one-half times their regular rate of pay.

(d) Computation of Hours Worked for Overtime Compensation Purposes

The computation of hours worked for purposes of reaching the maximum hour threshold to trigger the entitlement to overtime compensation shall include all hours actually worked. Paid Personal Leave, other paid Leave, holiday Leave and other types of Leave shall not be included.

(e) Overtime for Part-Time, Non-Exempt Employees

Part-time, non-exempt employees who work more than their normal work schedule, but less than the FLSA maximum hours for the appropriate work cycle, will be paid at straight time. When hours worked exceed FLSA maximums for the appropriate work cycle, Part-time Employees will be paid overtime at time and one-half of the regular hourly rate. Part-time Employees are not authorized to perform any work in excess of their normal work scheduled in the absence of written approval by the County Manager.

5.10 MAXIMUM WORK HOURS

The following sets forth the maximum work hours for purposes of computing overtime. Employees are not entitled to overtime compensation until the maximum work hours in the applicable work period have been exceeded.

LAW ENFORCEMENT EMPLOYEES

Hours worked in excess of 171 hours in a twenty-eight day work period;

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES EMPLOYEES

Hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week;

FIRE SERVICES EMPLOYEES

Hours worked in excess of 53 hours per week;

OTHER EMPLOYEES

Hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a seven-day work period.

5.11: OVERTIME LIMITS

Overtime work shall be limited to meet operational needs of an emergency nature. Department Heads and Supervisors shall have the responsibilities of administering overtime policies and controlling excessive overtime. All overtime must be approved by Department Heads prior to an employee actually working overtime. Supervisors shall be held responsible for overtime abuses by employees, and, if necessary, recommend proper disciplinary action.

5.12: ATTENDANCE RECORD KEEPING

Department Heads/Supervisors shall be responsible for accurate record keeping of time and attendance. Individual time sheets shall be maintained in each Department (as required by FLSA) with totals from time sheets transferred to payroll time sheets and forwarded to payroll.

5.13: PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

Employees who average less than 30 hours per week shall not qualify for employee benefits and the advantages of the personnel system.

REGULATION 6: EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

The purpose of this section is to provide an orderly procedure for processing grievance claims of regular employees. The objective of this procedure is to reach a firm and equitable decision in a

timely manner. The employee, Department Head and/or Supervisor should make an effort to resolve any grievance informally before initiating this formal procedure.

6.1: GRIEVANCE CLAIM

A grievance is a claim initiated by an employee alleging: a) inequitable application of disciplinary procedures; b) erroneous or inconsistent application of County Rules and Regulations; c) employment status or productivity which has been adversely affected by unfair treatment; and/or d) unsafe or unhealthy working conditions exist.

The following areas are NOT grievable:

a. Issues which are pending or which have been concluded by other administrative or judicial procedures;

b. Management's rights to assign work and/or establish work processes;

c. Disciplinary actions that do not result in a Dismissal, Demotion or salary reduction;

d. Budget allocations and expenditures and organizational structure, including the persons or number of persons assigned to particular jobs or units;

e. The content or rating of a Performance Evaluation;

f. The selection of an individual by the Department Director, or County Manager to fill a position through Appointment, Promotion, or transfer, except when the employee can show adverse effect because of unlawful discrimination;

g. Any matter which is not within the jurisdiction or control of the County;

h. Internal security practices established by the County Manager and/or Board of Commissioners; and

i. Decisions, practices, resolutions or policies made or passed by the Board of Commissioners or County Manager.

6.2: GRIEVANCE AND APPEALS

An employee shall complete the following:

6.2.1: GRIEVANCE STATEMENT

Submit a grievance statement within five Working Days from the date that the grievable action or violation occurs to the Supervisor and Department Head in writing stating the specific claim and the specific relief desired.

6.2.2: INFORMAL GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION

Request an informal grievance resolution. Informal means dialogue between employee and management should be used in an attempt to resolve the grievance in a timely fashion.

6.2.3: FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If the grievance is unresolved informally, the employee may request a formal grievance review.

6.2.4: FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE TIMING

The following procedure is intended to define maximum time limits. Grievances should be handled expeditiously as time and circumstances permit.

The time limit at any step set forth in this Regulation may be extended by the County Manager or mutually agreed to by all parties involved. A grievance not advanced to the higher step within the time limit provided shall be deemed permanently withdrawn, and as having been settled on the basis of the decision most recently given. Failure on the part of the County's representative to answer within the time limit set forth in any step may entitle the employee to proceed to the next step.

6.2.4.1: DEPARTMENT LEVEL

a. Written grievance statement received by Department Head from the employee.

b. Within 20 calendar days the Department Head will provide a written response to the employee filing the grievance.

6.2.4.2: GENERAL MANAGEMENT LEVEL

a. An employee may file a request for review by the County Manager or authorized Elected Official if the employee is not satisfied with the Department Head's decision. Appeal to the County Manager or authorized Elected Official and must be filed within 15 calendar days from the Department Head's written decision.

b. Within 20 calendar days the County Manager or authorized Elected Official will acknowledge receipt of the request for grievance review and shall either schedule a meeting to review the facts or respond to the grievance in writing, at his/her discretion. If a meeting to review the facts is held, then a written response to the grievance review shall issue thereafter. Decisions of the County Manager or authorized Elected Official are final.

REGULATION 7: DEPARTMENT POLICY

7.1: PERSONNEL RECORDS

7.1.1: PUBLIC INSPECTION

All personnel records of employees covered under these rules and regulations and all other records and materials relating to the administration of the personnel system shall be considered the confidential property of Dawson County. Information obtained in the course of official duties shall not be released by any employee other than those with this responsibility as part of official duties. All requests for personnel information must be processed through the Open Records Officer or designee. The release of personnel records is governed under the Georgia Open Records Act (O.C.G.A. 50-18-70):

Within three (3) work days after the request is received, the Open Records Officer will determine if the requested information can be released;

Verbal requests are acceptable for any employee to see his/her own file with three (3) work days advance notice;

A written request is required for all others who wish to review any personnel records or files;

Requests by anyone other than the employee must be for specific information. General review of one or a number of files is not permissible under the Georgia Open Records Act;

Charges for information from the County's personnel files are as follows: Hourly rate equal to that of the lowest paid qualified individual to assemble material (minus the first fifteen minutes) and up to 10 cents per copy for requested information.

Items not subject to the Georgia Open Records Act (O.C.G.A. 50-18-72(2)-7) include but are not limited to medical records, similar files or related information and third party evaluations.

NOTE: For further information regarding the accessibility of personnel records, refer to the Georgia Open Records Act (O.C.G.A. 50-18-70).

7.2 DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

In agreement with state retention schedule, employee records shall be kept for no less than three (3) years after termination of employment. Such records may be kept in their original form or in any other duplicate form, which the Human Resources Director deems appropriate. All other records, including correspondence, applications and

Examinations may be destroyed after three (3) years. The records are governed by Georgia Records Act (O.C.G.A. 50-18-90) (85)-(503).

7.3: APPLICATION RELEASE

The following explains policies and procedures for release of resumes and applications for employment to the newspaper or other interested citizens:

7.3.1: INFORMATION TO BE RELEASED

In accordance with state law, applications, resumes, or the name of candidates who are Applicants in an employment search for a position with Dawson County may be released within three (3) days after the request has been received from the media or interested citizen.

7.3.2: INFORMATION REQUIRED TO BE WITHHELD

Evaluations of candidates, or recommendations, or any reference material may not be subject to disclosure under the Georgia Open Records Act (OCGA Sec. 50-18-70 et seq.). Such information shall be confidential.

7.4: TERMINATED EMPLOYEE REFERENCE AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION POLICY

7.4.1: TERMINATED EMPLOYEE REFERENCE POLICY

Previous employees of the County separated due to Resignation, termination, Layoff, or any other form of separation have the right under privacy laws to expect that we will not release to prospective employers, the general public, or the media, any information other than:

- Years of service;
- Job title and duties; and
- Confirmation of an employee's final pay rate.

NOTE: In certain instances, the County may be required to disclose information regarding an employee who has engaged in criminal activity.

7.4.2: TERMINATED EMPLOYEE REFERENCE POLICY RATIONALE

While the State of Georgia has a strong policy of open government, there is a corresponding policy protecting the rights of the individual's personal privacy. This policy is intended to address this issue in a fair and balanced manner. Further, under tort law, invasion of privacy standards protects the right of a person to be free from unwarranted publicity or the unwarranted exploitation of personality in publicizing

private affairs with which the public has no legitimate concern. Georgia State Code (O.C.G.A. 50-18-72(a)(2)) protects medical records and similar files from disclosure, which would be considered an invasion of personal privacy. It argues that the report amounts to a personnel file which is similar to a medical file, which is specifically exempt under the act.

7.4.3: RECOMMENDATION OF RE-EMPLOYMENT

In every instance other than death or retirement, upon the separation of a regular employee from a position, the Department Head shall specify on the Personnel Action Form or an attachment thereto whether or not the employee's performance has been sufficiently satisfactory for him/her to be considered for re-employment. An answer of "no" disqualifies the employee from further Appointments under the County provided it is supported by the reasons for such an answer. The employee has the right to appeal the disqualification, as provided under these rules. Eligibility for re-hire will be determined by the Director of Human Resources.

7.5: ADMINISTRATIVE INQUIRY AND REVIEW

Records consisting of material obtained in an investigation related to the Suspension, firing, or investigation of a complaint against a public official or employee are confidential. These records, materials and reports are not to be released until ten (10) Business Days after the investigation has been terminated and the final report has been provided to the County Manager or authorized Elected Official. Such information is only to be released from the County Manager's or authorized Elected Official's office. As with the release of other sensitive personnel information, the Georgia Open Records Law must be balanced with tort privacy laws.

7.6: OFFICIAL BULLETIN BOARDS

The Human Resources Director will designate and control official County bulletin boards with each Department. The boards are to be used only for official notification purposes such as workers' compensation doctors, job-posting Notices, benefits information, and similar employee notifications.

REGULATION 8: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

8.1: ACCEPTABLE USE

The Dawson County IT Department's intentions for publishing Acceptable Use Procedures are not to impose restrictions that are contrary to Dawson County Government's established culture of openness, trust and integrity. The Dawson County IT Department is committed to protecting Dawson County Government's employees, partners and the County from illegal or damaging

actions by individuals, knowingly or unknowingly.

Internet/intranet/extranet-related systems, including, but not limited to computer equipment, software, operating systems, storage media, network accounts providing electronic mail, World Wide Web browsing, and File Transfer Protocol, are the property of Dawson County Government. These systems are to be used for business purposes in serving the interests of the County and of our citizens and Elected Officials in the course of normal operations. Please review Dawson County policies for further details. (See Appendix D)

Effective security is a team effort involving the participation and support of every Dawson County Government employee and affiliate who deals with information and/or information systems. It is the responsibility of every computer user to know these guidelines and to conduct activities accordingly.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the acceptable use of computer equipment at Dawson County Government. These rules are in place to protect the employee and Dawson County Government. Inappropriate use exposes Dawson County Government to risks including virus attacks, compromise of network systems and services, and legal issues.

This policy applies to employees, contractors, consultants, temporaries, and other workers at Dawson County Government, including all personnel affiliated with third parties. This policy applies to all equipment that is owned or leased by Dawson County Government.

8.2: GENERAL USE AND OWNERSHIP

1. While Dawson County Government's IT Department desires to provide a reasonable level of privacy, users should be aware that the data created on the County system remains the property of Dawson County Government. The confidentiality of information stored on any network device belonging to Dawson County Government cannot be guaranteed because the County's network must be protected.
2. Employees are responsible for exercising good judgment regarding the reasonableness of personal use. If there is any uncertainty, employees should consult their Supervisor or manager.
3. The Dawson County IT Department recommends that any information that users consider sensitive or vulnerable be encrypted or password protected.
4. For security and network maintenance purposes, authorized individuals within Dawson County Government may monitor equipment, systems and network traffic at any time, per Dawson County IT Department's Audit Policy.
5. Dawson County Government may audit networks and systems on a periodic basis to ensure compliance with this policy.

8.3: SECURITY AND PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

1. The user interface for information contained on internet/intranet/extranet-related systems

should be classified as either confidential or not confidential as defined by County confidentiality guidelines. Examples of confidential information include, but are not limited to,: County private, County strategies, County sensitive, trade secrets, citizen lists, and research data. Employees should take all necessary steps to prevent unauthorized access to this information.

2. Keep passwords secure and do not share accounts. Authorized users are responsible for the security of their passwords and accounts. System level passwords should be changed quarterly and user level passwords should be changed every six months.
3. All PCs, laptops and workstations should be secured with a password-protected screensaver with the automatic activation feature set at 10 minutes or less or by logging-off when the host will be unattended.
4. Use encryption or password protection of information.
5. Information contained on portable computers is especially vulnerable, so special care should be exercised.
6. All hosts used by the employee that are connected to the Dawson County Government internet/intranet/extranet, whether owned by the employee or Dawson County Government, shall be continually executing approved virus-scanning software with a current virus database unless overridden by Departmental or group policy.
7. Employees must use extreme caution when opening e-mail attachments received from unknown senders, which may contain viruses, e-mail bombs, Trojan horse code, or other damaging contents.

8.4: UNACCEPTABLE USE

The following activities are, in general, prohibited. Employees may be exempted from these restrictions during the course of legitimate job responsibilities (e.g., systems administration staff may have a need to disable the network access of a host if that host is disrupting production services). Under no circumstances is an employee of Dawson County Government authorized to engage in any activity that is illegal under local, state, federal or international law while utilizing Dawson County Government-owned resources.

The activities below are not exhaustive, but attempt to provide a framework for activities that fall into the category of unacceptable use.

8.4.1: SYSTEM AND NETWORK ACTIVITIES

The following activities are strictly prohibited with no exceptions:

1. Violations of the rights of any person or company protected by copyright, trade secret, patent or other intellectual property, or similar laws or regulations including, but not limited to, the installation or distribution of "pirated" or other software products that are not appropriately licensed for use by Dawson County Government.
2. Unauthorized copying of copyrighted material including, but not limited to, digitization and distribution of photographs from magazines, books or other copyrighted sources, copyrighted music, and the installation of any copyrighted software for which Dawson County Government or the end user does not have an active license.

3. Exporting software, technical information, encryption software or technology in violation of international or regional export control laws is illegal. The appropriate management should be consulted prior to export of any material that is in question.
4. Introduction of malicious programs into the network or server (e.g., viruses, worms, Trojan horses, e-mail bombs, etc.).
5. Revealing your account password to others or allowing use of your account by others. This includes family and other household members when work is being done at home.
6. Using a Dawson County Government computing asset to actively engage in procuring or transmitting material that is in violation of sexual harassment or hostile workplace laws.
7. Making fraudulent offers of products, items, or services originating from any Dawson County account.
8. Making statements about warranty, express or implied, unless it is a part of normal job duties.
9. Effecting security breaches or disruptions of network communication. Security breaches include, but are not limited to, accessing data of which the employee is not an intended recipient or logging into a server or account that the employee is not expressly authorized to access, unless these duties are within the scope of regular duties. For purposes of this section, "disruption" includes, but is not limited to, network sniffing, pinged floods, packet spoofing, denial of service, and forged routing information for malicious purposes.
10. Port scanning or security scanning unless prior notification to Dawson County IT Department.
11. Executing any form of network monitoring that will intercept data not intended for the employee's host, unless this activity is a part of the employee's normal job/duty.
12. Circumventing user authentication or security of any host, network or account.
13. Interfering with or denying service to any user other than the employee's host (for example, denial of service attack).
14. Using any program/script/command or sending messages of any kind with the intent to interfere with or disable a user's terminal session via any means locally or via the internet/intranet/extranet.
15. Accessing, viewing, or possession of illicit or pornographic material.

8.4.2: EMAIL AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

1. Sending unsolicited email messages including "junk mail" or other advertising material to individuals who did not specifically request such material (email spam).
2. Any form of harassment via email, telephone or paging, whether through language, frequency, or size of messages.
3. Unauthorized use or forging email header information.
4. Solicitation of email for any other email address, other than that of the poster's account, with the intent to harass or to collect replies.
5. Creating or forwarding "chain letters", "Ponzi" or other "pyramid" schemes of any type.
6. Use of unsolicited email originating from within Dawson County Government's networks of other internet/intranet/extranet service providers on behalf of, or to advertise, any service hosted by Dawson County Government or connected via

Dawson County Government's network.

7. Posting the same or similar non-business-related messages to large numbers of Usenet newsgroups (newsgroup spam).
8. Global emails may only be sent after obtaining the approval of the Department Head/Director

8.5: PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES and VOICEMAILPOLICY

This document describes Information Technology Department security's requirements for personal communication devices and voicemail for Dawson County Government.

This policy applies to any use of personal communication devices and Dawson County Government voicemail issued by Dawson County Government or used for Dawson County Government business.

8.5.1: ISSUING POLICY

Personal Communication Devices (PCDs) will be issued only to Dawson County Government personnel with duties that require immediate and frequent contact when away from normal work locations. For the purpose of this policy, PCDs are defined to include handheld wireless devices, cellular telephones, laptop wireless cards and pagers. Effective distribution of the various technological devices
must be limited to persons for whom the productivity gained is appropriate in relation to the costs incurred.

Handheld wireless devices may be issued for operational efficiency to Dawson County Government personnel who need to conduct immediate, critical Dawson County Government business. These individuals generally are at the executive and management level. In addition to verbal contact, it is necessary that they have the capability to review and have documented responses to critical issues.

Hands-free enabling devices may be issued to authorized Dawson County Government personnel who have received approval. Care must be taken to avoid being recorded when pairing adapters.

8.5.2: VOICEMAIL

Voicemail boxes may be issued to Dawson County Government personnel who require a method for others to leave messages when not available. Voicemail boxes must be protected by a PIN that must never be the same as the last four digits of the telephone number of the voicemail box.

8.6: LOSS AND THEFT

Files containing confidential or sensitive data may not be stored in PCDs unless protected by approved encryption and/or password. Confidential or sensitive data shall never be stored on a personal PCD. Charges for repair due to misuse of equipment or misuse of services may be the responsibility of the employee as determined on a case-by-case basis. The cost of any item beyond the standard authorized equipment is also the responsibility of the employee. Lost or stolen equipment must immediately be reported.

8.7: PERSONAL USE

PCDs and voicemail are issued for Dawson County Government business. Personal use should be limited to minimal and incidental use.

8.8: PCD SAFETY

Conducting telephone calls or utilizing PCDs (Personal Communication Devices) while driving can be a safety hazard. If employees must use a PCD while driving, Dawson County Government encourages the use of hands-free enabling devices.

8.9: GUIDELINES ON ANTI-VIIRUS PROCESS

Recommended processes to prevent virus problems:

Always run the current Dawson County Government standard, supported anti-virus software that is available from the Dawson County IT Department. Download and run the current version; download and install anti-virus software updates when available.

NEVER open any files or macros attached to an email from an unknown, suspicious or untrustworthy source. Delete these attachments immediately, then "double delete" by emptying your Trash.

Delete spam, chain, and other junk email without forwarding,

Never download files from unknown or suspicious sources.

Avoid sharing equipment and saved information with read/write access unless there is absolutely a business requirement to do so.

Always scan external devices (e.g., CD, DVD, memory stick) from an unknown source for viruses before using it.

Back-up critical data and system configurations on a regular basis and store the data in a safe place.

If the anti-virus software is disabled for any reason, such as during some software

installations, do not run any applications that could transfer a virus, e.g., email or file sharing.

New viruses are discovered almost every day. Periodically check with the Dawson County IT Department and this recommended processes list for updates.

Section II: Miscellaneous

1.1 PARKING

Parking spaces are not reserved for any employee.

1.2 OFFICE ASSIGNMENT

Offices vs. cubicles or other areas to work are assigned at the discretion of the Department Head. Therefore, the need for an office will supersede seniority and or rank.

SECTION III. Definitions

Applicant – Any person who has filed an application in accordance with the provisions of the Employee Handbook.

Appointment – The act of placing an employee in an Authorized Position.

Business Day – The eight hours the County Administration offices are officially opened for business.

Classification Plan – The official or approved system of grouping positions into Classification Descriptions that are further grouped into appropriate Grades approximately equal in difficulty, responsibility, training, and experience requirements. The Classification Plan is based upon a categorical designation of Classification Descriptions that contain appropriate Classification Titles, essential functions, descriptions of duties and responsibilities, types of work performed, Minimum Qualifications, performance aptitudes, and ADA compliance factors for a certain category of Positions.

Compensation Plan – The system of assigning jobs to Classification Descriptions and to an appropriate pay Grade based on the similarities of positions.

Continuous Service – Continuous Service is employment that is uninterrupted, except for authorized Leaves of Absence or Suspension.

County – Dawson County, Georgia

County Manager – The chief administrative employee of the Dawson County Board of Commissioners.

Demotion – Demotion means a change in the rank of an employee from a position in one Grade to a position in another Grade having a lower minimum starting salary.

Department – a major administrative division of County government whose employees report to a Department Director.

Department Director or Department Head– The top administrative official in each major administrative division.

Dismissal – The termination of an employee.

Elected Official – A County official duly elected by the citizens of Dawson County and presently serving in office.

Examination – Methods used to determine eligibility of Applicants for employment. Examinations may include but shall not be limited to written, oral, physical, medical, or performance tests, rating of training, and/or experience.

Executive Employees – the County Manager and all employees who report directly to the County Manager.

Full-time Employee – An employee who works in a position that is budgeted for twelve months of the year, scheduled to work thirty or more hours per week regularly throughout the year.

Grade – All positions in a group which are sufficiently similar as to authority, kind or subject matter of work, level of difficulty, and duties and responsibilities with the same minimum requirements of training, experience or skill, and such other characteristics that warrant the same range of compensation for each position in the group.

Human Resources Director – The official designated by the County Manager as the representative in charge of the personnel system of Dawson County.

Immediate Family – An employee's spouse, children, mother, father, brothers, sisters, half-brothers, half-sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents, grandchildren, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, step-parents and step-children.

Lateral Transfer – A Lateral Transfer is when an employee is moved from one position with a certain Classification Title to a different position within the same Grade, but with a different Classification Title, either within or outside the employee's Department.

Layoff – The separation of an employee or employees from County employment for specified reasons unrelated to the employee's performance.

Leave – Any of a number of ways in which an employee is permitted to take time off from work. Leave may be granted with or without pay.

Minimum Qualifications – Those minimum requirements as to education and experience that qualify an Applicant to be considered for Appointment as an employee with the County. Additional requirements such as licenses, certificates, and others may also be indicated where necessary.

Motor Vehicle – Every self-propelled device in, upon, or by which any person or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a highway, excepting devices used exclusively upon stationary rails or tracks and electric personal assistive mobility devices (EPAMD).

Notice – Such publicity as may be deemed necessary to assure reasonable Notice to those concerned.

Part-time Employee – An employee who works in a position that is budgeted for twelve months of the year, but who works less than thirty hours per week.

Performance Appraisal or Performance Evaluation – A method of evaluating each employee on a periodic basis as to performance on the job.

Promotion – A change in rank of an employee from a position in one Grade to a position of another

Grade having a higher minimum salary.

Resignation – The termination of an employee at his/her request.

Safety Sensitive Position – Part of the essential job functions require: the operation of a County vehicle two or more times during a normally scheduled workweek for that position; performance of law enforcement duties as a POST-certified law enforcement officer; possession of a firearm; providing emergency medical, rescue, or fire suppression services; interacting with incarcerated persons; performing duties essential to drug interdiction; performing duties related to the operation of heavy machinery; or performing duties which directly affect public health or safety.

Supervisor – An individual who is authorized by the County to take tangible employment actions against subordinate employees, i.e., to effect a significant change in employment status, such as hiring, firing, failing to promote, reassignment with significantly different responsibilities, or a decision causing a significant change in benefits.

Suspension – A forced Leave of Absence without pay.

Temporary Employee – An employee who works in a position that is temporary for purposes of a special project or other work of a temporary nature. The temporary position period is established according to the special project or special circumstances requiring work of a temporary nature. The temporary position is not budgeted for twelve months of the year and does not recur regularly from year to year.

Vacancy – A position duly created and still existent, but not occupied by an employee.

Weapon – a "knife or handgun" which is further defined as follows. A "knife" means a cutting instrument designed for the purpose of offense and defense consisting of a blade that is greater than five inches in length which is fastened to a handle". A "handgun" means a firearm of any description, loaded or unloaded, from which any shot, bullet, or other missile can be discharged by an action of an explosive where the length of the barrel, not including any revolving, detachable, or magazine breech, does not exceed 12 inches; provided, however, that the term "handgun" shall not include a gun which discharges a single shot of .46 centimeters or less in diameter.

Workday or Working Day – A Workday or Working Day is defined as eight hours for County employees; twelve hours for Law Enforcement sworn officers who work a twelve hour shift; and twenty-four hours for Fire Department employees who work a twenty-four hour shift.

EXHIBIT A - Leave Request Form

LEAVE REQUEST

Date: _____

I _____ request time off.
(Employee Name)

List exact dates away from work: _____

_____

Time off will be: Vacation_____ Compensatory_____

Personal_____ Sick_____

Approval by: _____ _____
Shift Supervisor Date

Approval by: _____ _____
Department Head Date

EXHIBIT B - TIMESHEET

DAWSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT • EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE RECORD

Name: _____ Payroll # _____

Dept: _____ _____ FLSA Status Code: Exempt / Non-Exempt (Circle One)

Pay Period Begins: _____ _____ Time Workday Ends: _____

Day	Mo/Date	Hrs. Paid	Time In	Time Out	Time In	Time Out	Comments
SAT							
SUN							
MON							
TUES							
WED							
THUR							
FRI							
Sub-Total							
SAT							
SUN MON							
TUES							
WED							
THUR FRI							
Sub-Total							
Total							

Recap of Pay Period Hours

Regular Hours to be paid _____

OT Hours at straight time rate _____

OT Hours at premium time rate _____

Sign

Employee Signature Date

Supervisor Signature Date

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

REGULAR SALARY $ ..... /HR .....

..... HRS ..... $ ..... /HR .....

..... HRS ..... $ ..... /HR .....

TOTAL _____

EXHIBIT C – REQUEST FOR OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

DAWSON COUNTY, GEORGIA
STATEMENT OF OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

No employee may engage in any paid employment or outside business that interferes with the efficient performance of his/her duties and/or presents a conflict of interest while employed by Dawson County. If outside employment creates a conflict of interest, the employee will be expected to resign one of the positions. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide evidence from the second employer that he/she is covered under the employer's workers' compensation policy or that such insurance is not required under Georgia law. The employee must also obtain approval of the County Department Head/Director before accepting outside employment.

EMPLOYEE NAME: _____ DEPT: _____

Does the employee engage in any paid employment or outside business? _____

If yes, the employing business is _____
(enter SELF if you are self-employed)

The duties of this employment involve _____

_____

Hours of outside employment: _____
(days of week and hours worked)

I certify that the outside employment being requested does not create a conflict of interest with my responsibilities with Dawson County and is consistent with all applicable County rules and regulations.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPROVAL:

_____ _____
Department Head/Director Date

EXHIBIT D – SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Purpose and Intent:

The purpose and intent of this policy is to establish guidelines for employees who engage in social media activity as defined herein. This policy is not intended to prohibit any employee's personal expression in general through social media activity in particular; however, because such activity can adversely affect the efficiency and effectiveness of Dawson County operations, as well as undermine public trust and confidence, a certain amount of regulation is necessary and appropriate. This policy therefore attempts to strike a reasonable balance between the employees' interest in engaging in social media activity and Dawson County's interest in preventing unnecessary disruption to or interference with its operations and relationship to the public it serves.

Definitions:

1. For purposes of this policy, the term, "social media" is defined as the online technologies through which employees and other individuals engage in "social media activity" as defined below. In most cases, the term refers to internet-based websites such as MySpace®, Facebook®, Twitter®, LinkedIn®, Google+®, YouTube®, Tumblr®, and Blogger®. Online social media technologies covered by this policy also include, but are not limited to, such applications as web logs/blogs/video logs/vlogs, message boards, podcasts, and wikis.
2. For purposes of this policy, the term, "social media activity" is defined as the act of sharing information or otherwise communicating through social media, including, but not limited to, the posting, uploading, reviewing, downloading, and/or forwarding of text, audio recordings, video recordings, photographs/images, symbols, or hyperlinks.

Scope of Policy:

1. This policy applies to all employees of Dawson County without regard to whether their social media is conducted in or outside the workplace, while on or off-duty, or anonymously or through the use of pseudonyms.
2. This policy applies to all employees of Dawson County without regard to job title, position or rank; however, with the approval of the Sheriff's Office and any other Department or affiliated agency of Dawson County having special or unique concerns pertaining to its employees' social media activity may adopt and implement more restrictive SOP's or other internal rules narrowly designed to address such concerns.

Prohibitions on Social Media:

1. All employees of Dawson County should remain mindful that, as public servants, they are generally held to higher standards than the general public with regard to their on-duty and off-duty conduct, professionalism, and ethics. As a result, certain social media activity that may be tolerated or even acceptable in the private sector may nevertheless constitute a violation of this policy.

2. Each employee of Dawson County who engages in social media activity must take personal responsibility for ensuring that such activity is consistent with all policies of Dawson County, including, but not limited to, those pertaining to making false or misleading statements, promoting or endorsing violence or illegal activity, promoting or endorsing the abuse of alcohol or drugs, disparaging individuals or groups based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or other characteristics protected by law, or otherwise engaging in conduct unbecoming an employee of Dawson County, bringing discredit to Dawson County, or interfering with or detrimental to the mission or function of Dawson County.
3. Employees must refrain from engaging in any social media activity which disqualifies them from performing, or in any way reasonably calls into question their ability to objectively perform, any essential function of their jobs. Examples of such functions include, but are not limited to, testifying, making hiring or Promotion decisions or recommendations, conducting Performance Evaluations, and determining eligibility for County programs.
4. While any employee, at his/her discretion, may engage in social media activity with any other employee(s) consistent with the prohibitions, limitations and restrictions, and guidelines of this policy, no employee may be required or otherwise compelled to engage in such activity with another employee.
5. No employee, whether for purpose of engaging in social media activity or otherwise, may disclose or otherwise reveal any privileged or confidential information of the County, any other current or former employee of the County, or any Applicant for employment with the County.

Limitations and Restrictions on Social Media Activity:

1. Employees are strongly discouraged from disclosing or otherwise revealing their status as employees of Dawson County through social media and, except as otherwise authorized in advance by the County Manager, are strictly prohibited from directly or indirectly representing themselves to be speaking on behalf of the County. Similarly, in the absence of prior approval, employees' social media activity should not reveal or depict the County's adopted logos, seals, symbols, uniforms, patches, badges, or similar items identified with the County.
2. Except as otherwise authorized in advance by the County Manager, if an employee's status as an employee of Dawson County is disclosed, revealed, or otherwise made apparent in connection with his/her social media activity, his/her social media activity must include a prominently displayed disclaimer to the effect that the activity reflects only the employee's personal views or opinions and not those of the County; provided, however, that no disclaimer will shield an employee from the imposition of appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary action for social media activity which otherwise violates this policy. Employees should recognize that social media activity is generally more likely to violate this policy and other policies of the County if their status as County employees is disclosed or revealed in connection therewith.
3. Except as otherwise authorized in advance by the County Manager, no employee may utilize County computers or equipment for purposes of engaging in social media activity.

4. Except as otherwise authorized in advance by the County Manager, no employee, whether for purposes of engaging in social media activity or otherwise, may post or upload any information, audio recordings, photographs/images, etc. from County computers or equipment.
5. To preserve the continuity of the County's message, ensure accuracy, and avoid unnecessary confusion on the community, except as otherwise authorized in advance by the County Manager, employees should refrain from engaging in any social media activity that purports or serves to announce or explain details of the County programs, projects, activities, initiatives, or events.
6. Exceptions to the above-stated limitations and restrictions may be authorized by the County Manager; provided, however, that any request for such an exception represents a promise by the employee that, if approved, the disclosure of information, photographs, audio, video, etc. via social media activity will be fully consistent with the letter and spirit of this and all other policies of the County, and internal policies or rules adopted by his/her Department Director, as well as any laws pertaining to copyrights, trademarks, trade secrets, patents, and privacy and reputational rights.
7. The County reserves the right to require any employee to remove immediately any posted or uploaded text, audio recordings, video recordings, photographs/images, etc. (even if previously approved) if such posted material constitutes a violation of this policy or other County policies.

Application to Other Policies:

All personnel policies of the County relating to employee conduct apply equally to conduct that occurs through social media. This includes, but is not limited to, policies related to discrimination, harassment, retaliation, workplace violence, conflicts of interest, and political activity. Any conflicts or inconsistencies between this policy and any one or more other policies shall be resolved by the County Manager.

Duty to Report:

All employees have an ongoing duty to report any violations of this policy by any other employee. The County considers this duty to report to be a critical component of its efforts to enforce this policy, and thereby ensure the safety, well-being, morale, and efficiency of its employees, preserve its reputation and goodwill in the community, and avoid or minimize unnecessary disruptions to or interference with its operations and service to the public.

No Expectation of Privacy in Social Media Activity:

1. Dawson County employees should be aware that social media activity is not secure or private, even if active steps are taken to restrict access. Once information has been posted or exchanged via social media, it is generally trackable, traceable, and accessible indefinitely. For this reason, and consistent with the with the County's current Internet Policy, employees should have no expectation of privacy in any social media activity conducted in the workplace and/or on-duty or in any social media activity which otherwise directly or indirectly relates to or affects the County, any of its Departments, or its employees.

2. The County reserves the right to inspect or monitor any social media activity engaged in by its employees using County-owned computers or other electronic equipment or devices. In addition, employees may be required to provide access to any social media websites or other applications in which they participate upon a determination by the County that there is a reasonable suspicion to believe that such access will reveal evidence of a violation of this policy or any other County policy.

Corrective and/or Disciplinary Action; Other Potential Consequences:

1. Employees engaging in social media activity in violation of this policy will be held accountable, and corrective and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment may be taken in accordance with the County's disciplinary policies and procedures.
2. If an employee is sued in part due to his/her social media activity under circumstances where the County would ordinarily provide a defense and/or indemnify the employee, the County reserves the right to withhold or withdraw such defense or indemnification in the event any such activity is found to violate this policy or any other policy of the County.

Interpretation and Application:

1. Nothing in this policy is intended to or will be applied in a manner that violates any employee's constitutional rights, including rights to freedom of speech, expression, and association, or federal or state rights to engage in any statutorily-protected activity.
2. Any employee unsure about the application of this policy to any particular social media activity should seek guidance from their Department Head before engaging in such activity.
3. This policy is intended for internal use of Dawson County only and should not be construed as establishing a higher duty or standard of care for purposes of any third party civil claims against the County and/or its employees. A violation of this policy by an employee provides only a basis for corrective action against such employee by the County.

EXHIBIT E – DAWSON COUNTY VEHICLE POLICY

Dawson County

County Vehicle Policy

Policy Statement:

The use of a County vehicle is a privilege. Dawson County expects employees who drive vehicles to act responsibly and use necessary discretion in the operation of the vehicle. Violation of any policy may lead to vehicle usage being reviewed/terminated.

The Dawson County Board of Commissioners, through the budget process, provides cars to County Departments. Dawson County will provide vehicles to employees whose responsibilities require that they have a vehicle for uses related to their job. Each Department Director will be responsible for justifying the use of each vehicle.

Dawson County vehicles are one of the most visible representations of the government to the public. Employees who operate these vehicles should always keep in mind that operation of this vehicle directly reflects on Dawson County itself. Dawson County citizens have an expectation that County vehicles will be used to conduct "official County business" and to provide timely services.

Unless a vehicle is exempt by state law, the County logo must be displayed on the front doors of all County vehicles. Exceptions include some vehicles used by the Dawson County Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's office and all of the court functions.

Vehicle Usage:

- Each employee assigned a vehicle shall exercise good judgment in utilizing it and shall not drive or use the vehicle so as to cause unfavorable comment, or reflect discredit upon the County.
- Only authorized individuals are allowed to operate County vehicles.
- County vehicles are to be used for official business only. County employees and other authorized individuals are allowed to ride in a County vehicle. County employees may use a County vehicle to transport family members to work-related seminars and training. Under no other circumstances shall a non Dawson County employee or unauthorized person be transported in a County vehicle unless the employee has obtained an insurance rider from their own insurer and filed it with the Dawson County Human Resources Department.

  With the insurance rider in place, employees may only transport non Dawson County employees to:

  - Schools
  - Day Care

- Medical/dental appointment within Dawson County or their County of residence

In the event of an accident with injuries to the non-County employee passengers, the private insurance rider would provide coverage. Insurance riders are to be obtained at the expense of each employee and from the insurer of his or her own choosing.

- County vehicles may be used during non-duty periods for transportation within and outside the County to attend activities for County business.
- Unattended vehicles must be locked at all times.
- Under no circumstances shall an employee of Dawson County consume alcohol or be under the influence of alcohol or medication that may impair their driving ability while operating a County vehicle.
- Alcoholic beverages may not be transported in County vehicles.
- Department Directors may require additional restrictions as necessary.

Safety and Maintenance:

- Each employee assigned a vehicle will be required to operate that vehicle in accordance with all laws of Dawson County and the State of Georgia.
- Employees are required to ensure that normal preventative maintenance measures are taken. Such maintenance includes:
    - Interior and exterior cleaning
    - Maintaining water, fuel, oil and tire pressure at prescribed levels
- All scheduled repairs, maintenance, and service must be performed by an authorized service provider.
- One incident of a preventable accident may result in revocation of driving privileges, Suspension without pay or termination.
- All employees and passengers are required to wear safety belts while operating/riding in County vehicles.
- Smoking is not allowed in any County vehicles.
- All accidents must to be reported to the appropriate Department Director and, in the case of accidents involving damage to other vehicles or property, must be investigated by the Georgia State Patrol.
- All drivers will have their license checked annually by the Department Director.

Additional Requirements for Take-home Vehicles

Background:

In Departments that report directly to the Dawson County Manager, there are approximately 14 take-home vehicles in use by County employees. That number excludes all vehicles assigned as take-home to the Dawson County Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's office and all of the court functions.

Policy Statement:

The use of a take-home vehicle is a privilege. Dawson County expects employees who have take-home vehicles to act responsibly and use necessary discretion in the operation of the vehicle. Violation of any policy may lead to vehicle usage being reviewed/terminated. Dawson County will provide take-home vehicles to employees whose responsibilities require that they respond on an on-call basis and/or regularly need to respond to emergency calls directly related to their job. Each Department Director will be responsible for justifying each take-home vehicle.

"Take-Home" Usage:

- Employees living within 30 miles of Dawsonville will be permitted to drive their assigned take-home vehicles to and from work. Employees living outside 30 miles from Dawsonville will leave their assigned vehicle at the Dawson County facility closest to their home. Travel of more than 30 miles needs to be approved on a case-by-case basis by each Department Director.
- Personal use of take-home vehicles should be limited. From time to time, it may be necessary to conduct personal business in a County vehicle. Such usage should be minimal and appropriate. Appropriate stops include:

    - Laundry
    - Bank
    - Convenience store
    - Medical/dental appointment within Dawson County or their County of residence
    - Incidental stops where driving to obtain a personal vehicle would result in extra and unnecessary expenditure of fuel

- Take-home vehicles may be used during non-duty periods for transportation within and outside the County to attend activities for County business.
- Department Directors may require additional restrictions as necessary

Elected Officials:

Employees who work directly for Elected Officials may have different standards for take-home vehicles.

Agreements between employees and the County existing prior to the adoption of this policy will remain in full force as long as the employee complies with all other requirements of this policy.

EXHIBIT F – DAWSON COUNTY RETURN TO WORK POLICY

Dawson County
Return to Work Policy

It is the policy of Dawson County to provide our employees who incur an injury or illness on the job with the best possible recovery program. A key component of this program is to establish processes and procedures for returning the employee to work at the earliest date medically possible. This document describes the County's procedures for returning an employee to work who has been injured on the job.

When determined appropriate, the County will make a reasonable good faith effort to provide temporary work tasks or hours tailored to the abilities of employees who are injured on the job. We ask employees to perform only those job functions that their doctor has agreed can be safely performed during the recovery process. All alternative and modified job assignments will be structured to meet the capacities and therapy needs of the injured employee. This work is often referred to as "light duty" or "modified" work. Such assignments are temporary in nature and are monitored by the Supervisor. Job restrictions, as defined by treating physicians, are strictly adhered to.

Definition of Modified Work:

The County defines "modified work" as temporary assignments within an employee's abilities, knowledge and skills. These positions are developed using the employee's abilities/restrictions as determined by the employee's treating physician. They may also include responsibilities and tasks taken from the employee's regular job, when the employee cannot perform full duties or work a full day.

Communication Regarding Return to Work:

The employee shall inform the physician of the County's Return to Work program. An employee is required to provide a doctor's release to duty form to his/her immediate Supervisor upon returning to work or within 24 hours, whichever is sooner. Additionally, all ill or injured workers must complete an accident report form (including all necessary paperwork). The Human Resources Department will forward the accident report form to our adjusting company. The Human Resources Department will communicate with the medical provider regarding any work restrictions.

Roles/Responsibilities:

Human Resources Department

- Establish clear, consistent Return to Work policies and procedures.
- Provide employees with orientation/training in the County's Return to Work program.
- Ensure that County Return to Work policies and procedures are uniformly followed.
- Maintain close communication with the injured employee throughout the healing process.
- Report all workers compensation claims to our adjusting company in a timely manner.
- Follow up with medical providers and employees regarding prescribed therapy and recovery process
- Ensure job restrictions are fully adhered to.
- Work closely with our adjusting company to ensure all benefits are paid timely.

Immediate Supervisor

- Report job injuries to Human Resources Department within 24 hours of knowledge of injury.
- Understand and adhere to the County's Injury Reporting Procedure and Return to Work policy.
- Ensure that employees released to modified work are working within the job restrictions.
- Ensure that employees receive a thorough return to work orientation and that they understand the County's return to work policy and procedures.
- Report any absences related to the work injury to the Human Resources Department.
- Maintain close communication with the injured employee throughout the healing process.

Injured Employee

- Report all injuries, no matter how slight, immediately to your immediate Supervisor.
- Inform your medical provider of the County's Return to Work policy
- Return to work following medical treatment and report to your immediate Supervisor.
- Provide your Supervisor with the Return to Work form from your doctor.
- If it's not medically possible to return to work, report to your Supervisor via phone immediately following your medical evaluation.
- Report to work in your temporary or modified job assignment following a temporary modified job offer by the County.
- Follow your medical provider's recommendations with respect to established work restrictions, limitations, therapies and physical capacities.
- Return to your normal work assignment as soon as your medical provider deems it is safe.

Monitoring the Return to Work Program

Modified and alternative jobs and work hours are temporary in duration, and subject to regular re-evaluation. The treating physician on the next scheduled medical appointment will reevaluate the modified work release. Upon receiving additional information, the County will reevaluate its ability to provide temporary, modified work and to increase or decrease the assigned tasks, based on the restrictions outlined by the physician.

Rate of Pay During Modified/Alternative Work Period:

Any employee who returns to work at a modified or alternative job or at less than their normal work hour schedule will be paid at the employee's regular rate.

EXHIBIT G – DAWSON COUNTY APPEARANCE POLICY

Dawson County
Appearance Policy

Purpose: The Purpose of this policy is to establish the standards of acceptable grooming and appearance. All personnel are expected to present the highest professional standards of personal hygiene and appearance while performing their duties and while representing Dawson County in an official capacity. The provisions of this policy are applicable to all Dawson County employees, including temporary and contracted employees.

Procedure:

a. It is the responsibility of all Supervisors to ensure through personal observation and daily inspections that employees comply with all uniform, appearance, and grooming requirements of the County. Employees who report to work dressed or groomed inappropriately, may be prevented from working until such employee returns to work well groomed and wearing proper attire.

b. For the purpose of this policy, all employees will be classified into one of three groups, defined below

    1. Internal – Employees who conduct a majority of their official duties inside a normal office setting
    2. External – Employees who conduct a majority of their official duties outside of a normal office setting
    3. Uniform – Employees who are employed inside the Emergency Services Department, or any other Department that is assigned a specific uniform to be worn during work hours.

General Grooming and Appearance Standards for <u>All</u> Personnel:

a. All personnel are expected to present the highest professional standards of personal hygiene and appearance while performing their duties and while representing the County in an official capacity.

b. All employees will exhibit an appearance that confirms our professionalism for our customers, partners, coworkers, and citizens

c. This policy strives to provide a healthy balance between professionalism, comfort and self-expressions

d. This policy does not inhibit or discourage the practice of any cultural custom or religion.

Internal Employee Standards: Internal employees will conform to the following standards of clothing attire unless otherwise authorized by their Department Head for a specific purpose.

Prohibited clothing items include, but are not limited to: jeans, sweat pants or jogging pants, shorts, t-shirts, tank-tops, cropped (above the waist) tops, sweatshirts, shirts or tops that contain obscene printed material, flip-flops or sneakers and any shirt that is not tucked in

Female Employees: Business casual attire for female employees is defined as dresses, skirts, blouses, blazers, dress pants, cotton twill trousers, traditional denim skirts, jumpers or dresses, knit polo shirts, cotton shells, knit shirts with collar (button front), cotton long sleeve shirts, cotton turtlenecks, gathered skirts, casual knit dresses, tailored trousers, appropriate hosiery, rubber, crepe or leather-soled shoes and dress sandals. Footwear must blend with the total business and professional image presented.

a. Prohibited clothing items will include, but are not limited to: jeans, sweatpants or jogging pants, leggings, spandex pants, stretch pants or tight stirrup pants, shorts, cut-offs, tank-tops or camisoles, cropped (above the waist) tops, see-through voile or chiffon blouses, miniskirts, low cut front or back dresses or tops, strapless dresses or blouses, halter tops, shirts or tops that contain obscene printed material, or sneakers. If dress sandals are worn, the employee must ensure that their feet are properly groomed and the toe nails must be trimmed and neat.

b. Shoes may be flat or medium height heel (pumps). Excessive decorative attachments or athletic, casual sandals or tennis type shoes are unacceptable

c. Skirt/dress length will be consistent with the conservative image.

External Employee Standards: – External employees will conform to the following standards of clothing attire unless otherwise authorized by their Department Head for a specific purpose.

a. While working outside or in adverse conditions, safety should be the number one priority.

b. All employees serving in this capacity should be as neat and business like as working conditions permit. Minor repairs shall be made to reattach a button, sew a small tear or fasten a hem.

c. Prohibited clothing items will include, but are not limited to: cut-offs, leggings, spandex pants, mini-skirts, stretch pants or tight stirrup pants, tank tops, cropped tops, tops with “spaghetti straps”, low cut front or back tops, halter tops, shirts or tops that contain obscene printed material, flip-flops or casual sandals.

Uniformed Employees: Uniformed employees will conform to the following standards of clothing attire unless otherwise authorized by their Department Head for a specific purpose.

a. Will wear the designated agency issued uniform components and equipment items when reporting for duty, while on duty, and during any authorized special assignments. When in uniform, care shall be taken that all items fit well, are neat, clean, pressed, in good condition and are properly worn.

b. While in uniform, employees shall not mix items of civilian clothing as an outer garment, unless specifically authorized by this directive.

c. All uniform components and items of equipment must conform to County approved specifications as established by the County Manager and as prescribed in this policy. No alterations to any item will be made in such a manner that the item does not conform to approved specifications.

d. Personnel are responsible for the general care and maintenance of uniforms and equipment.

    1. The uniform is to be kept well pressed, clean, and free of spots and dirt.

    2. Minor repairs shall be made to reattach a button, sew a small tear, or fasten a hem.

    3. All leather and authorized metal items shall be clean and polished.

    4. Headgear will not be altered, such as by bending the hat brim or in any way creasing or altering the hat’s manufactured shape.

    5. Uniform and equipment replacement required due to fair wear and tear, damage, or change in wearer’s size will be accomplished in accordance with prescribed procedures.

6. Uniforms and equipment turned-in upon an employee's termination of employment will be in the same condition as when issued, except for normal wear and tear and will be dry-cleaned.

7. Badges shall be displayed on the standard uniform at all times.

8. Only authorized hats are allowed.

Grooming Standards:

a. **Hair:** Hair must be kept clean and neat. Hair must not contain an excessive amount of grooming aids. Hair styles shall be in accordance with the professional image of Dawson County. Extreme styles are not permitted.

b. **Facial Hair:** When worn, facial hair will be kept trimmed and neat in appearance. Facial hair must be in accordance with the professional image of Dawson County. Extreme styles are not permitted.

c. **Sideburns:** When worn, sideburns must be neatly trimmed and tapered in the same manner as the haircut.

d. **Wigs and Hairpieces:** Wigs and hairpieces must conform to the same standards required for natural hair.

e. **Facial Cosmetics:** If worn, facial cosmetics are to be subdued and worn with discretion and in good taste to present an overall professional appearance. Any deviation of the above must be authorized by the employee's Department Head.

f. **Fingernails and Toenails:** Fingernails and toenails shall be kept clean. Fingernails and toenails should not be excessive in length and if polished should be suitable for a business environment.

g. **Jewelry and Accessories** should be worn in a tasteful manner at all times to reflect the professional image of Dawson County.

h. **Sunglasses:** Sunglasses are permitted for wear during daylight hours and outside of buildings unless the employee has a prescription from a doctor requiring that sunglasses be worn under other circumstances.

i. **Visible Body Piercings:** Piercings, unless in the ears, are prohibited, while on duty by any Dawson County employee.

j. **Tattoos:** Tattoos are only allowed to be exposed on External and Uniformed employees and then are only allowed to be visible on the arms. This not to prohibit employees from having unexposed tattoos or office staff from having a small

exposed tattoo on the ankle or foot area. Tattoos must be kept to the professional grooming standards of the County.

k. **Fragrances:** Care should be given not to wear excessive amounts of perfume/cologne that may be offensive to customers and/or coworkers.

Exceptions: From time to time, the County Manager may allow employees to "dress down" for special occasions.