

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Date: November 4, 2025

9:00 a.m.

Place: Commissioners Room, Courthouse, Caledonia, MN

Members Present: Cindy Wright, Eric Johnson, Kurt Zehnder, Robert Schuldt, and Greg Myhre

Others Present: Interim Auditor/Treasurer Polly Heberlein, Fillmore County Journal Reporter Charlene Selbee, Interim Administrator Carol Lapham, Human Resource Officer Brent Parker, Board Clerk/EDA Director Allison Wagner, Public Health and Human Services Director John Pugleasa, Financial Assistance Supervisor Karen Kohlmeyer, Public Health Supervisor Jordan Knoke, Engineer Brian Pogodzinski, Environmental Services Director Amelia Meiners, La Crescent Community Development Larry Kirch, Explore La Crosse Jeremiah Burish, Mechanical Support Coordinator Paul Reardon, Jerry Ladsten, and Yvonne Krogstad

Presiding: Chairperson Johnson

Call to order.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Schuldt, motion unanimously carried to approve the agenda.

Motion was made by Commissioner Myhre, seconded by Commissioner Wright, motion carried unanimously to approve the meeting minutes from October 28, 2025.

Public Comment:

None.

APPOINTMENTS

La Crescent Community Development Larry Kirch, Explore La Crosse Jeremiah Burish, and Mechanical Support Coordinator Paul Reardon recapped the 2025 USA Gravel National Championships that had taken place in Houston County during Applefest weekend. In addition, they gave an update on the 2026 championships that would also take place in Houston County. Kirch thanked the County and staff for helping make the USA Cycling Gravel National Championships successful on behalf of the City of La Crescent, Explore La Crosse, USA Cycling, and Medalist Sports. Kirch said the City wanted to give special thanks to County Engineer Pogodzinski. 787 participants had registered for the event representing 48 states. Krich said the

traffic control plan and road safety were the biggest area for the event to approve upon for 2026. He said the course and timing of races could be modified in 2026 to reduce congestion. In 2026 the tentative date for the event would be September 12 and 13, the weekend prior to Applefest. Overall, the group had learned a lot and would be even more prepared for the event the following year.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Wright moved, Commissioner Myhre seconded, motion unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda. The Commissioners thanked Julie Renk, Public Health and Human Services Eligibility Worker for her 32 years of service to Houston County. Approved items are below.

- 1) Hire Phillip Nielsen as a 67-day temporary/casual Veteran Services driver, at a pay rate of \$16.91 per hour.
- 2) Accept the resignation/retirement of Julie Renk, Public Health and Human Services Eligibility Worker, effective December 2nd, 2025, with thanks for her 32 years of service to the residents of Houston County.

ACTION ITEMS

File No. 1 – Commissioner Myhre moved, Commissioner Schuldt seconded, motion carried unanimously to approve a CUP for Gerald Ladsten to build a dwelling on less than 40 acres in the Agricultural Protection District in Wilmington Township.

File No. 2 – Commissioner Myhre moved, Commissioner Schuldt seconded, motion carried unanimously to approve a Zoning Amendment to rezone an area from the Agriculture Protection District to Residential in La Crescent Township for Ronald McKelvey Credit Trust and Christine Saudek Trust.

File No. 3 – Commissioner Zehnder moved, Commissioner Myhre seconded, motion unanimously carried to approve an IUP for Benjy and Martha Borntreger to run a Level II Home Occupation consisting of the construction of vinyl windows in Wilmington Township.

File No. 4 – Commissioner Wright moved, Commissioner Schuldt seconded, motion unanimously carried to approve an IUP for Richfield Acres LLC to operate a cannabis microbusiness in the Agriculture Protection District in Spring Grove Township.

File No. 5 – Commissioner Myhre moved, Commissioner Zehnder seconded, motion unanimously carried to accept WS Trucking & Const, LLC’s quote for snow removal. The total estimated cost would be \$8,755.00.

File No. 6 – Commissioner Myhre moved, Commissioner Schuldt seconded, motion unanimously carried to adopt Resolution No. 25-38 Final Acceptance for SAP 028-610-021,

Contract #5160 with Minnowa Construction Inc for the bridge replacement on CSAH 10. The total cost was \$457,591.78. Resolution is below.

RESOLUTION NO. 25-38

**FINAL ACCEPTANCE FOR SAP 028-610-021
CONTRACT # 5160**

MINNOWA CONSTRUCTION INC

NOVEMBER 4, 2025

WHEREAS, Contract No. 5160 has in all things been completed, and the County Board being fully advised in the premises,

NOW, THEN BE IT RESOLVED, That we do hereby accept said completed project for and in behalf of the County of Houston and authorize final payment as specified herein.

File No. 7 – Commissioner Schuldt moved, Commissioner Myhre seconded, motion unanimously carried to accept Auxiliary Post 6801 donation of \$200.00 to the Veteran Services Office to use for any veteran’s needs.

File No. 8 – Commissioner Zehnder moved, Commissioner Wright seconded, motion unanimously carried to initiate a competitive search for a 1 FTE Public Health and Human Services Department Eligibility Worker (B24). Commissioner Wright said she appreciated the research that went into the position and justification for the position.

File No. 9 – Commissioner Zehnder moved, Commissioner Myhre seconded, motion unanimously carried to approve Juvenile Detention Center Contract with Mower County and authorize the signature of Board Chairman, Eric Johnson.

File No. 10 – Commissioner Zehnder moved, Commissioner Myhre seconded, motion unanimously carried to review and approve payments. Payments are below.

2025/11/04 COMMISSIONER'S WARRANTS:

VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT
BRAD'S ELECTRIC INC	2,666.65
DELTA DENTAL	7,103.92
INSIGHT PUBLIC SECTOR	3,079.15
IUOE LOCAL 49 FRINGE BENEFIT FUNDS	26,605.00
LIBERTY TIRE RECYCLING LLC	3,303.50
MASS MOUNTAIN	6,600.00
MEDICA	248,104.92
MINNOWA CONSTRUCTION INC	46,490.42
MN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY	2,512.84
OFFICE OF MNIT SERVICES	3,498.62
SCHNEIDER CORPORATION/THE	3,075.00
SNO PAC FOODS INC	125,000.00
VERIZON WIRELESS	2,947.39
WINONA CONTROLS INC	2,665.51
	<u>483,652.92</u>
18 VENDORS PAID LESS THAN \$2000.00	<u>11,729.25</u>
	<u>495,382.17</u>
PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	<u>9,786.06</u>
	<u>505,168.23</u>

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Interim Administrator Lapham said there had been a fraud attempt on the County’s bank account that had been stopped.

The Commissioners discussed recent and upcoming meetings including a SELCO, Department Head, Transportation Summit, Workforce Development Inc., EDA, Airport, and Personnel meeting.

Closing Public Comment:

None.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Myhre, seconded by Commissioner Schuldt, motion unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 10:09 a.m. The next meeting would be a special workgroup session on November 12, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. A public hearing would follow at 6:00 p.m. on November 12th pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § 375A.1205, Subdivision 1. The purpose of the hearing would be to consider making the positions of Auditor / Treasurer and Recorder positions appointed.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HOUSTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA

By: _____
Eric Johnson, Chairperson

Attest: _____
Carol Lapham, Interim Administrator

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Date: November 12, 2025

5:00 p.m.

Place: Commissioners Room, Courthouse, Caledonia, MN

Members Present:

Cindy Wright, Eric Johnson, Kurt Zehnder, Robert Schuldt, and Greg Myhre

Others Present:

Interim Auditor/Treasurer Polly Heberlein, Interim Administrator Carol Lapham, Board Clerk/EDA Director Allison Wagner, Public Health and Human Services Director John Pugleasa, Human Resource Officer Brent Parker, Financial Assistance Supervisor Karen Kohlmeyer, Social Services Supervisor Bethany Moen, Fiscal Supervisor Heidi Harms, Public Health Supervisor Jordan Knoke, Accountant Sheila Schroeder, Sheriff Brian Swedberg, Chief Deputy Bill Hargrove, Donna Buckbee, Mary Denzer, John Jordan, and Yvonne Krogstad

Board Workgroup Session

The Commissioners discussed the Public Health and Human Services Director position opening with Human Resource Officer Brent Parker. They discussed how to fill the position, changes, and evaluating it. They discussed getting input from the staff on how to shape the position for the future.

The Commissioners discussed a potential Spring Grove contract for police department services with Sheriff Swedberg and Chief Deputy Hargrove. The proposed contract rate for 2026 from the Sheriff's Office had been \$387,000. Spring Grove had told the Sheriff's Office that they had a budget of only \$218,000 for public safety. They discussed the high volume of calls from Spring Grove and what different options would look like. Sheriff Swedberg proposed keeping both deputies that currently worked in the Spring Grove contract, and instead not replacing Sheriff's office staff in other areas later in the year. The deputies had been hired to serve the Spring Grove contract, but Swedberg and Hargrove were not recommending laying off staff if Spring Grove was paying less. They said the deputies could help fill in when other Sheriff's Office deputies took time off. No official decisions were made on the matter.

The workgroup session ended at 5:54 p.m.

At 6:00 p.m. a public hearing, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § 375A.1205, Subdivision 1 was held. The purpose of the hearing was to consider making the positions of Auditor/Treasurer and Recorder appointed.

The current Auditor/Treasurer and Recorder were appointed in the interim because the elected officials in those positions had retired prior to their term ending. Human Resource Officer Parker said the County was considering making the positions appointed instead of elected in the future. He said this approach was common across Minnesota. The goal was to create consistency and accountability. It would allow the County to recruit and retain people based on qualifications and allow for more oversight from the County on the positions.

Donna Buckbee from Ferndale Road in Houston County said she was speaking in favor of keeping the positions elected. She had concerns about consolidation of power. She said there were valid concerns on both sides. She said people who got elected often end up being a disappointment and didn't do the job they said they would do, but that was the reason for more elections.

John Jordan from Money Creek thanked the board for the opportunity to address his concern. He said much of the struggle of the Country was people's right to vote. He asked why the board would want to disenfranchise this at this time in history. He said he was against making the positions appointed. He shared some thoughts on behalf of his wife saying "we still live in a democracy. I want to remain in a democracy".

Mary Denzer from Yucatan Township said she lived in post war Europe and saw people try to get votes in. She said she felt the Townships, County, and State were the most democratic. She believed in government for the people by the people. She said the positions should continue to be elected.

Yvonne Krogstad from north of Spring Grove said she had researched the pros and cons of making the positions appointed instead of elected. She said she had found more cons than pros. She said one con of making the positions elected would be less control by the general public. She said she was concerned about public notices and the County should make sure they were posted on the website.

There would be another public hearing on the matter on December 16th during the regular Board of Commissioner meeting that started at 9:00 a.m.

Commissioner Myhre moved, Commissioner Zehnder seconded, motion unanimously carried to close the public hearing.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HOUSTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA

By: _____
Eric Johnson, Chairperson

Attest: _____
Carol Lapham, Interim Administrator

MariBell 765/161 kV Transmission Project

Houston County Board of County Commissioners

November 18, 2025



Agenda

About Us ● » Dairyland Power Cooperative and GridLiance Heartland

Project Overview ● » Background – Project Need
» Maribell Transmission Line Project
» Anticipated Project Schedule
» Project Benefits
» Routing Considerations
» Right-of-Way Easements

Wrap Up ● » Q&A

Thank You for Meeting with Us Today

Dairyland Power Cooperative

- » Clay DeWitt: Manager, Regional Transmission Projects

GridLiance Heartland

- » Jessica Hewitt, Sr. Director Development
- » Josh Daubenspeck, Project Director



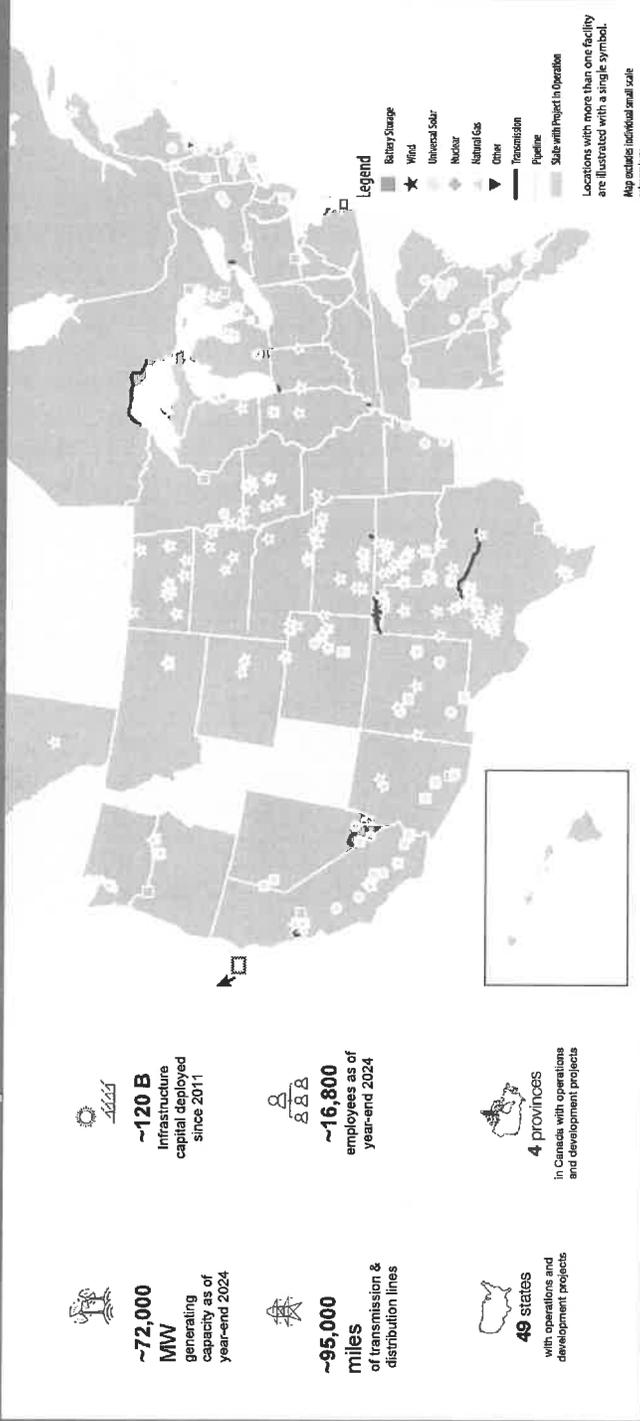
Dairyland Power Cooperative

Overview

- Generation & Transmission (G&T) cooperative/not-for-profit
- Wholesale power to 24-member distribution cooperatives & 27 municipal utilities
- Headquartered in La Crosse, Wisconsin
- Energy provided to approximately 750,000 people
- 500 employees
- ~400 distribution substations served

Investing in America's Energy Infrastructure

NextEra Energy Inc. (NextEra) is one of the largest energy infrastructure companies in North America



NextEra Energy Resources' assets in Minnesota

- Approximately **\$808 billion** total capital investment
- Approximately **\$66.4 million** annual payroll
- \$2 million** annual land payments
- \$672,000** in property taxes, 2023*
* Annual Property Taxes (in units: property tax) in a typical town, inferred data based on 2023 full year

Current Presence in 5 States And 3 RTOs

GridLiance is a subsidiary of NextEra Energy Transmission (NEET), invested in empowering cooperatives and municipal utilities

1

GridLiance West

Southwest Nevada Assets

- 167 miles of 230 kV transmission lines and related substation infrastructure
- Integrated into CAISO
- CAISO-directed reliability and resiliency 230 kV Sloan Canyon Switching Station completed in 2019
- CAISO-directed economic upgrade completed in 2020
- Ongoing build-out opportunities

2

GridLiance High Plains

Panhandle Oklahoma Assets

- 444 miles of 69 kV and 115 kV transmission lines and related substation infrastructure
- Mostly integrated into SPP
- Reliability upgrades completed in 2019

Southern Kansas Assets

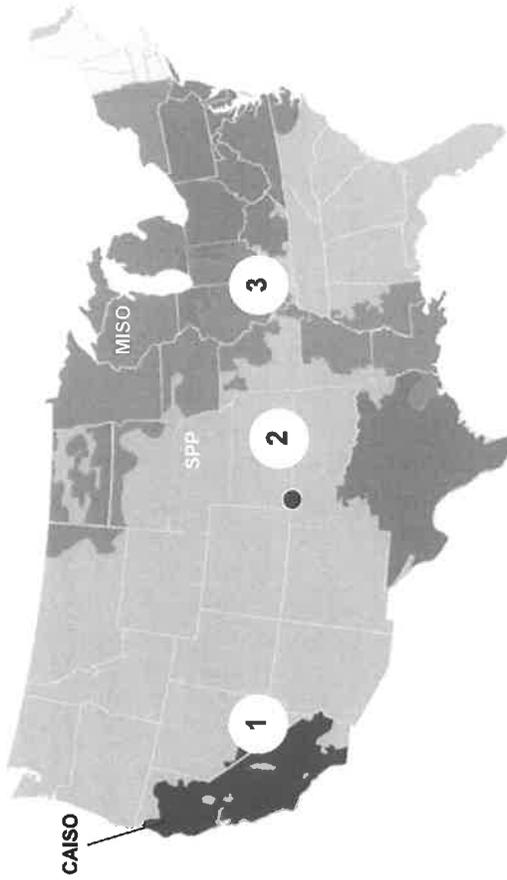
- 29 miles of 69 kV transmission lines (65% ownership)
- Integrated into SPP
- SPP-directed reliability upgrade projected completed in Q1 2021

3

GridLiance Heartland

Ohio River Crossing Assets

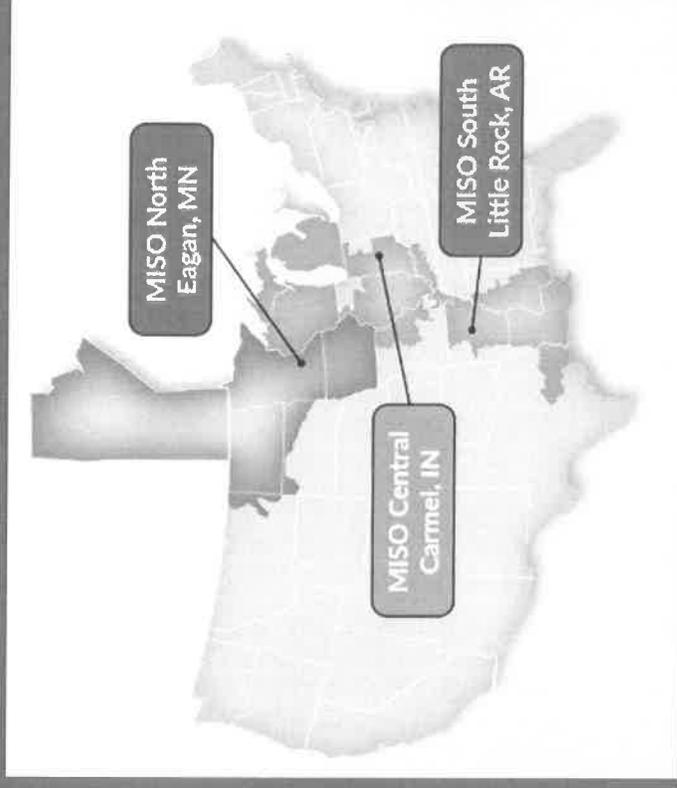
- Six 161 kV transmission lines and related substation infrastructure
- Located in Southern Illinois/Western Kentucky
- Integrated into MISO
- Ongoing buildout opportunities related to aging conditions



Background – Project Need

Midcontinent Independent System Operator

- ▶ MISO is an Independent System Operator responsible for monitoring the grid and operating the real-time energy market in the central United States and a portion of Canada
- ▶ Future needs and overall system planning
- ▶ GridLiance Heartland and Dairyland Cooperative are MISO members



MariBell Transmission Project

What Is The Project?

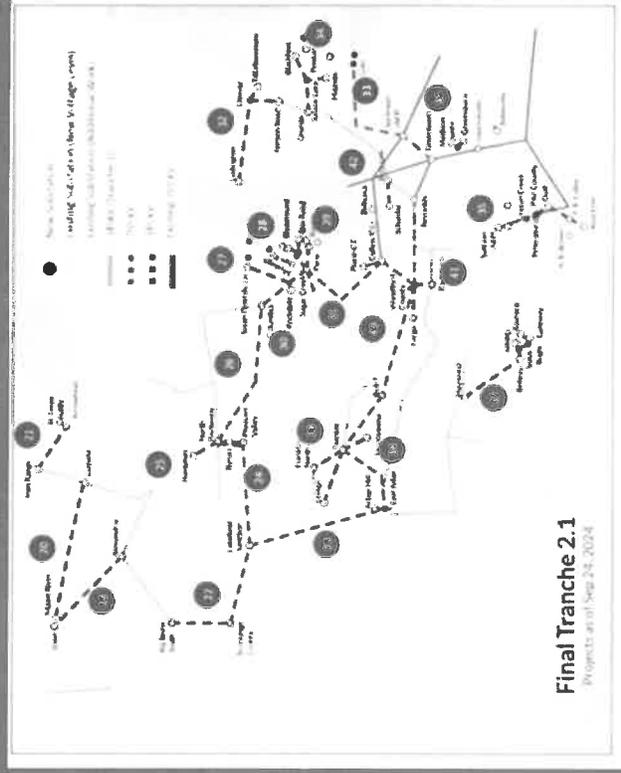
This proposed project is a ~140-mile, 765/161 kilovolt (kV) double-circuit transmission line

Why Is It Needed?

- ▶ MISO's Tranche 2.1 develops a 3,631-mile 765 kV backbone that ensures future reliability
- ▶ \$21.8 billion investment for 24 projects across the MISO Midwest subregion (us)
- ▶ MISO assigned Dairyland Power Cooperative a portion of one of these projects, Long Range Transmission Plan (LRTP) 26, because of its existing 161 kV network
- ▶ Middle segment of North Rochester, MN – Portage, WI 765 kV line

Where?

The project route extends from Marion, Minnesota to Bell Center, Wisconsin



Project Timeline

Estimated Schedule



Minnesota Certificate of Need Application: Feb. 2026
Route Permit Application: Sept. 2026

*The project schedule is subject to change.

Note: Subject to Regulatory approvals

Project Benefits

The proposed MariBell Transmission Project will enhance the reliability, resilience and flexibility of the regional electric grid while also providing economic benefits throughout the Upper Midwest.

- ▶ With growing demand for energy in the region, MariBell will support economic development, community services and public infrastructure
- ▶ Greater regional reliability by increasing transmission capacity & capabilities
- ▶ 765 kV design minimizes land use while maintaining high reliability
 - » One 765 kV line transfers 5 to 6 times the amount of electricity as a 345 kV line
- ▶ Estimated to provide over \$400 MM in local and state property tax revenue to Minnesota

Routing Considerations

Socioeconomic, Landowner Impacts

- ✓ Most direct route possible; lower cost for customers
- ✓ Reducing routing impacts for landowners by paralleling or co-locating with existing transmission lines, roads, and property lines
- ✓ Maximizing distances from residences and public facilities
- ✓ Minimizing impacts to public airports (FAA) and Military Training Zones

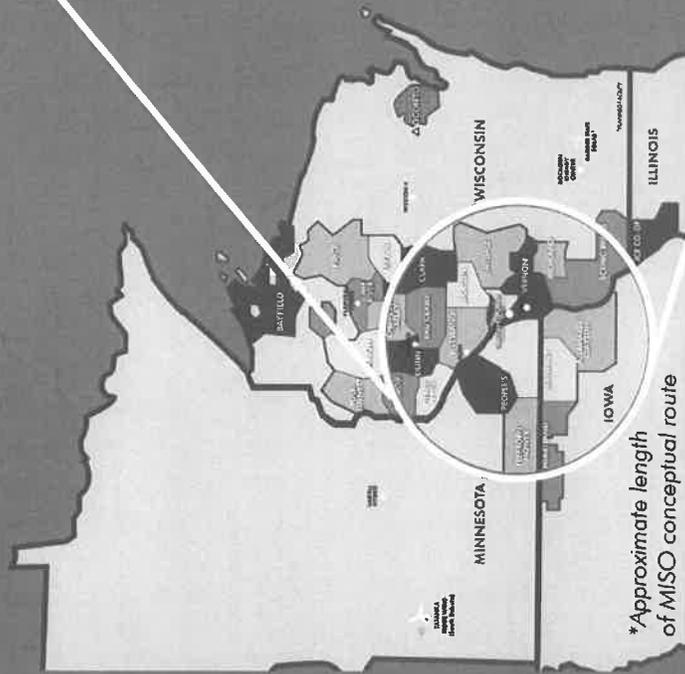
Environmental Impacts

- ✓ Minimizing impacts to forested wetland and known cultural and archeological resources
- ✓ Minimizing/avoiding protected or sensitive species and habitat impacts
- ✓ Minimizing impacts to federal, state, and tribal lands

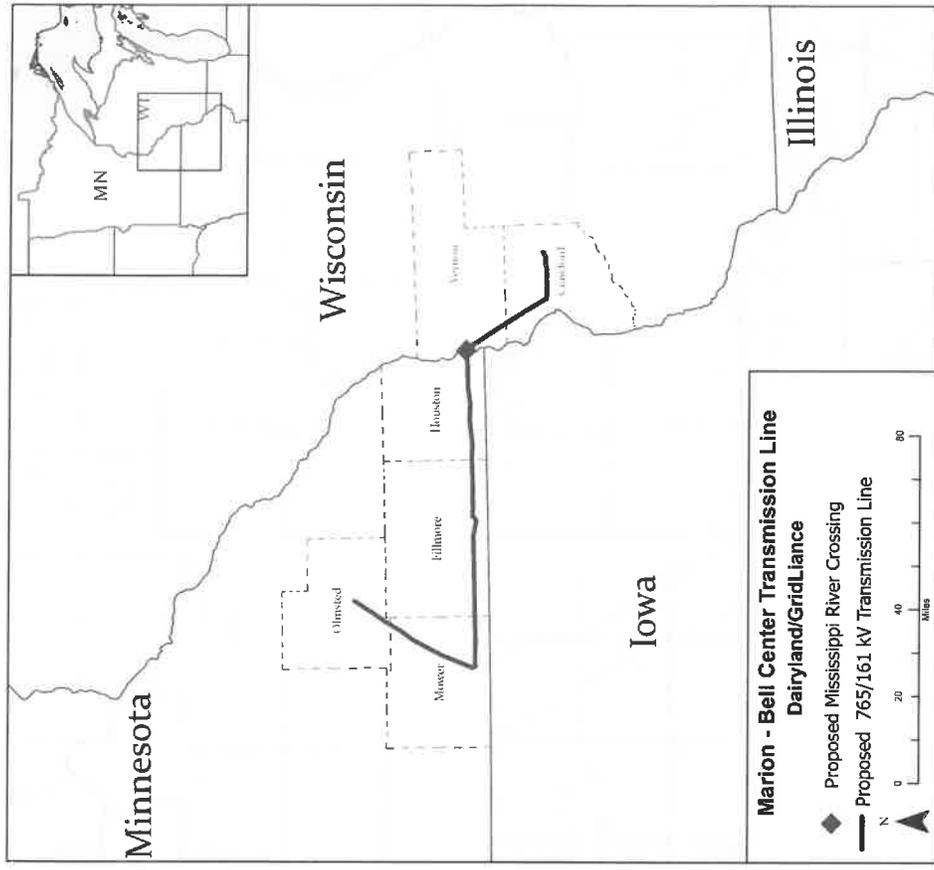
Infrastructure Impacts

- ✓ Optimize clearances to existing structures, including bridges, culverts, transmission lines, telecom towers, and wind turbines

Proposed MariBell Route



*Approximate length of MISO conceptual route



Marion - Bell Center Transmission Line
Dairyland/GridLiance

- ◆ Proposed Mississippi River Crossing
- Proposed 765/161 KV Transmission Line

Right-of-Way Easements (ROW)

Working with Landowners

- ▶ ROW agents onboarded in September
 - » Dairyland has hired a ROW Services Contractor to assist with landowners' outreach and land rights management
 - » Contractors will remain under contract for the duration of the project
- ▶ Land agents have begun in-person outreach to landowners to explain the project, and collect and provide contact information
 - » Local governments are being updated in parallel with landowner engagement
- ▶ Environmental, design and land surveys to commence in 2026
- ▶ Land agents will serve as the primary points of contact for landowner questions and liaisons between project representatives and landowners throughout the project duration



Member & Community Engagement

- ▶ Open Houses & Public Comment Opportunities
 - » PSCW & MPUC will host formal public meetings as part of permitting process
 - » Dairyland and GridLiance are hosting voluntary open house meetings this week:
 - > Nov. 18, 4:00-6:00 p.m.: Four Seasons Community Center, 900 N. Kingston St., Caledonia, MN 55921
 - > Nov. 20, 4:00-6:00 p.m.: Westby Community Center, 206 N. Main St., Westby, WI 54667

For more information or if you have any questions, please contact us at:

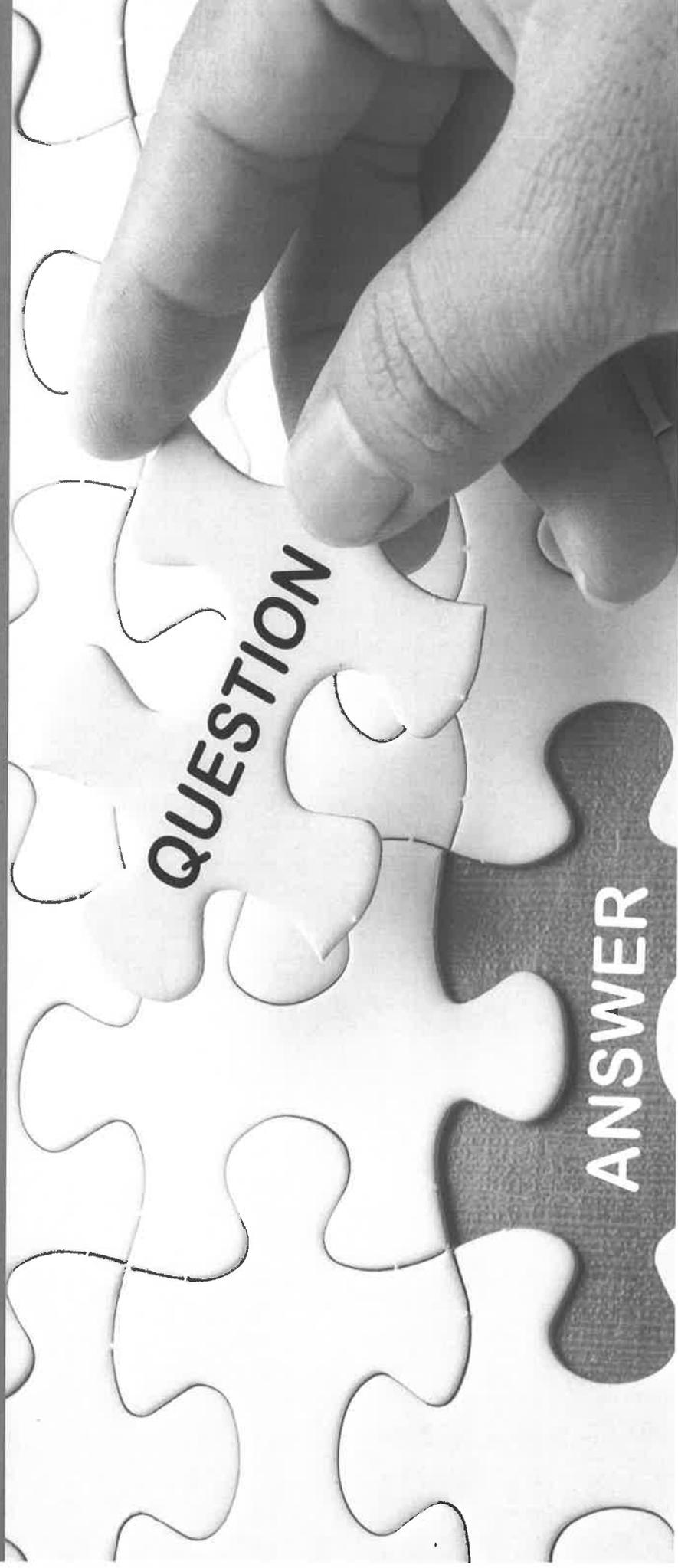


connect@maribelltransmission.com



www.maribelltransmission.com

Comments & Questions?



COUNTY OF HOUSTON

STATE OF MINNESOTA

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

APPROVAL OF PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the County of Houston, Minnesota will hold a public hearing on November 18, 2025 at 9:30 A.M. or thereafter at the Houston County Commissioner's Room, Room 222, 304 South Marshall Street, Caledonia, MN, 55921, to consider granting a property tax abatement under Minnesota Statutes, Sections 469.1812 to 469.1815, to assist in the construction of a cold storage facility (the "Property"). The Property is described as follows:

Tax Parcel No. 211163000

Legal description is:

The South One-Half of the Southeastern Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 24, subject to the right of way of Minnesota Highway No. 44 and that part of RG&G Addition to the City of Caledonia not included in Lot 2 and Lot 3 of RG&G Addition to the City of Caledonia EXCEPTING the following described parcels:

1. Parcel One: All of the premises lying southerly of the northerly line of Green Acres Drive; and
2. Parcel Two: Lots 2 and 3, Block 1 of RG&G Addition to the City of Caledonia according to the official plat thereof on file and of record in the Office of the County Recorder in and for Houston County, Minnesota.

All being a part of Township 102, Range 6, West, Houston County, State of Minnesota

The abatement of County taxes shall not exceed a period of six years and will commence with taxes payable 2027. The annual amount of the abatement shall be stepped on the following schedule:

Year 1 The County shall abate 80% of the County's taxes
Year 2 The County shall abate 65% of the County's taxes
Year 3 The County shall abate 50% of the County's taxes
Year 4 The County shall abate 35% of the County's taxes
Year 5 The County shall abate 20% of the County's taxes
Year 6 The County shall abate 5% of the County's taxes

The County estimates that the total maximum amount of the abatements will not exceed **\$194,359.98**. Following the public hearing, the County will consider granting the abatement which

will be provided for the addition of a minimum of 1 job as proposed under the terms of the Tax Abatement Agreement.

A draft copy of the abatement resolution containing the terms of the abatement will be on file at the County Courthouse and available for public inspection on and after the date of this notice. Any person wishing to express an opinion on the matters to be considered at the public hearing will be heard orally or in writing.

BY ORDER OF THE COUNTY BOARD
Carol Lapham
Interim County Administrator

RESOLUTION NO. 25-41

**Approving a Property Tax Abatement for Certain Property
in the City of Caledonia, Houston County, Minnesota for
Sac Pac Foods, Inc.**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Sections 469.1812 to 469.1815, the Minnesota State Legislature has authorized cities, school districts, counties and towns to rebate all or part of their respective portions of a parcel's property tax as an incentive to economic development provided the designated project meets criteria as established; and

WHEREAS, the Houston County Board of Commissioners believes that a strong economy is critical to the continued comprehensive growth and health of Houston County; and

WHEREAS, the Houston County Board recognizes that many complex factors influence the economic climate of the area and the Board has and will continue to support diverse efforts to foster a positive environment for both small and large business growth, attract and retain new corporate residents, and encourage development of the local labor force: and

WHEREAS, the Houston County Board has established the Houston County Economic Development Authority (EDA) which has been designated as the body responsible for reviewing and acting upon economic development abatement requests and other business subsidies, thereby replacing the original Abatement Committee; and

WHEREAS, the Houston County Board of Commissioners held a public hearing on, November 18, 2025 following due notice as required by law and a recommendation by the Houston County EDA in favor of the abatement application of Sno Pac Foods, Inc., dated July 29, 2025 and

WHEREAS, the Houston County Board of Commissioners has found and determined that:

1. It expects the benefits to Houston County of the proposed abatement agreement to at least equal the costs to the County of the proposed agreement;
2. The proposed abatement is in the public interest because it will:
 - a. Increase the County tax base by creating a new market value of **\$3,418,700**;

Create new and retain existing businesses and their employment opportunities in the

County;

3. The proposed tax abatement otherwise meets or exceeds the County's Business Subsidy Criteria because:
 - a. The project will provide needed resources for the expansion of Sno Pac Foods, Inc., that has sufficient other financing to complete the project in a timely manner;
 - b. It will encourage a high quality of construction and promote the highest and best use of land, consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan, the City's zoning ordinance, and other local regulations;
 - c. The project will not significantly and adversely increase the demands for service needs in the County;
 - d. The project will create and retain jobs which pay desirable wages and provide support for other local businesses.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Houston County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the abatement request of **Sno Pac Foods, Inc.**, subject to the following stipulations:

1. The abatement will be payable to **Sno Pac Foods, Inc.** on the existing tax value in accordance with a development agreement which will specify the terms of such payments over six (6) years beginning in 2027.

2. After full payment of the taxes as due each year:

In year one (1), **Sno Pac Foods, Inc.** will receive a 80% abatement;
In year two (2), **Sno Pac Foods, Inc.** will receive a 65% abatement;
In year three (3), **Sno Pac Foods, Inc.** will receive a 50% abatement;
In year four (4), **Sno Pac Foods, Inc.** will receive a 35% abatement;
In year five (5), **Sno Pac Foods, Inc.** will receive a 20% abatement;
In year six (6), **Sno Pac Foods, Inc.** will receive a 5% abatement;

3. In year seven (7) and thereafter, **Sno Pac Foods, Inc.** will pay 100% of the real estate taxes without tax abatement.

4. Total abatement granted for the **six (6)** years.

*****CERTIFICATION*****

*

STATE OF MINNESOTA

COUNTY OF HOUSTON

I, Carol Lapham, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Houston County Board of Commissioners at regular session dated November 18, 2025.

(SEAL)

WITNESS my hand and the seal of my office this __ day of _____.

Carol Lapham

County Interim Administrator

**HOUSTON COUNTY
AGENDA REQUEST FORM
November 18, 2025**

Date Submitted: 11/13/2025

By: Brent Parker, Human Resources Officer

ACTION

- **Consider approving resolution 25-42 adopting Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual.**
- **Consider approving Contract / Statement of Work with UKG and the Minnesota Counties Computer Cooperative for providing HR, payroll, and workforce management software.**
- **Consider discussing future County reorganizational structure and consider authorizing Human Resources Officer Parker to write and initiate a RFP for external/economic development services for 2026.**

APPOINTMENT REQUEST

HR CONSENT AGENDA REQUEST

- **Hire Kelly Zielinski as a Public Health and Human Services Collections Officer (B24 – Step 2) effective December 1st, 2025**
- **Hire James Lyden as a 67-day temporary/casual Drop Site Supervisor, at a pay rate of \$17.50 per hour.**

Reviewed by:	____ HR Director ____ Finance Director ____ IS Director ____ County Attorney ____ Environmental Svcs	____ Sheriff ____ Engineer ____ PHHS (indicate other dept) _____
Recommendation:		
Decision:		

**Board of County Commissioners
Houston County, Minnesota**

Resolution 25-42 Adopting Houston County Policies and Procedures

Manual Date: November 18th, 2025

Whereas, the Houston County Board of Commissioners has authority to establish and revise county personnel policies; and

Whereas, these policy recommendations have been reviewed in consultation with the management team; and

Whereas, the County Human Resources Officer recommends the adoption of new and updated policies to promote positive, productive, safe, and effective workplace culture and practices, and to support continued compliance with applicable law and regulations, and effective delivery of public services; and

Therefore, be it resolved, Houston County shall establish a personnel policy manual including the following sections and policies effective:

Section A – Purpose, Adoption, and Administration

- A-1 Purpose
- A-2 Adoption
- A-3 Administration
- A-4 Application
- A-5 Definitions

Section B – Staffing and Employment Practices Policies

- B-1 Equal Employment Opportunity
- B-2 Recruitment and Selection
- B-3 Background Investigation
- B-4 Probationary and Trial Periods
- B-5 Separation from Employment
- B-6 Layoff
- B-7 Outside Employment
- B-8 Personnel Records, Forms, and Transactions
- B-9 Performance Management
- B-10 Hours of Work and Time Reporting
- B-11 Photo ID / Building Access Policy
- B-12 Dress Code – next to hours and time
- B-13 Disability and Workplace Accommodation
- B-14 Acceptable Use of Computers and IT Resources
- B-15 Telework / Remote Work

- B-16 Nepotism
- B-17 Vehicle Use
- B-18 Travel Reimbursement
- B-19 Data Privacy / Not Public Data
- B-20 Nursing and Lactation Support
- B-21 Vacation Donation

Section C – Classification and Compensation Policies

- C-1 Classification Plan
- C-2 Compensation Plan
- C-3 Administration of Compensation Plan

Section D – Benefits / Entitlements Policies

- D-1 Insurance
- D-2 Holidays
- D-3 Vacation
- D-4 Sick Time / ESST
- D-5 Family Medical Leave (FMLA)
- D-6 Minnesota Paid Leave (MPL)
- D-7 Leaves of Absence
- D-8 Employee Training and Development

Section E – Code of Conduct Policies

- E-1 Discrimination and Harassment Prevention
- E-2 Respectful Workplace
- E-3 Workplace Violence
- E-4 Code of Conduct
- E-5 Discipline and Discharge
- E-6 Grievance Procedure
- E-7 Political Activity
- E-8 Conflict of Interest
- E-9 Commercial Driver’s License (CDL)

Section F – Workplace Safety and Health Policies

- F-1 Emergency Closure of County Government Offices and Adverse Weather Conditions
- F-2 Cell Phone and Wireless Communications
- F-3 Communicable Disease Prevention Management
- F-4 DOT Drug and Alcohol Testing
- F-5 AWAIR Program
- F-6 Drug, Alcohol, Tobacco and Cannabis Free Workplace



Be it Finally Resolved that the County reserves the right to make additional changes and updates to County Personnel Policies by amendment or future Board Actions.

**State of Minnesota
County of Houston**

I, Carol Lapham, duly appointed Interim - County Administrator of Houston County, State of Minnesota, do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing copy of this resolution with the original minutes of the proceedings of the Board of County Commissioners, Houston County, Minnesota, at its session held on the 18th day of November 2025, now on file and have found the same to be a true and correct copy thereof.

Dated: 11/18/2025

Carol Lapham, Interim - County Administrator



Houston County

MINNESOTA

POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL

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Policies & Procedures Manual – Table of Contents

Section A – Purpose, Adoption, and Administration

- A-1 Purpose
- A-2 Adoption
- A-3 Administration
- A-4 Application
- A-5 Definitions

Section B – Staffing and Employment Practices Policies

- B-1 Equal Employment Opportunity
- B-2 Recruitment and Selection
- B-3 Background Investigation
- B-4 Probationary and Trial Periods
- B-5 Separation from Employment
- B-6 Layoff
- B-7 Outside Employment
- B-8 Personnel Records, Forms, and Transactions
- B-9 Performance Management
- B-10 Hours of Work and Time Reporting
- B-11 Photo ID / Building Access Policy
- B-12 Dress Code – next to hours and time
- B-13 Disability and Workplace Accommodation
- B-14 Acceptable Use of Computers and IT Resources
- B-15 Telework / Remote Work
- B-16 Nepotism
- B-17 Vehicle Use
- B-18 Travel Reimbursement
- B-19 Data Privacy / Not Public Data
- B-20 Nursing and Lactation Support
- B-21 Vacation Donation

Section C – Classification and Compensation Policies

- C-1 Classification Plan
- C-2 Compensation Plan
- C-3 Administration of Compensation Plan

Section D – Benefits / Entitlements Policies

- D-1 Insurance
- D-2 Holidays
- D-3 Vacation
- D-4 Sick Time / ESST

- **D-5** Family Medical Leave (FMLA)
- **D-6** Minnesota Paid Leave (MPL)
- **D-7** Leaves of Absence
- **D-8** Employee Training and Development

Section E – Code of Conduct Policies

- **E-1** Discrimination and Harassment Prevention
- **E-2** Respectful Workplace
- **E-3** Workplace Violence
- **E-4** Code of Conduct
- **E-5** Discipline and Discharge
- **E-6** Grievance Procedure
- **E-7** Political Activity
- **E-8** Conflict of Interest
- **E-9** Commercial Driver's License (CDL)

Section F – Workplace Safety and Health Policies

- **F-1** Emergency Closure of County Government Offices and Adverse Weather Conditions
- **F-2** Cell Phone and Wireless Communications
- **F-3** Communicable Disease Prevention Management
- **F-4** DOT Drug and Alcohol Testing
- **F-5** AWAIR Program
- **F-6** Drug, Alcohol, Tobacco and Cannabis Free Workplace

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Purpose

SECTION:	Policy Manual Introductory Sections Section A-1	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

The purpose of the ***Policies & Procedures Manual*** is to provide a uniform, comprehensive and efficient system of personnel administration in Houston County, Minnesota. The policies and related procedures define the County's terms and conditions of employment. These policies are not intended as a binding employment contract or an offer of employment conditions other than those of an at-will employee.

These policies, as a whole or in part, are subject to change, revocation, modification or amendment at any time at the County's sole discretion with or without advance notice. The County intends to keep the ***Policies & Procedures Manual*** current, but there may be times when policies or the law will change before these materials are updated. It is the further purpose of these Personnel Policies to ensure that:

1. Recruitment, selection and advancement of employees shall be based on job-related factors such as relevant education, experience, ability, knowledge and skill.
2. Positions with similar duties and responsibilities shall be classified and compensated on the basis of comparable compensation for comparable work, consistent with attraction and retention considerations.
3. The County acknowledges that equal opportunity for all people is a fundamental human value. Therefore employment opportunities and policies shall be enforced to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination, favor or harassment on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, veteran or military status, status with regard to public assistance, pregnancy, familial status, local Human Rights Commission activity, arrest or conviction records, or on the basis of any other characteristic protected by law, except in the instance of a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to effectively perform the job. The County prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the aforementioned factors. The County requires that all applicants and current employees be considered on the basis of individual qualifications, ability, knowledge and skills without discrimination or favor.

4. Employees shall be protected from coercive partisan political practices. Employees are prohibited from using their official authority to interfere with or affect the result of an election or nomination for office.
5. Consistent workforce management practices established within these policies are based on the recognized value of, and respect due to all employees contributing to their skills in County employment. Additionally, sound management practices enhance the effective delivery of public services, serving the members of our community.
6. The County complies with state and federal law throughout its policies, and if a conflict should arise between policies and law, the law shall prevail.

Savings Clause

If any of these policies shall be held to be contrary to law by a court or state or federal administrative agency of competent jurisdiction from whose final judgment or decree no appeal has been taken within the time provided, such provision shall be voided and the remainder of these policies, other than that which has been held invalid, shall not be affected.

Management Rights

The County Board of Commissioners (County Board) has the sole authority to approve, modify, reject, or approve as modified these policies.

The County Board retains the full and unrestricted right to: operate and manage all staff, facilities and equipment; establish functions and programs; set and amend budgets; determine the utilization of technology; establish and modify the organizational structure; select and direct personnel; establish work schedules; and to perform any inherent managerial function not specifically limited by current state and federal law, county ordinances, collective bargaining agreements, these policies, and County Board resolutions.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Adoption and Amendment

SECTION:	Policy Manual Introductory Sections Section A-2	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	

These policies and procedures were prepared and recommended by the Human Resources Officer approved by the County Board at a regular board meeting on [date] in accordance with Minnesota Statutes §§ 375.56 – 375.71 and have subsequently been amended as indicated below.

Adopted: [date]

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Administration

SECTION:	Policy Manual Introductory Sections Section A-3	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

These policies and procedures shall be administered by the Human Resources Officer who is accountable to the County Administrator. The Human Resources Officer shall develop and provide the necessary forms, procedures, and instructions for the implementation of these policies.

Copies of these policies and procedures shall be provided to all department heads and current employees and are made available on Houston Counties Help Desk site. A copy of these policies is provided to each new employee as a part of the new employee orientation process. Printed copies of these policies shall be available for public review upon request to the Human Resources Officer.

Departmental Rules

Each department head may establish rules and procedures for the express administration of Human Resources matters unique to that Department. Such rules shall be approved by the County Administrator prior to implementation and shall be filed with the Personnel Department and made available to all Department employees.

Indemnification

In accordance with Minnesota Statutes Chapter 466, the County declares its intent to defend, save harmless and indemnify any of its officers and employees against tort claim or demand, arising out of an alleged act or omission occurring in the performance of a duty, except that of malfeasance in office or willful or wanton neglect of duty.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Application

SECTION:	Policy Manual Introductory Sections Section A-4	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

These policies and procedures apply to all employees paid by Houston County, Minnesota except when they are in conflict with law or collective bargaining agreements.

Department Heads:

A department head is an elected or appointed official who is responsible for management of a department as determined by law or the County Board. Department heads include the following:

- County Administrator
- County Assessor
- County Attorney
- County Auditor / Treasurer
- County Engineer
- County Recorder
- County Sheriff
- County Surveyor
- Environmental Services Director
- Finance Director
- Information Technology Director
- Public Health and Human Services Director
- Veterans Services Officer

Unclassified Positions:

The County Board may create positions referred to as unclassified positions, for which the sections of these policies pertaining to selection and termination do not apply. Subject to applicable law, appointment for such positions shall be made by the County Board or an existing appointing authority and employment and termination shall be at the will of the Appointing Authority.

Application in Relation to Collective Bargaining Agreements:

These policies and procedures shall apply to all County employees except as specifically modified by a collective bargaining agreement or by the specific language of these policies. The

County retains the full and unrestricted right to perform any managerial function not specifically limited by current collective bargaining agreements, these policies, and County Board resolutions.

Employee Responsibilities:

Employees subject to these policies and procedures shall comply with, and carry out, the provisions of these policies. Any employee who fails to comply with any of the provisions of these policies may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Definitions

SECTION:	Policy Manual Introductory Sections Section A-5	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

Certain terms used in this *Policies and Procedures Manual* are defined for consistency and clarity of meaning. Unless otherwise indicated, the below terms used in these personnel policies shall have the meaning specified in this section.

Definitions

Administrative Leave – Paid time during which the employer may require an employee to be away from work, for example, during an investigation.

Appointing Authority – The official, commission, board, department head, or other individual(s) empowered to appoint or remove employees in the service of the County.

Appointment – A regular appointment to a paid position within the County service.

Class/Classification – A body of work performed, encompassing a group of jobs or positions, including jobs with a similar level of responsibility, duties, and qualifications. This is described by a classification description.

Class/Classification Description – A general description of a body of work. The classification description is sometimes referred to as a classification specification or class spec. Typically includes: a general summary of the work, distinguishing characteristics of the class, the essential duties of the class (nature of work), the knowledge and skills required at entry to the class, and licensing and special physical requirements.

County – Houston County, Minnesota

County Board – The Houston County, Minnesota Board of Commissioners

Days – Calendar days unless otherwise noted.

Demotion – A change of an employee's position from one classification to a position in another classification with lesser duties and/or compensation.

Discharge – A permanent separation from County employment as a result of the employee's inability to perform all the requirements of the assigned position and/or due to incompetence, misconduct, or failure to comply with job requirements and workplace expectations.

Dispute – A disagreement as to the interpretation or application of these Policies.

Department – County departments include the following:

- County Assessor's Department
- County Attorney Office
- County Auditor / Treasurer Department
- County DOT / Engineers Department
- County Recorder's Department
- County Sheriff's Office
- County Surveyor's Department
- Environmental Services Department
- Finance Department
- Information Technology Department
- Public Health and Human Services Department
- Personnel Department
- Veterans Services Department

Department Head – A department head is an elected or appointed official who is responsible for management of a department as determined by law or the County Board.

Elected Official – Those officials selected by vote of the constituency of the County.

Employee – A person in a paid position within the County service, as defined by Minnesota Statute §179A.

Employment Date – The date a person begins employment with the County in a regular position, or the most recent date hired if the individual is re-hired.

Exempt Employee – An employee excluded from the overtime pay provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Hiring Authority – The official, commission, board, department head, or other individual(s) empowered to appoint or remove employees in the service of the County.

Incompetence – An employee's demonstrating inadequacy or unsuitability to meet job expectations with or without a reasonable accommodation; the inability or failure to perform; ineptitude.

Insubordination – An employee's willful disregard and/or defiance of established authority and/or a supervisor's direct orders. Inappropriate language may also constitute insubordination.

Interactive Process - An interactive process is a back-and-forth exchange or conversation between two or more parties to communicate, respond, and collaborate on finding a reasonable accommodation for an employee with a disability.

Job Analysis – The systematic process of evaluating jobs with regard to the duties, responsibilities, scope, complexity, and requirements necessary to perform in the job. Information may be gathered by questionnaire, interview, and/or observation.

Job – A position or set of positions performing similar work that are grouped in a broader classification.

Job Description – The written document that identifies the purpose, duties, responsibilities, requirements, and accountability of a job; and the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the job; as well as any required credentials. Job descriptions may contain more detail and/or information specific to a particular job, as compared to a classification description.

Job Elimination – The removal of a position from the organizational structure.

Job Evaluation – The process of comparing and classifying the relative value of jobs in the County for the purpose of determining salary levels and ranges, and compliance with pay equity statutes and rules.

Layoff – A separation from employment due to lack of work, lack of funds, or other reason not attributable to employee performance or conduct.

Layoff List – A list of employees laid-off and eligible for recall.

Leave of Absence – An approved, temporary separation from active employment duties, which may be with, or without, compensation.

Misconduct – An employee's intentional, negligent, or indifferent conduct, on the job or off the job, that displays a serious violation of the standards of behavior the employer has the right to reasonably expect of the employee, and/or displays a substantial lack of concern for employment.

Non-Exempt Employee – An employee covered by the overtime pay and minimum wage provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Overtime – All hours worked by non-exempt employees in excess of 40 hours in a week or in excess of another standard defined by the FLSA and adopted by the County.

Personnel Department – The Human Resources Officer and staff responsible for the administration of these policies and associated processes.

Position – A set of duties and responsibilities assigned to an individual role requiring the part-time or full-time employment of at least one person.

Probationary Period – The first six (6) or twelve (12) month period following an employee's initial hiring or re-hiring when they are in active service in a position. The probationary period is designed to be an extended selection period to determine if regular status should be granted. Under certain circumstances, the probationary period may be extended.

Promotion – A change in an employee's status from a position in one class to a position in another class with more responsible duties and/or a higher salary range.

Reclassification – A change in the designated salary range level of a position as a result of approved changes in job duties which modify the responsibilities or decision making authority by raising it to a higher grade/classification or reducing to a lower grade/classification, based on a retrospective review of how the position has evolved.

Reemployment – Appointment of a former employee to a position with the County.

Reinstatement – Appointment of a former County employee to a position to which the employee was assigned prior to their termination or separation of employment, and within a specified duration of time from that separation.

Reorganization – A planned, prospective change in the jobs, reporting structure, or other significant factors regarding one or more positions and/or vacancies.

Resignation – Voluntary separation of employment from County service.

Severance Pay – Payout of benefits and compensation to regular employees leaving County employment in good standing.

Seniority – The duration of continuous employment from the employee's most recent date of hire.

Sick Time – Paid time off granted to eligible employees for absences due to personal illness, injury, medical or dental appointments, or other health related needs that prevent the employee from their job duties.

Trial Work Period – Trial periods serve as an extension of the selection process during the initial period following promotion, transfer, or voluntary demotion.

Vacation – Paid time off granted to eligible employees for the purpose of rest, relaxation, and attending to personal matters.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Equal Employment Opportunity

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-1	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

Houston County is committed to equal employment opportunity (EEO), including compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, executive orders, and administrative policies. This policy of EEO and anti-discrimination applies to all aspects of the employment relationship.

Policy

To implement this policy, Houston County requires that all applicants and current employees be considered on the basis of individual ability and merit, without discrimination or favor.

Employment opportunities and policies shall be enforced to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, veteran or military status, status with regard to public assistance, pregnancy, familial status, local Human Rights Commission activity, arrest or conviction records, or on the basis of any other characteristic protected by law, except in the instance of a bona fide occupational qualification necessary for proper and efficient government operations. Houston County prohibits any such discrimination or harassment based on the aforementioned factors.

In all instances, proper regard shall be provided for applicants' and employees' privacy and constitutional rights as citizens under federal and Minnesota law. Any employee with questions or concerns regarding equal opportunity is encouraged without fear of reprisal to contact the Personnel Department.

All managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy within the scope of their duties. Reports of alleged violations of this policy should be submitted to the Human Resources Officer and/or the County Administrator.

The Human Resources Officer or County Administrator will review all the allegations of violation of this policy. The Human Resources Officer or County Administrator will determine if the complaint requires further investigation, and if so, will oversee the investigation to its

conclusion. If the complaint involves the Human Resources Officer and/or the County Administrator, the report should be submitted to the County Attorney.

Houston County forbids retaliation against anyone who makes a good faith complaint of a suspected violation of this policy, and against anyone who serves as a witness or participates in an investigation. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and may be subject to additional investigation.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Recruitment and Selection

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-2	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County's recruitment and selection procedures are designed and administered to provide open competitive processes for qualified candidates and to allow the County to evaluate job-related education, skills, and knowledge of candidates as compared to those factors required to successfully perform each County job. The County seeks to select individuals who are qualified to perform the duties and responsibilities of each job, and to deliver services to the public in an effective manner. The County will consider candidates presenting the most closely qualified match of education and experience to meet job-related knowledge, skills and abilities requirements, as determined through a consistent and relevant selection process.

The County shall conduct its recruitment and selection processes in a fair and equitable manner to recruit, select, and advance personnel on the basis of relative ability, knowledge, and skills, consistent with the law, free from discriminatory practices, and upholding equal employment opportunity. The County is committed to staff development, and it values the opportunity to promote from within the County to fill vacant positions. Regular employees are encouraged to seek promotional opportunities.

In order to provide the best possible services to the residents of Houston County Human Resources Officer will partner with County hiring managers, through the recruitment process. Department heads shall have the opportunity to participate in the selection process to fill employment vacancies as they occur.

Procedure

The Personnel Department will establish the forms and systems to identify vacant positions, post and advertise vacant positions, collect and screen applications, provide for, formulate and hold competitive employment examinations and interviews, design scoring systems based on job qualifications and duties, oversee background and reference checks, oversee job offers, and coordinate the pre-placement processes.

Filling Positions

The department head shall notify the Human Resources Officer of their desire to fill a vacant position. The Human Resources Officer approves filling vacancies with the Board of Commissioners' approval unless a specific exception exists (e.g., a lay-off list, hiring freeze, etc.). If such an exception exists, the Human Resources Officer shall discuss with the department head to determine appropriate action.

Vacancies

A vacancy shall be defined as any unfilled position approved by the County Board as part of the regular budget process or approved by subsequent County Board action. Vacancies may be filled by reemployment, reinstatement, promotion, demotion, transfer, temporary, or new hire.

Recruitment

The Personnel Department shall prepare and publish a notice of the vacancy using internal and/or external sources in such a manner as to provide open competition of qualified applicants. The notice shall specify the position's title (or approved working title), salary range and/or hiring range, a description of the duties and responsibilities, essential functions, minimum qualifications, typical working hours, application procedure and other pertinent information. Such announcements shall be posted to allow a reasonable period of time for interested parties to apply. Vacancies will be posted for internal applicants, and in addition, may also be posted for external applicants. Postings shall be made available and applications accepted for a minimum period of three weeks.

Applications

An applicant for a vacancy shall complete an employment application and submit additional required forms, reports, or materials to provide information describing their skills, education, experience, licenses, other qualifications, documentation for veteran's preference, etc.

The application process will contain a certification by the applicant, attesting to the accuracy of the statements made and information submitted during the application process. Information provided in applications may be verified and previous employers may be contacted. The Human Resources Officer may require presentation of transcripts, certificates, licenses and other evidence to substantiate qualifications claimed through the application process. Should it later be determined that statements made, or other information provided during the application process were false, the individual may be subject to immediate dismissal, regardless of length of service. Application data shall be maintained by the Personnel Department.

Screening

The Personnel Department shall receive and track applications. department heads and their designees and/or the Human Resources Officer will screen applications for minimum qualifications. Incomplete or illegible applications may be considered as not meeting the minimum qualifications.

The appointing authority works with Human Resources Officer to design a selection process which includes, at a minimum, an objective screening tool to evaluate applications for job-related knowledge, skills, experience, education, and training. The Human Resources Officer shall oversee developing supplemental application questions to ascertain an applicant's minimum and preferred qualifications for a vacant position. The scores on the screening tool are used to determine which applicants will move forward in the selection process. The selection process may include competitive examinations, experience and training ratings, physical abilities assessments, medical and/or psychological examinations, performance tests, work samples, oral exams, and/or other valid selection techniques.

Accommodation for Applicants with a Disability

An individual with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation during the application and/or selection process by contacting the Personnel Department and providing information regarding the need for accommodation. To be considered for employment, an individual must be able to meet the minimum qualifications for the job, with or without a reasonable accommodation. An applicant or candidate for County employment who can be reasonably accommodated without creating an undue hardship or causing a direct threat to workplace safety will be provided a reasonable accommodation during the application and selection process. Such applicant/candidate will be given the same consideration for employment as other qualified applicants. Applicants who pose a direct threat to the health, safety and well-being of themselves or others in the workplace, when the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation, will not be hired.

Veteran's Preference

As part of hiring processes where applicants may be eligible to receive veteran's preference, the County will incorporate notification of the availability of veteran's preference points and provide a process to request this preference along with procedure for submitting a copy of the veteran's Form DD214 or other appropriate documentation. Veteran's preference does not apply in selection processes for department head positions or temporary positions which meet requirements to be defined as either a department head or temporary position as relates to veteran's preference law.

Veteran's preference points shall be applied at a meaningful point in the selection process for all open competitive examinations, exclusive of department head and temporary positions as noted above, and in accordance with Minnesota Statutes § 197.455. Where a hiring process is open to the public, internal candidates are entitled to the same veteran's preference they would receive if they were an external candidate in that process.

In order to receive preference points, an individual must be a veteran or otherwise qualify for veteran's preference as defined by state guidelines, and must provide appropriate documentation. The veteran must also receive a passing score (e.g., meet minimum qualifications for the position) on the examination in order to have preference points applied.

Eligible disabled veterans may apply for veteran's preference points during an internal promotional examination, when applying for an initial promotion after entering public employment.

Pertinent Personal Relationships

No preference in hiring is given to immediate or extended family members of current employees or elected officials or to an applicant where the applicant will be the supervisor or subordinate of another employee or elected official with whom the applicant has a personal relationship, where the existence of such a relationship is highly likely to impair the organizational integrity of the work unit to which the applicant would be assigned, and/or the existence of which is highly likely to impair the job performance of the applicant or the employee or elected official.

Eligibility Lists

The Human Resources Officer shall establish and maintain a list of eligible candidates for certain positions and determine the period of time an eligibility list shall remain in effect. The eligibility list shall not remain in effect for a period greater than one year.

Selection Processes

Based on the applicant scores on the final element of the selection process (interviews, tests, etc.) and after including any claimed veteran's preference points, the Human Resources Officer shall certify the top qualified candidate for the position.

The Personnel Department or the hiring manager shall check employment references for the selected candidate. Acceptable reference sources should generally be in a position to have knowledge of the candidate's work product and/or skills and qualifications relevant to the job and will ideally include past or current supervisors or other individuals in a role overseeing the individual's work. The County may also require additional checks or verifications as relevant to the position, including drug testing, background checks, criminal history, credit checks, driver's license checks, professional license and academic verifications. Some positions also require Minnesota Statutes Chapter 604 civil liability verifications.

Job Offer

The Human Resources Officer or designee shall extend a formal employment offer to the selected candidate including the starting date, salary, benefits, employment status and other conditions of employment, which shall be confirmed in writing. In the unusual circumstance that it is necessary to appoint a selected candidate to a position before all required information is gathered, the employment offer shall be conditional upon the satisfactory results from the

final information gathering process(es). In such cases, the selected candidate shall be required to sign a statement accepting a conditional appointment.

The Personnel Department shall promptly notify applicants not selected for a position, addressing the specific requirements of collective bargaining agreements and veteran's preference.

Upon arrival, the new employee will attend an orientation to County employment.

Reemployment

Reemployed individuals are normally considered new employees, with consideration of previous employment for purposes of pay, benefits, or seniority and shall serve a probationary period.

Temporary Appointments

Employment in a temporary appointment is for a limited period of time. Temporary employment are not subject to the requirements defined for recruitment and selection in open competitive processes as described above. No preference in hiring is given to relatives of current employees or elected officials. It is preferred that appointments be made from a relevant temporary employment eligibility list.

An individual temporarily appointed to a position shall be subject to removal at any time and shall acquire no tenure or seniority in the position to which they are temporarily appointed. If the individual is subsequently appointed to the position in a regular status role, the period of service under the temporary appointment shall not be counted as part of their probationary period.

When a position is filled by temporary appointment of a current County employee from another classification, such employee shall be compensated at a rate of pay appropriate to the classification of temporary appointment, but all other benefits shall be computed on the basis of the primary classification to which the employee is assigned.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Background Investigation

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-3	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

To protect the County, community, and its assets, Houston County conducts background investigations to minimize potential risks.

Policy

It is the policy of Houston County to conform with Minnesota Statutes Chapter 364 relating to criminal offenders and rehabilitation, and state & federal regulations governing the process for background investigations, confidentiality of information gathered, and the protection of privacy of individuals undergoing background investigations.

The Personnel Department in consultation with the County's hiring managers, shall determine the appropriate level of background investigation for each classification.

Procedure

Background investigations shall be initiated after a conditional offer of employment and shall be completed prior to hiring an employee.

Background investigations on current employees may be completed prior to the effective date of a transfer, promotion, or demotion.

Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) Security Policy background investigations shall be conducted for all personnel who have authorized access to FBI CJIS systems. This includes employees who have direct responsibility to configure and maintain computer systems and networks with direct access to FBI CJIS systems.

Authority

The Personnel Department is responsible for initiating background investigations.

The Human Resources Officer in consultation with the County Attorney's Office shall determine the job relatedness of any criminal conviction.

The Sheriff's Office conducts extensive background investigations based on statutory obligations.

Retention and Accessibility of Background Investigation Records

The Personnel Department has the authority to maintain, store, use and disseminate records in accordance with County Retention Policies, Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, and applicable federal and state laws.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Probationary and Trial Periods

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-4	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The probationary period serves to ensure that employees newly assuming a County position along with its duties and responsibilities of public service are prepared to meet the performance and conduct expectations of the position. This timeframe provides opportunity for the employee to learn and adjust to the new role and to successful County employment, as well as demonstrating their willingness and ability to meet the requirements of the position. It provides opportunity for both the employee and supervisor to assess the new employment relationship and to establish effective workplace interactions. The probationary period is the final stage of the qualifying and selection process. In the case of initial new hire probationary periods, successful completion is necessary before an employee may attain regular status employment.

Policy

Trial Periods

A trial period is applied when a County employee moves from one position into a different position within County service, when the employee previously completed their original new hire probationary period and has attained regular employment status. Trial periods serve as an extension of the selection process during the initial period following promotion, transfer, or voluntary demotion.

Application

Newly hired, rehired, transferred, demoted, and promoted employees shall continue the qualifying and selection process through a probationary period or trial period designed to assess their ability to meet the required work standards, and performance and conduct requirements of the position. During such period, the employee may receive orientation, training, and learning opportunities related to the new role. The employee's work performance, methods, and approach will be observed and monitored, along with their demonstrated ability to learn, reflect positive and professional work interactions, follow work rules, policies and procedures, and meet work objectives and performance standards.

The employee's supervisor shall define the expectations during the probationary or trial period, communicate expectations to the employee, provide orientation and learning opportunities, monitor performance, and provide periodic feedback.

Duration of Probationary and Trial Period

The probationary or trial period shall begin when the employee reports for duty and shall normally continue for six months / 1040 hours of active service for non-supervisory positions and twelve months / 2080 for law enforcement, professional, and supervisory positions. Individuals shall be notified of the length of their probationary or trial period as a part of the employment offer.

Time served in a temporary or acting appointment prior to being hired to a regular position of employment shall not be considered as time counted toward completion of the required probationary or trial period. Only time worked and on approved paid leave during the probationary or trial period shall be counted toward completion of the required timeframe.

The department head shall determine if the probationary employee's conduct or job performance is such that the employee is eligible for regular status as outlined in section B-7. The department head shall certify to the Human Resources Officer if the employee is to be granted regular status.

Promotion or Transfer During Initial New Hire Probationary Period

Newly hired employees who transfer to a different position or are promoted while serving a new hire probationary period shall begin a six (6) or twelve (12) month probationary period in the new position before being granted regular employment status. Employees subject to a new hire probationary period who have not yet been granted regular employment status may be dismissed at any time.

Extension of Probationary Period

In some instances, the newly hired employee may not meet all of the required performance and conduct expectations during the probationary period. The department head in consultation with the Human Resources Officer may extend the probationary period for up to 3 months with the agreement of the probationary employee. In these cases, the department head and the Human Resources Office shall prepare a written statement for the employee's signature indicating the expectations required for successful completion of the extended probationary period. If the probationary employee does not agree to the extension of probation in these cases, the employee shall be dismissed.

Return to Former Position During Trial Period

During a trial period resulting from internal movement of a regular status employee to a different County position, the appointing authority or department head may return a promoted, transferred, or voluntarily demoted employee to their previous position.

A regular employee who is transferred, promoted or voluntarily demoted and does not successfully complete the trial period following that transfer, promotion, or voluntary demotion, may, upon the acceptance of the department head, be eligible for reemployment in the first available position in the job previously held. A transferred, promoted, or voluntarily demoted employee may initiate this process by submitting a request to revert to a formerly held job which may be considered by the department head and the Human Resources Officer. An employee returned to a formerly held classification will generally return to the same seniority and salary as held prior to the promotion, transfer, or voluntary demotion.

Dismissal During Initial Probationary Period

The department head with approval of the Human Resources Officer may dismiss a probationary employee at any time during the initial new hire probationary period if the department head determines that the employee's performance or conduct does not meet the required work standards. In addition, an employee may be dismissed during the initial new hire probationary period for reasons including but not limited to changes in departmental organization, elimination of a position, work stoppage, lack of work, or lack of financial resources.

Dismissal During Trial Period Following Attainment of Regular Employment Status

Promoted, transferred, or demoted employees serving a trial period in a new position who have previously completed a new hire probationary period and been granted regular employment status, may be removed from employment for just cause and under circumstances comparable to those warranting removal of a similarly situated regular status County employee.

Dismissal actions affecting a veteran will be processed in accordance with Minnesota Statute § 197.46. The department head shall consult with the Human Resources Officer to determine appropriate action in the case of an employee failing to meet performance or conduct requirements during the trial period resulting from a promotion, transfer, or demotion.

Conclusion of the Probationary or Trial Period

For newly hired and rehired employees subject to an initial new hire probationary period, the department head shall determine whether regular employment status is to be granted or denied prior to the conclusion of the probationary period. The department head shall provide notice to the employee and the Personnel Department regarding their determination. Such determination is final and not subject to hearing, or grievance or appeal process when taken during the initial new hire probationary period.

For employees who were promoted, transferred, or demoted, the department head shall determine whether continued employment in the new position is appropriate. The department head shall communicate their determination to the Personnel Department prior to conclusion of the trial period. If the department head believes that continued employment in the position is not appropriate, they shall consult with the Human Resources Officer to determine appropriate action in the case of an employee who has previously completed the initial new hire probationary period

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Separation from Employment

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-5	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County and the employee have certain obligations when an employee ceases to work for the County. The purpose of this policy is to define those obligations and provide consistent methods for addressing them.

Policy

An employee may end their county employment by either voluntary or involuntary separation. The employee shall provide adequate notice of a voluntary resignation. The county shall provide the employee with adequate notice in the case of an involuntary termination.

Procedure

Voluntary Resignation:

Employees who wish to resign in good standing shall provide written notice to the immediate supervisor of their intent to resign. Depending on the situation, an employee may be required to complete certain forms at the time of their resignation.

A non-supervisory employee is expected to provide a ten (14) calendar day notice of their intent to resign. A supervisory employee is expected to provide twenty (30) calendar day notice.

The employee's supervisor shall notify the Personnel Department of the acceptance of the employee's resignation notice as submitted and provide written notification of acceptance to the employee. In some situations, the supervisor may assess that it is in the best interest of the County to allow a shorter notice period. In these cases, the supervisor shall discuss a waiver of the expected notice period with the Personnel Department.

An employee who does not submit a resignation in compliance with the provisions of these policies may be considered as having not resigned in good standing. An employee who does not resign in good standing shall: 1) be deprived of the opportunity to be considered for

reinstatement; 2) not be eligible for severance pay; and 3) have the fact recorded in the employee's record.

Employees shall not use accrued leave time to extend their length of employment or delay their resignation date.

No regular employee shall be required to retire from County employment solely for age, except in those positions where a bona fide occupation qualification exists.

Upon giving notice of resignation, every County employee is to be extended the courtesy of an exit interview with the County Administrator or a member of the Board of Commissioners. An Exit Interview Form will be completed by the interviewer and filed in the employee's personnel file. If an interview is not possible, the Personnel Department will send the exit interview form to the exiting employee, with a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

The information obtained by these interviews may be helpful in identifying, addressing, and/or correcting existing problems. This information may be shared with the Department Head/Supervisor as deemed necessary and appropriate.

The exiting employee will be advised of separation matters including, but not limited to, final pay, severance pay, COBRA coverage, pension benefits.

Involuntary Termination:

An employee may be discharged for cause consistent with the Discipline and Discharge Policy in cases where corrective and/or disciplinary action has failed to improve unacceptable performance, obtain compliance with policies or practices, or correct inappropriate conduct; or where the unacceptable conduct is determined severe so as to warrant discharge as the most appropriate disciplinary action including in cases without prior corrective action or discipline.

Under no circumstances shall an employee be discharged without having the Human Resources Officer review the action. If removal from the work site is necessary, the employee shall be placed on paid administrative leave, pending review of the circumstances of the situation.

Resignation by Failure to Report to Work:

An employee who is absent from work for a period of three (3) days or more without notifying their immediate supervisor of the reasons for the absence and receiving permission to remain away from work, shall be considered as having resigned without notice and not in good standing. This rule shall also apply to an employee who fails to return within three (3) days of the expiration of an authorized leave. If the failure to contact the supervisor was caused by unavoidable circumstances, the supervisor may waive this provision.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Layoff

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-6	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

When a reduction of the workforce is necessary, the County intends to follow consistent methods and inform employees regarding the process. The purpose of this policy is to define consistent methods and process in the event of a layoff.

Policy

The County may determine that workforce adjustments in terms of numbers and skills of employees are needed to meet the service requirements and fiscal responsibilities of the organization.

Procedure

Order of Layoff:

If it becomes necessary to reduce the workforce, the County shall implement a layoff by classification within a department, in inverse order of classification seniority. Where it is determined that two or more persons in the classification have equal seniority, the employee with the lowest rating on the most recent performance appraisal shall be placed on the layoff list first.

Layoff Notice:

Whenever possible the County will provide affected employees a notice of reduction in workforce at least 5 working days in advance of the effective date of the layoff.

Demotion or Transfer in Lieu of Layoff:

A regular employee about to be laid off may request to demote or transfer to replace an employee with less seniority in the same or lower classification, provided the affected employee has previously worked in that classification. Such request shall be submitted to the department head in writing. The request will be evaluated by the department head and the Human Resources Officer to determine eligibility and appropriate action. Any employee who requests and receives a demotion or transfer to avoid a layoff shall be placed in the salary range of the new job classification into which they have demoted or transferred.

Recall List:

For a period of one (1) year, an employee affected by a layoff will be placed on a recall list for the classification most recently held. An employee exercising their right to demote or transfer to avoid a layoff shall be placed on the appropriate recall list related to the position from which they demoted or transferred, for a period of one (1) year.

Seniority:

Employees will retain the seniority they had accrued prior to layoff, but shall not accrue additional seniority during the time they are on layoff status.

Recall from Layoff:

Recall from layoff shall be by classification, in inverse order of layoff. When an individual accepts a recall, their name shall be removed from the recall list. Upon recall from layoff, the employee's seniority and leave accrual rate shall be reinstated to those in place immediately prior to the layoff.

Failure to Report to Work following Recall:

If an employee does not return to work upon recall, on the scheduled date as directed by the County, or an extended date mutually acceptable to the employee and the County, the employee shall automatically have terminated their employment.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Outside Employment

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-7	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

In order to avoid conflicts of interest between County employment and other employment situations, the County requires employees to provide notification of any additional employment or contract work.

Policy

An employee shall not engage in any employment, private enterprise, participate in any professional activity or perform any act or service during or outside their employment with the County, which would negatively affect the employee's ability to perform the duties of their position with the County.

Procedure

Employees shall notify their department head, in writing, of their intent to seek outside compensated employment, including the nature, location, employer, and working hours. The department head shall determine whether the outside compensated employment or activity creates a conflict of interest with County employment.

An employee's failure to disclose non-County compensated employment may be grounds for disciplinary action, including suspension or termination.

Employees participating in non-compensated or volunteer activities are generally encouraged to continue in such participation. Non-compensated or volunteer activities for organizations that have a financial relationship with the County are subject to the same conflict of interest rules as compensated employment. The employee participating in the volunteer activity with such an organization shall discuss the activity with their department head.

If the employee and the department head do not agree on the potential for conflict, the Human Resources Officer will make a determination as to actual or apparent conflict of interest. If the activity is denied by the Human Resources Officer, the affected employee may appeal the decision to the County Administrator, whose decision shall be final.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual
Personnel Records, Forms, and Transactions

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-8	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

In order to produce required reports and maintain personnel records, the Human Resources Officer shall implement the necessary forms and systems.

Policy

The Personnel Department shall develop, install or implement appropriate systems and forms to allow employees, applicants, supervisors, and other interested parties to submit and retrieve personnel information, to have records kept, and reports extracted. The Human Resources Officer shall also provide assistance to supervisors, managers, department heads, and Elected Officials in the keeping of records regarding actions concerning employees in their area of responsibility.

Procedure

The Personnel Department shall establish and maintain files on each employee working for the County, and include: their application, selection process information, pre-placement assessment results, proof of initial qualifications, orientation checklist(s), training records, performance evaluations, compensation, benefits participation, promotions, discipline, commendations and other personnel records.

Employee Access to Records:

Employees have the right to review their personnel files and may do so in accordance in Minnesota statute 181.961.

Reference Requests:

Department heads and supervisors shall refer all requests from outside organizations for references on current or previous employees to the Human Resources Officer.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Performance Management

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-9	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County Administers effective performance management practices to support and guide employees in delivering quality work and cost-effective service; to assist employees in developing and advancing professional and job-related skills; and to recognize employees for the quality of their work and professional achievements.

Policy

Each employee is required to have a formal written performance evaluation at least once per year. Supervisors who do not complete evaluations in a timely manner may be subject to the disciplinary process. The performance management system is based on accurate classification and/or job descriptions, job skills and competencies, behavioral and conduct expectations, and results-oriented performance goals. The County's performance management approach will be designed and used to assist and encourage each employee to reach their maximum potential and enhance their delivery of the services provided by the County.

Procedure

The most important factors for the success of a performance management system and its effective functioning are clear communication between the supervisor and employee, and the accurate rating of employee performance, supported by on-going training, feedback, and guidance.

The performance evaluation will be used to clarify expectations and goals, to recognize excellence in work methods, accomplishments and results, to counsel employees in areas needing change, and to identify training and development needs and opportunities. Standards against which performance is to be measured will be specific, measurable, related to quality, quantity, reliability and timeliness of work, or other reasonable performance criteria determined by the supervisor. Annual performance evaluations will be completed by February 1st for the prior calendar year.

The Personnel Office will train County employees on the performance management system, notify them of evaluation deadlines and requirements, provide consultation on goal setting and evaluation methods, and retain copies of all formal evaluations, including employee comments, if any exist department heads will ensure that each employee receives formal and informal performance feedback from their immediate supervisor.

The department head or their designee will review the evaluations for consistency with County policy and approve the overall rating prior to the evaluation being shared with the employee.

The immediate supervisor assigns and directs the employee's work, checks or inspects work for proper methods and results, and is immediately responsible for the work of the employee.

The immediate supervisor will, at least annually, formally evaluate the performance of each employee, provide each employee feedback on their work performance and provide a written summary of that evaluation on the Performance Evaluation Form to the employee and to the Personnel Department.

The supervisor evaluating the performance of an employee must be familiar with the duties of the position and the work performed by the employee. In the case where an employee has had more than one immediate supervisor during the rating period, the supervisor at the time of the evaluation will prepare and deliver the evaluation, preferably, in consultation with the previous supervisor(s).

The supervisor conducting the evaluation will notify the employee in advance of the evaluation and solicit employee input to the evaluation, allowing the employee adequate time to assess their own performance, report their accomplishments, suggest goals, and prepare any questions or suggestions regarding the duties of the position.

The supervisor will also hold at least one documented informal performance feedback discussion with each employee to address progress midway between their annual reviews, and midway during the new hire probationary period or promotional trial period.

Supervisors must ensure that employees receive meaningful and objective evaluations of their work. They must use the County established ratings accurately and consistently, both within their departments and work units as well as across the organization. There are no quotas regarding overall ratings. It is expected that there will be a variety of ratings reflecting the work of employees each year across the organization.

Supervisors giving an overall "needs improvement" rating to an employee will make the employee aware of the deficiencies in their performance prior to the annual evaluation .

Supervisors in these situations will inform the employee of the deficiencies in their performance, what they need to do to correct the performance deficiencies, provide a timeline

for the necessary improvements, and identify the consequences of not making the required improvements.

The employee will participate in the performance management process by providing input for the evaluation process (which may include a self-evaluation), attending the evaluation meeting, and signing off on the evaluation to indicate receipt of the evaluation, not necessarily agreement with its content. Employees may provide written comments within two weeks following the evaluation, to be included with the evaluation and placed in the Personnel File. Performance evaluations are not subject to the grievance process.

An employee who wishes to appeal the content of the performance evaluation, may submit a request to do so, in writing, to the Human Resources Officer. The employee must define in their written request the areas of concern or disagreement. The Human Resources Officer and the County Administrator will schedule a meeting with the employee to hear the employee's appeal. The allotted time for this meeting will be thirty (30) minutes. The rater of record (supervisor) will also have thirty (30) minutes to explain their rationale for the employees' performance evaluation as it was written. The decision of the Human Resources Officer and the County Administrator is final regarding any change in the evaluation. A non-bargaining employee who appeals must file their appeal by two weeks after the evaluation is completed.

In addition to the annual formal performance evaluations, employees will also be evaluated under the following conditions:

- At the completion of three months service with the County, supervisors will complete, at a minimum, an informal performance discussion with the employee.
- Prior to the completion of the probationary period for newly hired employees, or trial period for employees promoted or reinstated.
- Any time an employee's performance has changed significantly, positively or negatively.
- Any time the supervisor feels that it is in the best interest of the employee or the County.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Hours of Work and Time Reporting

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-10	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

Work schedules are designed to meet the needs of the residents of the County. department heads and supervisors determine employee work schedules. The County establishes practices to pay exempt and non-exempt staff consistently with the intent of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), while meeting a high level of public accountability regarding their work time.

Policy

Department heads or their designee shall schedule the work hours of employees to meet the service delivery needs of the County residents and the needs of the Department.

The Personnel Department shall design and provide timecards or other time reporting procedures and instructions to facilitate the accurate recording and approval of each employee's hours worked.

Employees' regular and punctual attendance at work supports effective business operations of the County and provision of services to the public. Employees shall comply with attendance requirements, time recording, and time reporting procedures within their Department or Office. Each department head is responsible to ensure compliance with procedures within their Department.

The County shall pay exempt and non-exempt non-bargaining staff in a consistent manner with their appointment as a full-time or part-time employee and in compliance with the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and Minnesota Statutes.

Any employee who fails to observe attendance or time reporting requirements may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Procedure

Non-Exempt Employee Scheduling and Time Reporting:

1. The County's general hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. The operations and standards of service of the County require employees be at work unless valid reasons warrant their absence.
2. The normal workday is eight hours including a paid fifteen (15) minute rest period during each four (4) hour work shift and excluding a one-half (1/2) hour unpaid lunch period. Travel time to and from work to eat a meal is included in the lunch period.
3. Full-time employees are expected to work forty (40) hours per week. (Law Enforcement, Jail, and Dispatch employees work eighty (80) hours during a two-week pay period.) Non-exempt (hourly wage) employees will be paid according to the time reported on their electronic timecard.
4. Generally, paid time and paid leave shall be accounted for in quarter-hour increments, unless there are fractions of hours smaller than a quarter of an hour available in the leave bank.
5. To comply with the provisions of both the federal and State Fair Labor Standards acts, hours worked, and any leave time used by non-exempt (hourly wage) employees are to be recorded daily and submitted on a biweekly basis. Audit standards require an employee to approve their timecards only after completing their last shift of the pay period.
6. Submission of the electronic time reporting includes the employee's declaration that the time reported is true and accurate for that pay period. Supervisors are responsible for reviewing and validating timecards of employees who directly report to them. Reporting false information on a time sheet may be cause for discipline up to and including termination from employment.
7. Any hours worked beyond the normal workweek require prior supervisory approval.
8. Non-compensated leave of absence hours shall not be included in the worked hours per week required to qualify for overtime.
9. Non-exempt employees shall not be allowed to use compensatory time to accumulate hours beyond forty (40) in any given work week. The compensatory time taken early in the week shall be reduced or eliminated based on hours worked or time off taken later in the week.

10. In the interest of increasing efficiency and minimizing overtime and compensatory time costs, qualifying employees are encouraged to flex their work schedule during a work week in which they are required more than 40 hours total during that work week.

Exempt Employee Scheduling and Time Reporting:

1. The department head or designee shall determine the work schedule for exempt employees.
2. Exempt employees are expected to work the hours necessary to meet the performance expectations outlined by their supervisors. The normal work period for exempt employees normally consists of eighty (80) hours in a two (2) week payroll period. Employees are responsible for managing and accounting for their work and may be required to regularly work in excess of their normal workday and/or the eighty (80) hour payroll period.
3. Except for Public Health Nurses, exempt employees are not eligible to receive overtime pay except under the following circumstances. Nurse positions are eligible for additional compensation, or compensatory time-off, at straight-time, for working more than 80 hours in a pay period.
4. Exempt employees are paid on a salary basis and receive a predetermined amount of pay each pay period and are not paid by the hour. Their pay does not vary based on the quality or quantity of work performed, and they receive their full weekly salary for any week in which any work is performed.
5. Exempt employees may flex their work hours during a pay period. Additionally, when circumstances exist that make it impossible to flex their hours during the same pay period, exempt Employees may flex their time during the next immediate pay period.
6. In accordance with exempt employee, paid leave shall be accounted for in blocks of one hour or more with no fractions of hours, unless the leave bank is being exhausted at the time leave is taken and there are fractions of hours in the leave bank, or where usage in smaller increments is required by law.
7. Under no circumstances shall an exempt non-bargaining employee receive non-exempt overtime paid at time and one half.
8. The Board of Commissioners' may upon declaration of natural disaster or other emergency status authorize over-time payments. Board declared overtime will be paid as straight time, calculated by the Employee's equivalent hourly rate based on a 2080-hour annual base salary rate for all hours worked in excess of eighty (80) hours in a two-week payroll period. The occurrence of Board declared overtime shall be dictated by influences outside the control of the County and the Employee. For example, natural disaster, pandemic, or another emergency condition

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Photo ID Badge / Building Access Policy

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-11	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

Houston County is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all employees, contractors, and members of the public while visiting or working in County facilities. This policy establishes guidelines for the issuance, use, and management of Photo ID Badges / building access to maintain building security.

Policy

Houston County utilizes Photo ID Badges / building access systems to enhance safety and security within County facilities. The individual to whom a Photo ID Badge / building access is issued is responsible for its proper use, safekeeping, and return when required.

Badge Display

All Houston County employees are encouraged to wear their issued Photo ID Badge in plain view while on County work time to promote safety, identification, and professionalism within County facilities. Badges should be worn with the photo facing outward and positioned between the collar and waist (either clipped or on a lanyard). Wearing a Photo ID Badge is not mandatory but is strongly encouraged as a best practice for professional identification and building security awareness.

Property and Use

All Photo ID Badges and building access credentials are property of Houston County and must be surrendered to the Personnel Department upon request or upon separation from County employment. Photo ID Badges / building access credentials may be used only by the individual to whom they are issued and only for official County business.

Access Levels

Appropriate levels of building access will be assigned to employees based on job duties. Access permissions will be managed by the Personnel Department in coordination with Department Heads.

Lost or Damaged Badges/Access Credentials

Loss or theft of a Photo ID Badge / building access credential must be reported immediately to the employee's supervisor and the Personal Department. Replacement badges or access credentials will be issued and recorded by the Personal Department.

Extended Leave

Employees on extended leave of absence may be required to surrender their Photo ID Badge / building access credentials for the duration of the leave.

Termination of Employment

Upon termination of employment, all Photo ID Badges / building access credentials must be returned to the Personnel Department prior to final payroll processing.

Policy Compliance

Employees are expected to comply with this policy. Failure to do so may result in corrective action up to and including termination, depending on the nature of the infraction.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Employee Dress Code

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-12	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

To establish standards for professional appearance and attire that promote a respectful, safe, and effective work environment. The policy ensures that employees present a positive image to the public and maintain credibility and professionalism in county government services.

Scope

This policy applies to all county employees, including full-time, part-time, temporary, and contract staff, regardless of department or location.

Policy

Employees of Houston County are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate for their position, work environment, and interaction with the public. Attire must be clean, neat, and suitable for the employee's specific duties. Some departments may require uniforms, protective gear, or department-specific standards which supersede this general policy.

Dress Code Guidelines

General Office Environment (Administrative & Clerical):

- Employees working in an office setting are expected to dress in a neat, clean, and presentable manner. Business casual is the general standard, but comfort and practicality are also considered.
- Acceptable clothing includes slacks, khakis, jeans, polo shirts, button-down shirts, sweaters, blouses, and dresses or skirts of appropriate length.
- Casual footwear such as clean sneakers or flats is permitted.
- While the environment is casual, clothing should still reflect the professionalism of public service, especially when interacting with the public or attending meetings.

Field Work or Labor-Intensive Roles:

- Employees should wear durable and appropriate work attire suited for outdoor or hands-on tasks.
- Closed-toe, non-slip footwear is required.
- Safety gear such as reflective vests, hard hats, and gloves must be worn as required by departmental procedures or OSHA regulations.

Uniformed Departments (e.g., Sheriff's Office, Highway Department):

- Employees must adhere to department-specific uniform policies.
- Uniforms must be clean, complete, and worn properly at all times when on duty.

Unacceptable Attire (all departments):

- Clothing with offensive language, slogans, or graphics
- Torn, frayed, or excessively worn clothing (unless job-appropriate)
- Flip-flops or beach sandals (except in approved areas or settings)
- Revealing clothing, such as low-cut tops, short skirts/shorts, or clothing that exposes undergarments
- Pajamas or loungewear

Religious and Medical Accommodations:

Houston County respects employees' rights to express their religious or cultural beliefs. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it creates an undue hardship or safety concern. Employees needing accommodations should contact the Personnel Department.

Enforcement and Discipline:

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring employees comply with this policy. Employees who report to work inappropriately dressed may be sent home to change. Repeated violations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Exceptions:

Exceptions may be made for designated "theme" or "spirit" days, special events, or when approved by the department head or Human Resources.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Disability and Workplace Accommodation

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-13	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	Resolution Number	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

Houston County does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training, or other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

Policy

Using the interactive process, applicants may request a reasonable accommodation during a selection process. Applicants requesting a reasonable accommodation will be given the same consideration as other applicants. The County will provide a reasonable accommodation for qualified applicants if it does not cause an undue hardship.

An employee may request a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job. The County will grant a reasonable accommodation if it does not cause an undue hardship.

The County may determine whether an employee poses a direct threat to the health or safety of themselves or others in the workplace and take necessary action to minimize or eliminate the threat.

Retaliation Prohibited:

The County will not tolerate any acts of retaliation against employees who have requested and/or received an accommodation. The County will not discharge, discipline, penalize, interfere with, threaten, restrain, coerce, or otherwise retaliate or discriminate against an employee for asserting rights under this policy. An employee who believes they have been retaliated against or have not been afforded rights under this policy should promptly report their concerns to the Personnel Department.

Procedure

Employee Responsibility:

Employees who believe they need an accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job are required to complete an Accommodation Request Form, located on the County's internal help desk OR available from the Personnel Department, which identifies limitations arising from the disability and potential reasonable accommodations that would support the employee in performing the essential functions of the job. Employees will submit the completed form to the Personnel Department. Medical documentation is generally required to support the request.

Supervisors' Responsibility:

Supervisors who receive a verbal request for an accommodation will direct the employee to complete the Accommodation Request Form. Supervisors shall contact the Personnel Department prior to taking any action.

Personnel Department Responsibility:

The Human Resources Officer will work with supervisors to evaluate the impact of the limitations arising from the disability and determine whether there is a potential reasonable accommodation that could enable the employee to perform the essential functions of the job.

The Human Resources Officer will respond to each accommodation request in writing. If a reasonable accommodation is granted, the supervisor and Human Resources Officer will periodically evaluate its effectiveness. The County reserves the right to discontinue or modify the accommodation based on the results of the periodic review.

Pregnancy Accommodation:

The County will provide the following accommodations to a pregnant employee who desires any of these accommodations, without requirement for the employee to provide a note from their doctor or any other certification of the necessity of the accommodations:

- More frequent or longer restroom, food, and water breaks;
- Seating; and
- Limits on lifting over 20 pounds.

In addition to the accommodations listed above, a pregnant employee seeking additional or other reasonable accommodations must notify the Personnel Department of their request for accommodation by completing and submitting the Accommodation Request Form. The employee and the employer shall engage in an interactive process with respect to the employee's request for a reasonable accommodation under this policy.

The County will provide reasonable accommodations to an employee for health conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth if requested, with the advice of the employee's licensed health care provider, unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer's business. Reasonable accommodation may include but is not

limited to temporary transfer to an existing and available position that is less strenuous or less hazardous, modification in work schedule or tasks, seating, more frequent or longer break periods, limits to heavy lifting, or a temporary leave of absence.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Acceptable Use of Computers and IT Resources.

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-14	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

This policy establishes responsibilities for the acceptable use of the County of Houston information technology resources. These resources are provided for use by the Board of Commissioners, other elected officials, employees, and other authorized users. County information technology resources are the property of the County of Houston and are provided to support the County's business purposes.

Computer and information technology resources are essential tools in accomplishing the mission of the County of Houston's governmental divisions. These resources must be used and managed responsibly to ensure their availability for mission-related purposes. Accordingly, this policy establishes the responsibilities of all users and provides standards for acceptable use within the framework of applicable state and federal laws, policies, and regulations.

Scope

This policy applies to all users of County information technology, regardless of location. The County Board has adopted operational procedures that include, but are not limited to: security standards, employee use guidelines, monitoring practices, limitations on unauthorized use, and other operational restrictions.

Compliance with Law and County Policies

- Users must comply with federal and Minnesota state laws, County policies, contracts, and software licenses applicable to their use. This includes but is not limited to laws related to libel, data privacy, copyright, trademark, gambling, obscenity, and pornography; the federal Electronic Communications Privacy Act; the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (prohibiting hacking and related activities); and Minnesota state computer crime statutes.
- Users are responsible for the content and consequences of their use of County information technology and may be subject to liability.

- Users must use only the information technology resources they are specifically authorized to use and only in the manner and to the extent authorized for legitimate business purposes. Access capability does not, by itself, imply authorization.
- Users are responsible for any activity under their assigned accounts or access. Users must lock their workstations when unattended.

Unauthorized Use

Users must respect all system security restrictions. Specifically, users must not:

- Allow unauthorized persons to use their account or password.
- Share their account or password with any individual, including family members.
- Permit others to use County devices under their control.
- Circumvent or attempt to circumvent security measures protecting County systems or data.
- Conceal or falsify user identification in communications (including e-mail).
- Download or install unauthorized software without prior approval from the County Director of Information Technology. Unauthorized software may be removed at any time without notice.
- Interfere with or disrupt County networks, distribute malicious code, or install devices/software enabling unauthorized access.

Personal Use

- Personal use is strictly prohibited on any computer or device with access to County data.
- Users have no expectation of privacy when using County-owned technology resources.
- The County reserves the right to conduct periodic audits of personal use to ensure compliance with this policy.

Right to Employ Security Measures

- The County reserves the right to employ any necessary security measures, including monitoring the use of information technology resources.
- Normal operation and maintenance of County systems may require monitoring for network integrity, security, troubleshooting, data backup, caching, and logging of activity.
- County officials may access stored data, without notice, for legitimate business purposes, including retrieving business-related information, addressing undeliverable messages, or responding to lawful information requests.
- Employees must immediately report any suspected violations of this policy to their supervisor or Department Head. Department Heads or supervisors shall consult with Human Resources, who may coordinate with the Director of Information Technology for investigation and corrective action.

- Any risks to the security or integrity of County systems must be immediately reported to the Director of Information Technology.

Disciplinary Proceedings

Willful or intentional violations of this policy will be addressed in accordance with applicable County policies and collective bargaining agreements. Violations may result in denial of access to County systems, disciplinary action, or termination.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Telework Policy

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-15	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to clearly define the County's current position on telework arrangements and to provide guidance to employees and supervisors regarding remote work expectations.

Policy

At this time, Houston County does not offer or support a formal telework or remote work program. All employees are expected to perform their duties on-site at their assigned work location unless otherwise authorized by the County Administrator or as required by law.

Exceptions to this policy may be made in the event of a declared emergency or other extraordinary circumstances, as authorized by the Houston County Board of Commissioners. In such cases, temporary telework arrangements may be implemented at the discretion of the Board and County Administrator to ensure continuity of operations while prioritizing employee safety and public service delivery.

Requests for individual telework accommodations outside of an emergency context will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis under exceptional circumstances and must receive prior written approval from the appropriate department head and the County Administrator.

This Policy is subject to periodic review and may be revised in accordance with operational needs, staffing considerations, or changes in applicable laws and regulations. County-issued computers and devices are subject to monitoring and tracking. Houston County reserves the right to access, review, and spot check county-owned equipment at any time to ensure appropriate use and compliance with all applicable policies.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Nepotism Policy

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-16	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to uphold the principles of merit-based employment and prevent conflicts of interest. The County establishes the following anti-nepotism policy applicable to all county employees, excluding elected officials.

Policy

Employment of Relatives:

Relatives of current county employees may be considered for employment, provided that such employment does not result in:

- A direct supervisory relationship between the relatives.
- An actual or perceived conflict of interest.
- The appearance of favoritism or impropriety.

Supervisory Relationships:

- No employee shall directly supervise or be directly supervised by a relative.
- If a supervisory relationship between relatives arises due to marriage, promotion, or reorganization, the county will attempt to reassign one of the employees to eliminate the direct supervisory relationship.

Decision-Making Involvement:

- Employees shall not participate in decisions concerning the hiring, promotion, transfer, or discipline of a relative.

Disclosure Requirements:

- Employees must disclose any familial relationships with current employees or applicants to the Personnel Department upon employment or upon the establishment of such a relationship.

Exceptions: This policy does not apply to elected officials, who retain the authority to hire staff at their discretion, subject to applicable laws and ethical guidelines.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Vehicle Use Policy

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-17	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear and consistent guidelines for the use, operation, and maintenance of all vehicles owned or leased by Houston County. The policy is intended to ensure that vehicles are used safely, responsibly, and solely for official County business. It also outlines procedures for scheduling, fuel use, accident reporting, and employee accountability.

Scope

This policy applies to all County employees, elected officials, contractors, and volunteers who are authorized to operate or ride in County-owned or County-leased vehicles. It also governs the conditions under which personal vehicles may be used for County business.

Authorized Use

County-owned and leased vehicles are to be used **exclusively for official County business**. Personal use is prohibited unless prior written authorization by the County Administrator is granted. All vehicle use must comply with Minnesota Statute §16B.55 and relevant traffic laws.

Drivers

- Only County employees with a valid driver's license may operate a county vehicle.
- A current driver's license must always be in the driver's possession.
- Passengers are limited to County employees or individuals participating in County programs or business. Family members are not permitted in County vehicles.

Prohibited Items and Conduct

- Smoking is strictly prohibited in all County vehicles.
- Radar detectors and similar electronic equipment are not allowed.
- Drivers are expected to operate vehicles safely and obey all traffic laws at all times.
- Use of mobile devices while driving must comply with hands-free laws.

Driver Responsibility

- Drivers are responsible for any traffic or parking violations incurred.

- Locksmith fees due to lockouts or lost keys will be the responsibility of the driver.
- Keys must be removed, and vehicles locked when parked.

Vehicle Maintenance and Fueling

- Each vehicle is issued a Wex Fuel Card to be used only for:
 - Regular fuel (self-service, no premium)
 - Car washes when purchased with fuel if available
- Unauthorized purchases made with the fuel card are the responsibility of the driver or department.
- Vehicle repairs must be authorized in advance by the designated vehicle caretaker.

Vehicle Scheduling and Usage

- Reservations
 - Vehicles must be reserved using the County fleet calendar. Enter the name, destination, and timeframe.
 - Vehicles reservations should be reserved one month in advance if possible.
 - Employees should check vehicle availability before using personal vehicles.
- Usage
 - Record required data on the trip log located in each vehicle.
 - Note any mechanical issues on the log form and Administration office
 - Keys and logs must be returned to the designated staff member (Assessor / Administration Office) after each use.
 - Vehicles should be refueled if under $\frac{3}{4}$ tank and cleared of any trash before return.

Accidents, Claims, Theft, and Breakdown Reporting

- Accidents
 - Contact law enforcement immediately and seek medical assistance if needed.
 - Collect names, addresses, vehicle descriptions, license numbers, witness information, and police report numbers.
 - Notify your supervisor
- Reporting
 - Report all incidents to the Administration office immediately or by the next business day.
 - Complete and submit the County Vehicle Accident Report and, if applicable, the First Report of Injury within one business day.
- Theft
 - Immediately report theft to local law enforcement and the Administration office
- Breakdown
 - Contact Houston County Sheriff's Office Dispatch @ 507-725-3379 to request the coordination of a tow.
 - Contact your supervisor.

Insurance and Liability

- County vehicles are insured under the County's policy. In the case of an incident occurring during official use, the County's insurance is primary.
- If the driver operates the vehicle in an unauthorized, illegal, or unsafe manner, the driver may be held personally liable, and disciplinary action may follow.

Personal Property

The County is not responsible for personal property left in County vehicles. Drivers are liable for damage to, or loss of others' personal belongings left in the vehicle.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Travel Reimbursement Policy

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-18	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

County employees and County elected officials, while in the performance of their responsibilities may be authorized to attend conferences, conventions, and workshops or to conduct other County business. (Hereinafter, "Authorized Representatives") Travel needs and costs must be anticipated and budgeted for in advance of the travel.

Employees should use a county vehicle when available. Employees attending the same function are encouraged to share transportation

Travel Within the County

Authorized representatives shall receive reimbursement only for mileage and/or registration fees while performing work within the County. Notwithstanding, registration fees, which include meals, shall be paid when the representative has been authorized to attend the meeting.

Out of County Travel

The County will reimburse the authorized representative for registrations, meals, transportation including parking, and lodging costs. The County will pay the actual meal costs up to the following amounts when business is conducted outside the County:

BREAKFAST - \$13.00
LUNCH - \$15.00
DINNER - \$20.00

To be eligible for breakfast cost reimbursement, the authorized person must need to leave their home prior to 6:00 A.M. To be eligible for dinner costs, the representative must be unable to reach home prior to 6:00 P.M. Receipts are required for meal reimbursements. When an authorized person is eligible to receive reimbursement for all three meals, the County shall pay the actual cost of receipted meal expenses, when business is conducted outside of the County, not to exceed a total of Forty-Eight (\$48.00) per day. **No reimbursement will be made for alcoholic beverages.**

The County will not reimburse employees for meals connected with training or meetings in which a meal is provided by the sponsoring organization as part of the event.

The County shall pay the actual cost of lodging when the authorized person is required to stay overnight and away from home in the performance of his or her duties for the County and is within the department's annual budget. The determination to stay overnight shall be based on a reasonable amount of travel time to reach the employees' meeting.

Employees shall use the most cost-effective means of transportation when traveling. The value of the employees' time shall be the determining factor in the decision. Receipts must be submitted for the reimbursement of all travel expenses and approved by the appropriate person(s) before being paid.

Authorized representatives are encouraged to use County vehicles for County business travel when a county vehicle is available. Should no County vehicle be available for County business travel, the County will reimburse the representative the GSA rate.

Out of State Travel

The Houston County Board of Commissioners have determined that representatives of the County shall be authorized to participate in the meetings and activities of their respective State Association by membership and attendance at meetings or training sessions, provided that such membership, meetings and/or trainings are job-related and serve a County public purpose. Money may be appropriated from the County Revenue Fund to defray expenses of such officials in connection with such expenses to be paid upon presentation and allowance of properly itemized claims in an amount not to exceed county policy or statutory limitations.

This policy applies to out-of-state travel necessary for job-related meetings and/or training for all Houston County employees, including elected officials as required by Minn. Stat. §471.661. Out-of-state travel, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as any travel that exceeds 500 miles in length (one way) and/or requires air transportation.

Out of State Travel Procedure

Out-of-state travel may be appropriate when the travel is to obtain ongoing education and training, receive updated information and technical expertise, or to attend an event related to County business, which serves a public purpose, and is directly related to the betterment of the County. The County Board shall determine when out-of-state travel is appropriate and in the interest of Houston County.

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. §471.661, County out-of-state travel policy for elected officials, including County Commissioners, is permitted within the budgetary allowance for "travel" as stipulated in the approved annual budget and the County Board approves such travel at a regular, special, or emergency County Board meeting prior to the travel date.

Out-of-state travel for all other employees is permitted provided there are adequate budgetary funds within the departmental budget, and the County Board and/or employees department head

determines that out-of-state travel is appropriate and in the interest of the position they hold as well as in the interest of Houston County.

The budgetary allowance for "travel" by definition for this policy includes mileage, and/or transportation expenses, lodging, food, parking, and registration fees.

Airline Travel Credit

Whenever public funds are used to pay for airline travel by an elected official or public employee, Minn. Stat. §15.435, requires that any credits or other benefits issued by any airline must accrue to the benefit of the public body providing the funding. In the event the issuing airline will not honor a transfer or assignment of any credit or benefit, the individual passenger shall report receipt of the credit or benefit to the public body issuing the initial payment within 90 days of receipt

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Data Privacy / Not Public Data Policy

SECTION:	Staffing and Employment Practices Section B-19	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Legal requirement

The adoption of this policy by Houston County, Minnesota (Houston County) satisfies the requirement in Minnesota Statutes, section 13.05, subd. 5, to establish procedures ensuring appropriate access to non-public data. By incorporating employee access to non-public data in Houston County's Data Inventory (required by Minnesota Statutes, section 13.025, subd. 1), in the individual employee's position description, or both, Houston County's policy limits access to non-public data to employees whose work assignment reasonably requires access.

Please direct all questions regarding this policy to the Houston County Data Practices Compliance Official (DPCO):

Suzanne Bublitz
Houston County Attorney
sbublitz@hocomn.gov
Phone: 507-725-5802
Fax: 507-725-5783
306 S Marshall St. Suite
2300 Caledonia, MN 55921

Procedures implementing this policy

Data inventory

Under the requirements in Minnesota Statutes, section 13.025, subd. 1, Houston County has prepared a Data Inventory which identifies and describes all non-public data on individuals maintained by Houston County. To comply with the requirement in section 13.05, subd. 5, Houston County has also modified its Data Inventory to represent the employees who have access to non-public data. In the event of a temporary duty as assigned by a manager or supervisor, an employee may access certain non-public data, for as long as the work is assigned to the employee.

In addition to the employees listed in Houston County's Data Inventory, the Responsible Authority, the Data Practices Compliance Official (DPCO), and department heads may have access to *all* non-public data maintained by Houston County if necessary for specified duties. Any access to non-public data will be strictly limited to the data necessary to complete the work assignment.

Classification position descriptions

Classification descriptions may contain provisions identifying any non-public data accessible to the employee when a work assignment reasonably requires access.

Data sharing with authorized entities or individuals

State or federal law may authorize the sharing of non-public data in specific circumstances. No public data may be shared with another entity if a federal or state law allows or mandates it. Individuals will have notice of any sharing in applicable Tennessee warnings (see Minnesota Statutes, section 13.04) or Houston County will obtain the individual's informed consent. Any sharing of non-public data will be strictly limited to the data necessary or required to comply with the applicable law.

Ensuring that non-public data are not accessed without a work assignment

Within Houston County, departments may assign tasks by employees or by job classification. If a department maintains non-public data that all employees within its department do not have a work assignment allowing access to the data, the department will ensure that the non-public data are secure. This policy also applies to departments that share workspace with other departments within Houston County where non-public data is maintained.

Recommended actions for ensuring appropriate access include:

- Assigning appropriate security roles, limiting access to appropriate shared network drives, and implementing password protections for non-public electronic data
- Password protecting employee computers and locking computers before leaving workstations
- Securing non-public data within locked workspaces and in locked file cabinets
- Shredding not public documents before disposing of them

Penalties for unlawfully accessing not public data

Houston County will utilize the penalties for unlawful access to non-public data as provided for in Minnesota Statutes, section 13.09, if necessary. Penalties include suspension, dismissal, or referring the matter to the appropriate prosecutorial authority who may pursue a criminal misdemeanor charge.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Nursing and Lactation Support

SECTION:	Benefits Policies Section B-20	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

Houston County recognizes the benefits to employee and infant/child health and well-being by supporting lactating employees to express milk in privacy during work hours in accordance with federal and state laws.

Policy

Nursing/Lactation Support:

The County supports employees in meeting their infant feeding/milk expression goals and will provide reasonable break times each day to an employee to express milk. The break times may run concurrently with regular break times already provided for the employee. The County will not reduce an employee's compensation for time used for the purpose of expressing milk. Employees should contact their supervisor to discuss appropriate break time arrangements under the lactation support policy.

The County will provide a clean, private, and secure space for an employee to express milk that is in close proximity to the work area, is a room other than a bathroom, is shielded from view, is free from intrusion from coworkers or the public, and includes access to an electrical outlet.

Employees should contact the Personnel Department to make arrangements for use of lactation rooms or other space which meets the above provisions. Employees shall use appropriate County-designated and/or County-approved space that meets requirements for expressing milk and for the storage and maintenance of supplies. Requests for the use of alternative employer space should be discussed with, and approved by, the Personnel Department

The County will provide employees with notice regarding nursing/lactation rights at the time of hire and when an employee makes an inquiry about or requests parental leave and upon request

Prohibited Retaliation:

The County will not discharge, discipline, penalize, interfere with, threaten, restrain, coerce, or otherwise retaliate or discriminate against an employee for asserting rights under this policy and relevant law. An employee who believes they have been retaliated against or have not been afforded rights under these policies should promptly report their concerns to the Personnel Department

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Vacation Donation

SECTION:	Benefits Policies Section B-21	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a mechanism that allows employees to voluntarily donate accrued vacation hours to another County employee experiencing a catastrophic or serious health condition, either their own or that of an immediate family member resulting in an extended inability to work and exhaustion of paid leave balances. This policy is intended to promote employee well-being and support County employees during times of medical hardship.

Policy Statement

Houston County employees may voluntarily transfer (donate) accrued vacation leave to another employee's sick leave donation bank when the recipient meets the eligibility criteria described in this policy. All donations and transfers under this policy are strictly voluntary and confidential. No employee shall be coerced or pressured to donate leave.

The County reserves the right to approve or deny requests based on the criteria below and administrative feasibility. This policy does not create entitlement and may be modified, suspended, or terminated at any time by the County Board.

Eligibility

Recipient Eligibility

An employee may receive donated vacation leave if all the following conditions are met:

1. The employee (or an immediate family member) is suffering from a catastrophic or serious
2. medical condition certified by a licensed healthcare provider.
3. The employee has exhausted all accrued sick leave, compensatory time, and all but three (3) days of vacation leave.
4. The employee is not currently receiving wage-replacement benefits through short-term or long-term disability insurance, workers' compensation, or other benefit programs.
5. The request is approved by the Human Resources Officer (or designee) and reviewed by the County Board if necessary.

Donor Eligibility

An employee may donate vacation hours if:

1. The donor has a sufficient vacation balance remaining after donation (no less than 40 hours for full-time employees).
2. Donations are made in whole-hour increments.
3. The employee does not donate more than 32 hours per calendar year.

Donation Process

Employees wishing to donate must complete a Vacation Donation Form, available in the Personnel Office, specifying:

- Donor's name and employee ID
- Recipient's name
- Number of hours to be donated (whole hours only)
- Donor's signature and date

Donations are confidential; the identity of donors will not be disclosed to the recipient.

Approval and Transfer

The Human Resources Officer will verify eligibility and approve or deny the request. The value of the donated leave will be converted based on hourly rate equivalency. Donated hours will be credited to the recipient's secondary sick leave bank at their respective rate of pay.

Example: A donor earning \$20.00 per hour donates five (5) hours of vacation leave (\$100 value). If the recipient earns \$25.00 per hour, they receive 4.00 hours of sick leave ($\$100 \div \$25.00 = 4.00$).

Use of Donated Leave

Donated hours must be used before any newly accrued sick leave following the employee's return to work. Donated hours have no cash value and are not payable upon separation. Unused donated leave will be returned to the donor(s) proportionally to the nearest half hour.

Confidentiality

All medical information and donation records will be treated as confidential and maintained by the Human Resources Department in accordance with applicable privacy laws.

Administrative Responsibility

Disclaimer

This policy does not establish a precedent or create any contractual right. Participation in the vacation donation program is voluntary and subject to the discretion of the County.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Classification Plan

SECTION:	Classification & Compensation Policies Section C-1	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County is required to maintain a system of assigning jobs of comparable worth, with comparable salaries. The County is best able to accomplish its work by defining specific job duties, tasks, and requirements for employees hired to perform that work.

Policy

Each County job shall be evaluated and placed in a specific classification and pay grade to ensure compliance with pay equity requirements. The Position Classification Plan shall assign pay grade and pay range to each job within the County.

Each Board approved position shall be defined by a job description including specific job duties and responsibilities, tasks, and requirements. These descriptions shall be reviewed periodically for accuracy and continued compliance with pay equity requirements.

Procedure

The Personnel Department shall provide a consistent format for job descriptions throughout the County, and a consistent process for evaluating jobs and assigning them to the appropriate pay level.

The Human Resources Officer shall develop and maintain current job descriptions for the positions in their Department. Job descriptions shall include the:

- Summary of the job, including why the job exists, what it does, and how the work is performed,
- Essential duties performed by employees in that job classification,
- Required education, credentials, experience, knowledge, and skills necessary to perform the job successfully,
- Supervisory authority of the position, if any,
- Reporting relationship for the position (the role to which this job reports), and
- Conditions under which the work is normally performed.

It is an inherent management right and duty to design, redesign, restructure and create new jobs to meet the objectives and changing needs of the County.

Job description reviews and reclassification requests must be formally initiated by both the department head and the employee. A request will only be considered when there is a substantial and documented change in the job duties, responsibilities, or requirements.

Once jointly submitted, the request is reviewed by the Personnel Department and must be approved by the Personnel Committee before proceeding. This process is not part of a routine cycle and will only occur outside of scheduled reviews under qualifying circumstances.

During scheduled classification reviews, the Personnel Department will notify department heads of positions due for regular review. department heads shall then meet with the employees in those roles to ensure the accuracy of job duties, work methods, working conditions, and requirements.

If significant changes are identified, the department head must inform the Personnel Department of any proposed updates to the job description and recommend whether the position warrants re-evaluation.

The Personnel Department will:

- Document any changes to job descriptions and update records accordingly.
- Review all recommendations for reclassification.
- Forward substantially changed positions to the classification consultant or designated authority for evaluation.

The classification consultant will apply an objective evaluation methodology and provide supporting documentation for all determinations. Once a decision is made, the Personnel Department will notify the department head and affected employees of the outcome, effective date of any changes, and provide information on the appeals process if there is disagreement with the evaluation.

Compensation Following the Job Re-Evaluation Process:

If a position is evaluated at a higher pay grade, the employee will move to the next highest step and receive a salary increase of at least 3% not to exceed the maximum of the new range.

If a position is evaluated at a lower pay grade, the employee's salary shall be frozen at their current step, until the maximum step of the new pay grade catches up to the employee's current pay. The effective date of any pay adjustments shall be retroactive from the date the job description was sent in for the re-evaluation process.

Reorganization Changes in Jobs:

When a department head restructures work within the Department, some positions may require new job descriptions and re-evaluation for appropriate classification. Significant changes in current staffing and organizational structure such as those involving changes in job duties and responsibilities which classify the job in a different grade or those which modify the type and number of positions in existing classifications may be completed with the approval of the County Board of Commissioners.

New (Additional) Positions:

If a new position is created, it is the responsibility of management to define and determine essential requirements and duties of the position. The Human Resources Officer will work with department heads to develop job descriptions in a consistent format. The job description will be assigned to a classification under the Classification Plan and to an appropriate pay level in the Compensation Plan. The County Board must approve any additional positions.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Compensation Plan

SECTION:	Classification & Compensation Policies Section C-2	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

In order to attract and retain a well-qualified workforce to perform County services, and comply with state and federal laws regarding wages, the County shall establish and communicate its compensation plan. The County has an interest in understanding how its compensation plan compares to that of similar public and private organizations that employ individuals with similar skills and duties.

Policy

The County's compensation system shall provide employees with reasonable and competitive compensation for their work. The Human Resources Officer shall maintain a compensation system consistent with, and responsive to:

- The Fair Labor Standards Act
- Wage and Hour laws
- Internal Equity as defined by the Local Government Pay Equity Act
- Established pay ranges for each classification
- The relative difficulty and responsibility of work
- The recruitment and retention experience of the County
- Relevant external market, including pay rates in the public and private sector
- The financial condition and policies of the County
- Pertinent economic data
- Availability of applicants possessing required skills

The Human Resources Officer shall review the compensation system periodically and recommend changes to the County Board. This periodic review will involve a review of the County's salary ranges.

Procedure

The compensation system shall include designated salary ranges, each with a minimum, target rate, and maximum rate. The County Board shall adopt a compensation salary range schedule

establishing rates of pay for salary ranges in the compensation system. The salary range schedule may be adjusted by the County Board. Salary ranges recommended by the Human Resources Officer may reflect:

- The relevant rates of pay in both public and private competitive labor markets
- The financial condition and fiscal policies of the County
- Other pertinent economic considerations

Each classification shall be placed in the appropriate grade through an objective evaluation process within the Classification Plan.

An employee's base pay rate shall not exceed the County's salary range maximum for the applicable classification.

Compensation increases may be granted at the sole discretion of the County. These increases will generally involve internal and/or labor market equity considerations or unusual circumstances and will occur only upon the recommendation of the Human Resources Officer with approval of the County Administrator.

Wage Deductions:

The County deducts mandatory amounts from an employee's wages as required by court order, IRS directive or state statute, and will make voluntary deductions from an employee's wages as authorized by the employee.

Direct Deposit:

Pursuant to Minnesota Statute 471.426, Houston County requires all employees use direct deposit for receipt of compensation. Funds will generally be available on Thursday of pay week. If additional processing time is required, funds may not be available until the following day. Any direct deposit changes (i.e., bank changes, deposit amounts, etc.) must be submitted to the Personnel Office no later than Monday of pay week for changes to be effective in the current pay cycle.

Payroll

Payroll is processed biweekly for all County employees. Pay periods end on alternate Saturdays with the official pay day being the following Friday. See, [2024 Pay Schedule](#). Link current pay schedule.

Wage Disclosure Protection Law:

Under the Minnesota Wage Disclosure Protection Law, employees have the right to tell any person the amount of their own wages. While the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act ([Minn. Stat. §13.43](#)), specifically lists an employee's actual gross salary and salary range as public personnel data, Minnesota law also requires wage disclosure protection rights and remedies to be included in employer personnel handbooks. To that end, and in accordance with [Minn. Stat. §181.172](#), the County will not:

- Require nondisclosure by an employee of his or her wages as a condition of employment.
- Require an employee to sign a waiver or other document which purports to deny an employee the right to disclose the employee's wages.
- Take any adverse employment action against an employee for disclosing the employee's own wages or discussing another employee's wages which have been disclosed voluntarily.
- Retaliate against an employee for asserting rights or remedies under Minn. Stat. §181.172, subd. 3.

An employee's remedies under the Wage Disclosure Protection Law are to bring a civil action against the County and/or file a complaint with the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry at (651) 284-5075 or (800) 342-5354.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

**Administration of Compensation Plan,
Promotion, Demotion, Transfer, and Reorganization**

SECTION:	Classification & Compensation Policies Section C-3	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County seeks to attract and retain a qualified workforce through administration of its compensation plan from new hire salary placement and throughout the employment life cycle. Current employees may also be presented with opportunities to use their knowledge and skills to serve the residents of the County in different roles throughout their employment, by applying for promotions, demotions, or transfers.

Policy

The County shall administer its compensation system to comply with state and federal laws. The County's compensation system shall be administered to provide employees with reasonable and competitive compensation for their work while balancing factors including but not limited to the external market and financial condition and policies of the County. Qualified current employees shall be afforded the opportunity to apply and be considered for vacancies as they occur throughout the County.

Procedure

Starting Salary:

A new employee shall generally be hired at or near the minimum of the salary range. The department head shall consult with the Human Resources Officer to determine the starting wage, up to the midpoint of the salary range. Requests for a starting wage above the midpoint must be recommended by the Human Resources Officer and approved by the County Administrator. Such authorization shall be based on exceptional qualifications and background of the proposed employee, by labor market conditions, or other extraordinary circumstances. When an employee transfers from one department to another, or within a department, and makes a lateral move to another position with the same grade, that employee's rate of pay remains the same.

Change of Job Title:

When an employee's job title is changed, yet their work is essentially the same as it had been, there is no change in status, promotion or demotion. The job classification seniority remains unaffected by such a title change.

Promotion:

When an employee applies for a promotion and is selected for the position, the employee's salary shall be placed within the new salary range, based on an offer determined appropriate by the Human Resources Officer. Requests for a salary increase exceeding the midpoint of the new range shall require the recommendation of the Human Resources Officer and the approval of the County Administrator.

Supervisory employees promoting are expected to give their current department head twenty (20) working days' notice; non-supervisory employees promoting are expected to give their current department head ten (10) working days' notice, both exclusive of time off. This requirement may be waived if both department heads agree.

Transfer:

When an employee transfers, the employee shall be eligible for annual salary actions based on the current schedule and salary range for the position held following transfer.

Supervisory employees transferring shall provide their current department head twenty (20) working days' notice; non-supervisory employees transferring are expected to give their current department head ten (10) working days' notice, both exclusive of time off. This requirement may be waived if both department heads agree.

Demotion:

Demotions may be voluntary (non-disciplinary) or involuntary (non-disciplinary). Distinctly different is a disciplinary demotion, which may be imposed as a form of disciplinary action and will be identified as such in formal written disciplinary documentation provided to the employee.

An employee's salary placement upon demotion may be addressed differently based on these differing circumstances and types of demotions. After an employee is demoted, the employee may be eligible for annual salary actions based on the current schedule and salary range for the position held following demotion.

Voluntary Demotions (Non-Disciplinary):

Voluntary demotions are subject to position availability.

- Voluntary Demotion Sought by Employee: An employee may apply to demote to a position in a lower salary range with lower level duties and responsibilities.

- **Salary Action Upon Voluntary Demotion:** When a voluntary demotion is requested by an employee, the employee's pay shall be placed within the salary range for the demoted position. In no event shall the salary of a voluntarily demoted employee remain above the maximum of the salary range for the position to which the employee is demoted.

Involuntary Demotions (Non-Disciplinary):

A department head may demote an employee to a position for which the employee is qualified, in a lower grade or compensation range, for the following reasons:

- **Demotion in Lieu of Layoff:** If an employee would otherwise be laid off because of position elimination, lack of work or funds, or the return to work from authorized leave by another employee to such a position in accordance with these Policies, said employee may be demoted to another vacant position for which they meet the minimum qualifications. See Layoff Policy for additional information regarding bumping and recall rights.
- **Reorganization Resulting in Demotion:** When a demotion results from a planned reorganization, an employee may be demoted to serve in a different position for which they are qualified.
- **Salary Action Upon Non-Disciplinary Involuntary Demotion:** In these cases of non-disciplinary, involuntary demotions, the employee's new salary shall be set in the following manner:
 - If the employee's current salary is within the new range, it shall remain the same and the employee shall be eligible for salary increases as outlined for the position held following demotion.
 - If the employee's current salary is above the maximum salary of the new. The employee's salary will be frozen until the range of the demoted position exceeds the frozen salary, at which time the employee will again be eligible for salary advancement.

Involuntary Demotions (Disciplinary):

A department head, in consultation with the Human Resources Officer, may demote an employee to a position for which the employee is qualified, in a lower grade or compensation range, for the following reason:

- **Disciplinary Action:** An employee may be demoted for disciplinary reasons. The employee shall be notified of a disciplinary demotion through formal written documentation as part of the disciplinary procedure. Any demoted employee shall be given the reasons for such demotion in writing from the department head, in consultation with the Human Resources Officer.
- **Salary Action Upon Disciplinary Demotion:** In cases of disciplinary demotions, an employee's salary shall be reduced to a salary within the new range, and to the step

at least 10% below their pre-demotion salary. If the 10% reduction places the employee's rate below the minimum of the salary range for the position into which the employee demoted, the employee's rate will be placed at the minimum of the salary range.

General Adjustment:

When a general adjustment is provided, it shall be applied for all probationary and regular employees subject to the following guidelines. Any increase percentage applied shall be calculated on the employee's regular base rate of pay, and in no case shall the employee's new base rate of pay exceed the salary range maximum for the employee's classification.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Insurance Benefits

SECTION:	Benefits Policies Section D-1	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County wishes to provide health insurance and additional insurance benefits as part of its overall compensation package supporting the attraction and retention of a qualified workforce.

Policy

As part of the County's total compensation package, the County makes a competitive monthly contribution toward group health and life insurance benefits. As such, the County maintains a health insurance program subject to the limitations and conditions established by the County and the insurance provider. See the current year's summary plan description 2025 Medica Benefits Overview.

Qualified employees may elect to enroll for individual (single) or dependent (family) coverage as set forth below:

The single coverage contribution by the County for the CDHP shall be 95% of the single premium for the plan. The County contribution rate for dependent/family coverage for employees choosing the CDHP shall be 85% of the plan premium. Premium rates are adjusted each calendar year.

Qualified employees electing the CDHP shall receive County contributions in the amount of fifty percent (50%) of the deductible into a VEBA or HSA Health Care savings account. Such contributions shall be made in four equal installments payable in conjunction with the 1st pay period of January, April, July, and October.

At no cost to the employee, the County provides a \$20,000 death benefit, term life insurance policy subject to the limitations; benefits and conditions set forth in the contract between the County and the insurance carrier. Additionally, the County also provides employees with access to employee purchased life insurance coverage through a company approved by the County.

Retirement / PERA

The County participates in the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) to provide pension benefits for its eligible employees to help plan for a successful and secure retirement. Participation in PERA is mandatory for most employees, and contributions into PERA begin immediately. For further information about PERA eligibility and contribution requirements see <https://mnpera.org>

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Holidays

SECTION:	Benefits Policies Section D-2	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County establishes a consistent process for compensating employees for specific holidays.

Policy

The following days, and other such days as the Board may designate, are holidays, to be compensated at straight time for regular and probationary full-time employees, provided the employee is in compensated payroll status the last working day preceding the holiday and the first working day following the holiday:

New Year's Day.....	January 1
Martin Luther King Day.....	Third Monday in January
President's Day.....	Third Monday in February
Spring Holiday.....	Friday before Easter
Memorial Day.....	Last Monday in May
Juneteenth.....	June 19
Independence Day.....	July 4
Labor Day.....	First Monday in September
Veteran's Day.....	November 11
Thanksgiving Day.....	Fourth Thursday in November
Friday after Thanksgiving.....	Fourth Friday in November
Christmas Eve.....	December 24
Christmas Day.....	December 25

Designated holidays that fall on Sunday will be observed the following Monday, those that fall on Saturday will be observed the preceding Friday, unless another day is specified for observance by the Board. In the rare case a holiday falls on a Sunday and Monday, The Sunday holiday will be observed on the previous Friday. An employee scheduled to work other than the normal workweek of Monday through Friday shall receive the same number of holidays. Employees will receive holiday pay for either the designated or the observed holiday based upon their regularly assigned work schedule.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Vacation Leave

SECTION:	Benefits Policies Section D-3	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County defines a consistent process for granting Vacation Leave accruals to employees and outlines the rules for using Vacation Leave.

Policy

The County believes that vacation is important to the health and well-being of our employees and for a productive work environment. As such, provides paid vacation for eligible full-time and part-time employees

Procedure

1. Vacation Leave is accrued and may be used during the probationary period.
2. Accrued vacation hours, as well as amounts used each pay period, are reflected on the employee's earnings statement and reflected electronically in the County's timecard system.
3. Employees in regular status positions at the County (positions assigned a full-time FTE, designated within the County's budget), including regular and probationary full-time, will accrue vacation leave based on the below schedule, provided the employee is in compensated payroll status or on approved military leave. This schedule reflects the full-time accrual rate. Part-time employees will accrue vacation leave on a pro-rated basis, based on their approved budgeted FTE, provided their pro-rated vacation leave accrual rate meets or exceeds the minimum standard outlined below.

Years of Completed Service	Days Earned Per Year (Defined as 8-Hour Days)	Hours Earned Per Year (Based on Full-Time Schedule Worked)
< 1 years	(3.08 hours per pay period) 10 days	80 hours
1 - < 5 years	(3.70 hours per pay period) 12 days	96 hours

5 - < 10 years	(4.31 hours per pay period) 14 days	112 hours
10 - < 15 years	(4.93 hours per pay period) 16 days	128 hours
15 - < 20 years	(5.54 hours per pay period) 18 days	144 hours
20 - < 25 years	(6.16 hours per pay period) 20 days	160 hours
25 years or more	(6.76 hours per pay period) 22 days	176 hours

- a. When continuous service reaches a point entitling the employee to the next higher accrual rate, the new accrual rate will commence on the first day of the pay period on or following the date of eligibility.
 - b. The accrual rate shall be determined by the employee's continuous service in a regular full-time or regular part-time position, including all authorized paid leave(s) and authorized leave(s) without pay for military service. Unpaid leaves of absence of fewer than thirty (30) days, and military leaves of absence, will not affect the date used to determine vacation leave accruals.
4. Two (2) years earned vacation days may be carried over from one year to the next. Employees having accumulated two (2) years earned vacation shall be allowed to accrue additional hours for use during the calendar year, but shall reduce those hours to two years accumulation by the end of the last payroll period within the calendar year.
 5. Vacation is granted for the purpose of employee recreation and, therefore, no employee shall be permitted to waive such vacation for the purpose of receiving double pay, unless the employee cannot be scheduled for an approved vacation by the department head. However, an employee who is not working due to illness or injury and has exhausted his/her sick leave, he/she may be permitted to draw his/her earned vacation pay.
 6. Upon separation from employment, employees must have their vacation accrual reduced to the two (2) year accumulated maximum, at the time of separation, or forfeit those hours accumulated over the two (2) year maximum.
 7. In all cases, vacation shall be subject to the needs and service obligations of the Department. In establishing vacation schedules, employees shall schedule a vacation period by seniority. Two (2) employees in the same job classification may be scheduled for a similar vacation period only with the approval of the department head.
 8. Part-time employees shall earn pro-rata vacation benefit based on the number of hours worked during a calendar month. A part-time Employee's Years of Service in the bargaining unit shall determine the threshold at which they shall accrue their pro-rated vacation credits.
 9. Non-exempt employees shall take all vacation time in minimums of one quarter (1/4) hour increments. Exempt employees shall take all vacation time in minimum increments of two (2) hours. Exempt employees may flex their work hours during a pay period. Additionally,

when circumstances exist that make it impossible to flex their hours during the same pay period, exempt Employees may flex their time during the next immediate pay period.

10. Vacation time cannot be granted prior to its accrual.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Sick Leave / Earned Sick and Safe Time

SECTION:	Benefits Policies Section D-4	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

Houston County provides sick leave benefits to eligible employees to support health, safety, and family responsibilities, while ensuring compliance with Minnesota’s Earned Sick & Safe Time (ESST) statutes (Minn. Stat. §§ 181.9445 – 181.9448) and the 2025/2026 amendments thereto.

Policy Overview & Applicability

All County employees who work at least 80 hours in Minnesota in a year are eligible under ESST. The County’s existing sick leave program integrates with ESST obligations. Where County sick leave provides more generous benefits, additional hours used for ESST-qualifying reasons must comply with ESST rules.

Accrual & Tracking

Full-time employees accrue 3.70 hours per pay period up to 960 hours. Part-time employees accrue on a pro-rata basis. Temporary / Casual employees earn one hour for every 30 hours worked after working the required 80 hours and will be administered under ESST rules.

Permissible Uses / Qualifying Reasons

Employees may use sick leave/ESST for illness, injury, preventive care, domestic abuse, sexual assault, stalking, communicable disease exposure, funeral or memorial arrangements, or public emergencies. Covered family members include spouse, child, parent, grandparent, sibling, in-laws, household members, and one individual designated annually.

Certain public-safety roles may be restricted from using ESST for weather or public emergency closures, consistent with Minnesota law.

Notice, Approval, and Documentation

If foreseeable, employees must provide up to seven (7) days’ notice. If not foreseeable, notice must be provided as reasonably required by the County. Leave is subject to supervisory approval and staffing needs, but employees cannot be required to find replacements.

If ESST is used for more than two (2) consecutive scheduled workdays, reasonable documentation may be required. For domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking absences, a written statement may be accepted if other documentation poses undue hardship.

Misuse, Denial, and Enforcement

Misuse of sick leave or ESST may result in denial of pay and disciplinary action. Failure by the County to comply with ESST may result in liability for leave owed plus liquidated damages under Minnesota law.

Severance, Payout, and Year-End Balances

Employees with five or more years of service who are not terminated for cause qualify for severance benefits of 50% of unused sick leave up to 480 hours.

Benefits, Return-to-Work, and Reinstatement

During approved sick or ESST leave, the County continues insurance contributions. Employees return to their prior position at the same pay rate. Seniority and service time continue during leave.

Discrimination, Retaliation, and Notice

The County prohibits retaliation or discrimination against employees for using or requesting ESST or sick leave. Employees may report violations to the Personnel Department or Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry. This policy may be modified or revoked at any time consistent with law and does not create a contract of employment.

Notice

THIS POLICY IS NOT A CONTRACT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND DOES NOT CREATE A CONTRACTUAL RIGHT TO PAID TIME OFF OR SIMILAR FORMS OF COMPENSATION. THE COUNTY MAY UPDATE THIS POLICY AND RESERVES THE RIGHT TO INTERPRET THE POLICY AS WELL AS REPLACE, MODIFY, OR REVOKE IT AT ANY TIME, WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE. THERE IS NOT A CONTRACTUAL RIGHT TO TIME OFF ACCRUAL AS DESCRIBED HEREIN, AND RELATED DOCUMENTS AND THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL BE UNDERSTOOD AS AN EFFECTIVE DISCLAIMER OF ANY CLAIM FOR TIME OFF ACCRUAL OR RELATED COMPENSATION.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

SECTION:	Benefits Policies Section D-5	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

Houston County strives to balance the demands of the workplace and our call to public service with the needs of our employees and their families. Consistent with this statement, the County provides eligible employees with leave rights in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The County posts the mandatory FMLA Notice as required by the United States Department of Labor and also provides all new hires with general notice information regarding FMLA.

This policy serves to provide employees with a general description of their FMLA rights. However, in the event of any conflict between this policy and applicable law, employees shall be afforded all rights required by law.

Policy

The FMLA entitles eligible employees with up to 12 weeks (26 weeks for military service member caregiver leave) of unpaid job protected leave for specified family and medical reasons, along with continuation of group health insurance coverage.

Eligibility:

To qualify for FMLA leave, an employee must meet all the following conditions:

- Employed by the covered employer for at least 12 months (or 52 weeks) in the preceding seven-year period. These do not need to be consecutive months of employment in order to meet the requirement. If the break in service was due to National Guard or Reserve military service obligations, the County will count separate periods of employment, exceeding the seven-year period, extended by the length of the military service referenced above.
- Worked at least 1,250 hours during the preceding 12-month period. For purposes of this policy, this includes hours actually worked and does not refer to all hours in compensated status. Paid leave, unpaid leave, and FMLA do not count toward the 1,250 hours worked.
- Works at a location where the employer has 50 or more employees within a 75-mile radius.

Type of Leave Covered:

Eligible employees will be granted FMLA leave for the following reasons:

- Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy or prenatal care, the birth of a child, and to care for the newborn child within one year of birth.
- Placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child within one year of placement.
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition.
- A serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of their job.
- Any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on "covered active duty;"
- To care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the eligible employee is the service member's spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (military caregiver leave).

Terms and Definitions:

A child, for purposes of this policy in situations other than military family leave, includes a biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing *in loco parentis* who is either under 18 years of age, or 18 or older and incapable of self-care because of mental or physical disability.

The need to care for a covered family member encompasses both physical and psychological care. It may also include acquiring or making arrangements for appropriate care or substituting or sharing care duties.

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves one of the following:

- Incapacity or treatment requiring inpatient care (an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential care facility, or other medical care facility.
- Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care, or childbirth.
- Any period of incapacity or treatment due to a chronic serious health condition which is defined as a condition that requires periodic visits (twice or more per year) to a health care provider for treatment, continues over an extended period of time, and may cause episodic rather than continuing periods of incapacity.
- A period of incapacity involving absence plus treatment – for example, inability to work, attend school, or perform other regular daily activities due to the serious health condition for more than three consecutive days and involving ongoing medical treatment; and any
- subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition. Ongoing medical treatment may either involve multiple appointments with a health care provider, or may include a single appointment and follow-up care such as prescription medication.

- Permanent or long-term conditions requiring supervision of a health care provider, but need not be receiving active treatment;
- Conditions requiring multiple treatments. Any period of absence to receive treatments and recovery therefrom, by a health care provider or under orders of or referral by a health care provider, either for restorative surgery after an accident or other injury, or for a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days in the absence of medical intervention.

An eligible employee whose spouse, son, daughter, or parent has been notified of an impending call or ordered to active military duty, or who is on covered active-duty status, may take up to 12 weeks of leave for a qualifying exigency. Qualifying exigencies include the following:

- Leave to address *any* issue arising from the military member's short notice deployment may be taken for up to seven days from the military member's receipt of notice of deployment.
- Attending military events or related activities.
- Certain childcare and related activities arising from the military member's covered active duty such as arranging alternative childcare, providing non-routine childcare, enrolling or transferring a child to a new school or day care facility.
- Certain activities related to care of the military member's parent who is incapable of self-care such as arranging for alternative care, providing non-routine care, admitting or transferring a parent to a new care facility.
- Making or updating financial and legal arrangements to address a military member's absence while on covered active duty.
- Attending counseling for the employee, the military member, or the child of the military member when the need for that counseling arises from the covered active duty of the military member and is provided by someone other than a health care provider.
- Certain post-deployment activities within 90 days of the end of the military member's covered active duty such as attendance at arrival ceremonies, reintegration events, and addressing issues arising from death of a military member.
- Taking up to 15 calendar days of leave to spend time with a military member who is on short-term, temporary rest and recuperation leave during deployment.

In accordance with the provisions for military caregiver leave, an employee eligible for FMLA leave who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member or a covered veteran may take up to 26 weeks in a single 12-month period to care for the covered service member who is receiving medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, or is in outpatient status, or is on the temporary disability retired list for a serious injury or illness; or to care for the covered veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness.

Length and Amount of Leave:

The length of FMLA leave (for reasons other than to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness) shall not exceed twelve weeks in a twelve-month period. The leave year is calculated on the following basis:

- A rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave.

For situations involving care for a covered service member with serious injury or illness, the 12-month period begins on the first day the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered service member and ends 12 months after that date. During this single 12-month period, an eligible employee's FMLA leave entitlement is limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks for any qualifying reason.

Intermittent Leave and Reduced Work Schedule:

Intermittent or reduced work schedule leave may be taken when medically necessary. Intermittent leave, whether due to the employee's or qualified family member's condition, must be documented in the medical certification form as medically necessary.

The County may temporarily transfer an employee to an available position with equivalent pay and benefits, if the alternative position would better accommodate the need for intermittent or reduced schedule leave.

When leave is required for planned medical treatment, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule such leave so as to minimize disruption of the employer's operations.

Intermittent or reduced schedule leave may be taken for the care of a newborn or newly placed adopted or foster child only when the schedule is mutually agreed upon by the County for this situation. In all cases, leave related to the birth, adoption or foster care placement of a child must be taken within one year of the birth or placement of the child.

Coordination of Leave:

The FMLA provides for protected *unpaid* leave of absence. However, FMLA leave taken at Houston County may be paid or unpaid, or a combination of both, due to additional leave running concurrently with FMLA leave.

Whenever applicable to the situation, additional forms of available leave shall run concurrently with FMLA leave including Minnesota pregnancy and parenting leave, and all forms of available paid time off including but not limited to sick leave, vacation leave, disability leave, workers' compensation leave when applicable, third-party sick/disability pay when applicable, and compensatory time off. An employee taking FMLA leave will be required to utilize and exhaust

available accrued paid leave that is applicable according to the circumstances, prior to converting to unpaid leave status.

Leave taken pursuant to a disability leave plan, such as short- or long-term disability insurance benefits, may be considered FMLA leave for a serious health condition and counted in the leave entitlement permitted under FMLA if it meets the criteria set forth above in 29 CFR § 825.112–825.115. In such cases, the County shall designate the leave as FMLA leave and count the leave against the employee’s FMLA leave entitlement. Because leave pursuant to a disability benefit plan is not unpaid, the provision for substitution of the employee’s accrued paid leave is inapplicable, and neither the employee nor the County may require the substitution of paid leave. However, the County and employees may agree, where state law permits, to have paid leave supplement the disability plan benefits not to exceed 100% of the employee’s pre-disability base wage.

If an employee takes paid sick or vacation leave for a condition that is later determined to qualify under the FMLA, the County may designate all or some portion of related leave taken under this policy, to the extent that the earlier leave meets the necessary qualifications and requirements for designation under the FMLA.

Procedure for Requesting Leave, Notice, and Certification Requirements:

An employee requesting leave which may qualify under the FMLA must provide written or verbal notice of the need for leave to the Personnel Department as soon as reasonably practicable. Whenever the need for leave is foreseeable, the employee is required to provide notice at least 30 days prior to the date on which the leave is to commence. When an employee becomes aware of a need for FMLA leave less than 30 days in advance, the employee must provide notice of the need for leave within two business days. When the need for FMLA leave is not foreseeable, the employee must comply with the County’s usual and customary notice and procedural requirements for requesting leave, absent unusual circumstances that would prevent the employee from doing so.

Employees taking intermittent leave will be required to follow their department’s regular call-in or notification procedures for approval of time off, to the extent reasonably practicable based on the nature of the condition requiring leave.

The County requires certification by the treating healthcare provider regarding the need for qualified FMLA leave, when the need for leave is due to the employee’s serious health condition or that of an employee’s family member. The County requires certification of the qualifying exigency for military family leave and for the serious injury or illness of a covered service member. The employee must respond to requests for certification within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Completed certification documentation must be provided to the Personnel Department. Failure to provide proper and complete certification, or required recertification, may result in a denial or delay of FMLA leave.

Recertification may be required when the employee requests an extension of the original length approved for the leave, when the circumstances regarding the leave have changed, or if the employer receives information casting doubt on the reason given for the absence. Recertification may also be required if there is a question regarding the validity of the certification or if the employee is unable to return to work as planned. In addition, when the need for leave extends beyond a single leave year, the employee shall be required to provide a new medical certification for each subsequent year.

Employer Notice, Certifications, and Designation Procedure:

Within five business days of the employee providing notice of their need for FMLA leave, the County shall provide the employee with the *Notice of Eligibility and Rights and Responsibilities*. The employer may request additional information sufficient to certify the need and eligibility for FMLA leave. Within five business days after the employee has submitted appropriate and sufficient certification documentation, the County will provide the employee with a written response to the employee's request for FMLA leave, using the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) *Designation Notice*.

Employee Status and Benefits During Leave:

An employee granted leave under this policy will continue to be covered under the County's group health plans, which shall include medical, dental, and vision plans, under the same conditions and at the same level of County contribution as would have been provided had the employee not taken FMLA leave. Rights to additional, continued benefits will depend on the County's established policy for providing such benefits when the employee is on other forms of leave, whether the leave is paid or unpaid. The employee is required to continue payment for any employee portion due for insurance coverage while on leave. Arrangements for payment of the employees' portion for insurance coverage must be made by the employee with the Personnel Department.

The County will continue making payroll deductions for other benefits while the employee is on paid leave. If the employee converts to unpaid leave, the employee may request continuation of other benefits by arranging to pay his or her portion of the premiums. If the employee does not continue payments for other benefits during unpaid leave, the County will discontinue coverage during the leave in accordance with plan administration rules. The County may require an employee on FMLA leave to report periodically regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work.

Return to Work and Reinstatement Following Leave:

An employee taking leave under this policy shall be required to provide a fitness for duty (FFD) clearance from the treating health care provider whenever the leave is for the employee's own health condition. Failure to provide the FFD certification in a timely manner may eliminate or delay the employee's right to reinstatement under the FMLA. If an employee is utilizing

intermittent leave and reasonable safety concerns exist related to return to regular job duties, an FFD certification may be required as frequently as every 30 days during periods when the employee has used intermittent leave.

Employees returning from FMLA will generally be reinstated to the same position held prior to their FMLA protected leave, or to a position equivalent in pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. However, no greater right to reinstatement or to other benefits, terms or conditions of employment exist than if the employee had been continuously employed during the FMLA leave period.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Leaves of Absence

SECTION:	Benefits Policies Section D-7	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County strives to balance the demands of the workplace and our call to public service with the needs of employees and their families. Consistent with this statement, the County provides eligible employees with leave rights in accordance Minnesota state statutes, federal law, and in certain additional situations as defined in these policies.

Policy

An employee who requests time off may be eligible to use accrued paid leave time and may be eligible for leave protected by law and/or leave time provided by County policy. When an employee's leave qualifies under more than one leave type, applicable leaves will be designated concurrently to the greatest extent possible.

Seniority and Benefits During Unpaid Leaves of Absence:

Except as required by law, seniority shall not accumulate during any unpaid leave of absence exceeding 30 days.

Health insurance benefits will be offered in accordance with state and federal law. Continuation provisions may apply at the end of the month in which the leave begins or following loss of eligibility for regular County contributions and will resume upon completing the eligibility and/or waiting period requirement, if any, following return from leave.

Failure to comply with the return-to-work date established for the leave, or failure to request an extension from the department head within five (5) days prior to the expiration of the leave, may be grounds for termination of employment.

Prohibited Retaliation:

Retaliation is prohibited for requesting, taking leave, or asserting other rights provided under these policies. The County will not discharge, discipline, interfere with, restrain, coerce, threaten, penalize, or discriminate against an employee regarding the employee's compensation, terms, conditions, location, or privileges of employment, or any other factor as

required by law, because the employee took time off from work or exercised their rights pursuant to these policies. An employee who believes they have been retaliated against or have not been afforded rights under these policies should promptly report their concerns to the Personnel Department

Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave:

Employees of Houston County are eligible to receive 12 weeks of unpaid pregnancy and parental leave under Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave laws. Parental leave due to birth or adoption of a child must begin within 12 months of the birth or adoption. However, if a child must remain in the hospital longer than the mother, the leave must begin within 12 months after the child leaves the hospital. The 12 weeks of pregnancy or parental leave may be taken consecutively or intermittently. Time taken off work to attend prenatal care medical appointments will not be counted against the employee's 12-week leave entitlement under the Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave law. Employees are required to provide reasonable notice to the Personnel Department of the date the leave will begin and the estimated amount of leave.

Employees who take pregnancy and parenting leave covered by Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave law are entitled to reinstatement in their same job after returning from leave, or return to a position of comparable duties, hours, and pay including any automatic adjustments that occurred during the leave period. An employee returning from a leave of absence longer than one month must notify their supervisor or manager at least two weeks prior to returning from leave.

An employee taking leave covered by Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave law will be provided with continuation of their employer-provided group insurance, including health insurance, along with continuation of any employer contributions as if they were actively working, during the leave. The employee will continue to be required to pay their portion of premium, if any, for such benefits.

Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave runs concurrently with FMLA leave whenever the employee is eligible for leave under both laws. However, if an employee has taken FMLA leave for unrelated reasons, the employee will still be entitled to 12 weeks of Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave for qualifying situations. Both paid and unpaid leave count toward the total of 12 weeks of Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave. Therefore, if an employee uses paid leave options such as PTO, vacation, disability, or sick time for all or part of their time off for qualifying pregnancy and parenting reasons, the employee would not be entitled to an *additional* 12 weeks of unpaid leave under Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave law. Employees are not required to use all available and applicable accrued paid leave such as sick leave, vacation leave, PTO, etc., during Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave prior to converting to unpaid leave of absence.

Minnesota School-Related Activities Leave:

Employees are entitled to take up to 16 hours of unpaid leave during any 12-month period to attend their children's school conferences, classroom activities, childcare, or other early childhood programs, or to observe and monitor the services or program, provided the conference, activity, or observation cannot be scheduled during non-work hours. Eligible activities must be school, early childhood or childcare related and do not include community or private extracurricular programs. Employees are required to provide reasonable notice of the leave request and make a reasonable effort to schedule the leave so as to not unduly disrupt the operations of the employer. This leave may be unpaid leave; however, the County may require the use of accrued paid leave under this section.

Elections and Voting:

All employees eligible to vote in an election shall be provided time off from work necessary to appear at the employee's polling place, cast a ballot, and return to work on the day of that election or during the time period allowed for voting in person before the election day, without penalty or deduction from salary or wages because of the absence.

Election Judge:

An employee selected to serve as an election judge pursuant to Minnesota law shall be provided time off with pay for purposes of serving as an election judge, provided the employee gives the County at least twenty days written notice. The employee's request to be absent must be accompanied with a certification from the appointing elections authority stating the hourly compensation to be paid to the employee for service as an election judge and the hours during which the employee will serve. In order to receive regular pay for the time served as an election judge, the employee shall be required to submit any compensation received for this duty, minus mileage and other expense reimbursement, to the County.

Jury Duty:

Employees who are called for jury duty shall receive their normal compensation for days they are scheduled to work. Any payments, per diem or fees, excepting expenses, shall be remitted to the County. If an employee is excused from court duty prior to the end of the work shift, the employee shall return to work as directed by the County or make arrangements for a leave, with or without pay.

Victim or Witness Leave:

An employee who is a victim or witness, who is subpoenaed or requested by the prosecutor to attend court for the purpose of giving testimony, or is the spouse or immediate family member of such victim, shall be provided reasonable time off from work to attend criminal proceedings related to the victim's case. This time off may be leave with or without pay as determined appropriate by the County, in accordance with the circumstances and the employees' available accrued leave. An employee who is absent from the workplace shall provide 48 hours' advance notice to the County, unless it is impracticable or an emergency prevents the employee from providing this notice. Upon request of the County, the employee shall provide verification that

supports the employee's reason for being absent from the workplace. All information related to the employee's leave pursuant to this section shall be kept confidential by the County.

Court Appearance/Witness/Testifying for County Related Business:

Employees subpoenaed as a witness in an official capacity or appearing for County related business as authorized by the appropriate County Authority, will receive their normal compensation, less any remuneration exclusive of expenses, unless the action is instituted by the employee.

Court Appearance/Witness/Testifying for Personal Matters:

Any other absence to testify in litigation, not in the status of an employee, shall not qualify for any compensation and the employee shall arrange for leave, with or without pay. Any party to a lawsuit, not connected to County duties shall not qualify for compensation and the employee shall arrange for a leave, with or without pay.

Bone Marrow Donation Leave:

An employee who works at least half time for the County who seeks to undergo a medical procedure to donate bone marrow shall be provided paid leave not to exceed 40 work hours, unless additional paid leave is agreed to by the employer. The County may require verification by a physician for the purpose and length of each leave requested by the employee to donate bone marrow. A medical determination that the employee does not qualify as a bone marrow donor does not result in forfeiture of the paid leave of absence granted to the employee prior to that medical determination.

Blood Donation

Employees will be allowed time off work with pay without having to use their vacation or sick leave accruals for donating blood at the blood mobile when it is in Caledonia, Minnesota. Employees must seek supervisory approval, which shall only be withheld when there is inadequate staffing to cover department functions.

Organ Donation Leave:

An employee who works at least half time for the County who seeks to undergo a medical procedure to donate an organ or partial organ to another person shall be provided with paid leave not to exceed 40 work hours for each donation, unless additional paid leave is agreed to by the employer. The County may require verification by a physician for the purpose and length of each leave requested by the employee for organ donation. A medical determination that the employee does not qualify as an organ donor and does not result in forfeiture of the paid leave of absence granted to the employee prior to that medical determination.

Military Leave:

In accordance with state and federal laws, for qualifying military training or active service in accordance with official military orders or related authority, an employee shall receive full pay at base wage rate for a period not to exceed fifteen (15) days per calendar year. The employee may choose when to take all or part of the 15 paid days for required service throughout the

year. Military leave in excess of fifteen (15) days in a calendar year may be provided without pay.

Extended Military Leave:

In accordance with state and federal laws, an employee shall be entitled to a military leave of absence without pay of up to five (5) years for service in the armed forces of the United States. Reinstatement shall be made upon the request of an employee and within the timeframes outlined in Minnesota Statutes and in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

Bereavement Leave:

Leave with pay not deducted from vacation leave to a maximum of three (3) days shall be granted upon the occasion of the death of the employee's current spouse, children, step-children, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, mother, father, step-father, step-mother, grandparents, step-grandparents, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandchildren, step-grandchildren; and the mother, father, aunt, uncle, brother, sister or grandparents of the employee's spouse; or a bona fide person living as a contributing member that is considered part of the family unit and not a tenant, renter or boarder.

Work Related Injury:

An employee temporarily disabled from work due to an injury or illness sustained directly in the performance of the employee's work with the County may be eligible for Workers' Compensation. See Workers' Compensation policy for additional information. All injuries or illnesses must be reported to the Supervisor on the date of the injury or as soon as possible thereafter.

Medical Leave:

A medical or disability leave of absence may be granted to an employee who is either ineligible or who has exhausted their entitlement to applicable mandated leaves (such as FMLA, Minnesota Pregnancy and Parental Leave, etc.). An employee requesting a medical or disability leave of absence should contact the Personnel Department and may be granted a leave of absence as a reasonable accommodation that will enable the individual to perform the essential functions of the job. Such leave will be evaluated through the interactive process and based on the specific facts of each case. The status of the leave will be reviewed at approximately 30-day intervals or as deemed appropriate based on the facts of the specific case.

Requests for such leave will be subject to prior certification by the attending medical authority or a medical authority designated by the County. The employee may be required to submit documentation from the healthcare provider stating the need for the leave, the expected duration of the leave, and a general explanation of the nature of the medical condition or disability including its impact on ability to perform the job, as well as an explanation of how the leave of absence will assist the employee in being able to return to work and perform the

essential functions of the job. Employees are required to use all available paid leave accruals prior to converting to an unpaid leave of absence.

Returning employees may be required to submit certification from the healthcare provider of their ability to safely perform the essential functions of the position.

Employee Death

When the death of an employee or elected official occurs, the County facilities shall remain open pursuant to the published calendar. The deceased employee's department will also remain open, if possible, at the discretion of the department head. Employees of that department only will be allowed up to 4 hours off with pay to attend the funeral or memorial service. Other employees who wish to attend the funeral or memorial of a current employee from another department, must take vacation, comp time or flex time, at the discretion of their department head.

Elected Office – Time off for Public Office Meetings (211B.10)

An employee elected to a public office must be permitted time off from regular employment to attend meetings required by reason of the public office. The time off may be without pay, with pay or made up within the pay period, as agreed between the employee and employer, subject to collective bargaining agreements.

Voluntary Furlough:

To reduce the tax burden on taxpayers, Houston County has a voluntary furlough program that provides employees with an option of taking leave without pay. Upon written request of the employee to his or her supervisor an employee shall be granted forty (40) hours of leave without pay per calendar year with no loss of benefits. Such a request shall be granted but will be scheduled by mutual agreement of the employee and the supervisor in increments of one (1) hour or more. All employees are highly encouraged to consider participating in this program. Department Heads shall approve requests pursuant to this Program only when it does not compromise public safety and/or their department's effective delivery of mandated services or the hours of operation of any County office.

Employee participation in this program shall not negatively impact the of the employee's benefits eligibility, leave accruals or other leave provisions as set forth in the Houston County policies or collective bargaining agreements.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Employee Training and Development

SECTION:	Benefits Policies Section D-8	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County recognizes the value of employees maintaining current knowledge in their field and intends to provide learning opportunities for employees to build and maintain professional skills in order to perform County work.

Policy

The County will conduct programs or ensure that learning opportunities are available to meet the mandatory training and development needs of County employees; offer learning opportunities to support County objectives; and encourage employee participation in formal educational pursuits that enhance job performance or potential for increased responsibility.

The Human Resources Officer shall coordinate the assessment of training and developmental needs of County employees and develop cost-effective strategies to address those needs.

The Human Resources Officer shall oversee the design, delivery, and evaluation of countywide training programs and services.

County Departments and Offices may implement specific training requirements and opportunities for their staff.

Conferences, Workshops & Seminars

Supervisors shall assess any employee request and approve or deny the costs for an employee attending a job-related conference, workshop, or seminar within the state, using the following criteria:

- The topic is relevant to the employees current job description.
- The employee's attendance provides a direct benefit to the County either by keeping the employee abreast of current developments in their professional field, expanding their knowledge to meet operational goals or assisting the Department in meeting County objectives.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Discrimination and Harassment Prevention

SECTION:	Code of Conduct Policies Section E-1	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

Houston County is committed to providing a respectful and inclusive work environment in which all individuals have the opportunity to contribute in a productive manner and to experience professional growth free from discrimination, harassment, or related retaliation based upon protected class status.

Policy

It is critical to this commitment that all employees be familiar with this policy and its related reporting process and take appropriate action to address any concerns that arise under the policy. Anyone who may have experienced or observed discrimination or harassment in violation of this policy, in the context of employment with Houston County, is encouraged to report their concern to the Human Resources Officer or the County Administrator. This policy defines the County's process for reporting, investigating, and addressing unlawful discriminatory, harassing, or retaliatory behavior.

Houston County prohibits discrimination including harassment, disparate treatment, and disparate impact, based on any characteristic protected by law regarding the terms, conditions, privileges and prerequisites of employment. This policy which focuses on maintaining a workplace free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation is intended to support and complement the County's commitment in this area, as well as its commitment to providing a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity.

Houston County prohibits discrimination, harassment, disparate treatment, disparate impact, and retaliation on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, veteran or military status, status with regard to public assistance, pregnancy, familial status, local Human Rights Commission activity, or on the basis of any other characteristic protected by law. In instances of bona fide occupational qualifications necessary to perform a job, certain limited circumstances apply, when factors relevant to job duties may be considered.

Introduction & Definitions:

Employment discrimination may occur in the form of harassment, disparate treatment, disparate impact, or retaliation. Huston County prohibits illegal discrimination in any form.

Important laws prohibiting employment discrimination include but are not limited to: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, Executive Order 11246 of 1965 pertaining to federal contractors, the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) and the Consumer Credit Protection Act (CCPA).

Harassment - Harassment is unwelcome conduct based on race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, veteran or military status, status with regard to public assistance, pregnancy, familial status, local Human Rights Commission activity, arrest or conviction records, or on the basis of any other characteristic protected by law. Harassment is defined as unlawful when enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment; or where the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, offensive, or abusive, or where the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's work performance. Harassment is also prohibited in retaliation for filing a charge of discrimination, testifying, or participating in any way in an investigation, proceeding, or lawsuit under these laws, or for opposing employment practices reasonably believed to discriminate against individuals in violation of these laws.

Sexual Harassment - Sexual harassment, as defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, b) such submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual (*quid pro quo* harassment), or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision.

Similarly, sexual harassment as defined by Minnesota Statutes § 363A.03, Subdivision 43 includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when: a) submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, affecting an individual's employment; or b) submission to or rejection of that conduct

or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment; or c) that conduct, or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's employment, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment environment.

Disparate Treatment - Disparate treatment discrimination occurs when an employer intentionally takes an employee's protected status into consideration when taking an adverse employment action.

Disparate Impact - Disparate impact discrimination occurs when an employer adopts a policy or practice that while appearing neutral and nondiscriminatory on its surface, has a disproportionately negative effect on members of a protected class. Disparate impact discrimination is also known as adverse impact discrimination.

Retaliation - Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws prohibit punishing or taking adverse action against employees or applicants for asserting their rights to be free from employment discrimination including harassment. It is unlawful to retaliate against employees or applicants for reporting employment discrimination or harassment; for filing an EEO charge or being a witness in a charge, complaint, investigation or lawsuit; for participating in an employer investigation; for refusing to follow orders they reasonably believed would result in discrimination; for requesting pay information to uncover discriminatory pay practices; and for participating in a complaint process. Likewise, it is unlawful to retaliate against an employee for exercising their rights related to religious accommodation, disability accommodation, family and medical leave, or military leave, among other protected actions.

Examples of Prohibited Conduct:

Discriminatory or harassing behavior may include, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- Slurs, epithets, negative stereotyping, denigrating jokes, nicknames for protected categories
- Threats, intimidating or hostile acts
- Conduct with the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with work performance
- Written or graphic material that denigrates, shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group, sexually suggestive objects or images
- Unwanted sexual conduct, advances, or requests for sexual favors
- Leering, whistling, touching, obscene comments or gestures
- Technology and social media-based communications, posts, and messaging of a harassing, discriminatory, or retaliatory nature

Individuals Subject to this Policy and Application to the Work Environment:

This policy applies to all employees, interns, volunteers, and elected officials. Violations of this policy by any employee may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Conduct prohibited by this policy is unacceptable in the workplace, as well as in any work-related setting outside of the workplace such as during attendance at conferences, professional meetings, educational programs, or workplace-related social events. Off duty conduct which bears a nexus with the employee's job may also be subject to this policy.

Certain employees, by the nature of their job, may be exposed to inappropriate or undesirable conduct during the course of interactions with members of the public. However, inappropriate conduct of individuals interacting within and influencing general County work settings – for example, vendors, contractors, applicants, customers, and clients - may also be reported so that Houston County may take necessary and reasonable action to maintain a working environment free of discrimination and harassment.

Employee Responsibilities:

Houston County encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. Individuals who believe they may have been the victim of such conduct, or observed a violation of this policy, are encouraged to discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor or next level manager. When appropriate to the situation, individuals are encouraged to promptly advise the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcomed and request that it be discontinued. This step should be documented. If addressing the offender does not effectively resolve the concern or is not appropriate to the situation, and in all cases of potentially significant violations of this policy, individuals should follow the discrimination and harassment complaint procedure provided in this policy for making a formal report to the Human Resources Officer or County Administrator.

Management Responsibilities:

Supervisory and management representatives are responsible for maintaining a work environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Supervisory and management personnel are required to take prompt action to correct behavior in violation of this policy and document their action. Regarding all potentially significant violations of this policy, and concerns that are not corrected through immediate intervention, supervisory and management personnel are required to promptly contact the Human Resources Officer or County Administrator to determine appropriate action. Supervisory and management representatives' commitment to this policy is a key element of the leadership role at Houston County. Due to the critical nature of this responsibility, supervisory and management representatives who become aware of a potential violation of this policy and who fail to take appropriate action shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Reporting Procedure:

Prompt reporting of allegations of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation is advised, to facilitate timely investigation, intervention, and constructive action as appropriate to the situation. Formal reports of alleged violations of this policy should be submitted to the Human

Resources Officer or the County Administrator, If the complaint involves the Human Resources Officer and/or the County Administrator, the report should be submitted to the County Attorney. To facilitate appropriate assessment and follow-up action responsive to the complaint, whenever possible the formal complaint should contain details of the situation, and should identify the person or persons against whom the complaint is being made, as well as the names of any witnesses, and the name and contact information of the individual reporting the concern.

Intentionally False Claims Prohibited:

An employee, not acting in good faith, and making false claims of discrimination or harassment may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. In addition, any employee who intentionally provides false information during an investigation may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. False and malicious complaints of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation are differentiated from complaints that, even if erroneous, are made in good faith. A complaint made in good faith and later proven false is not subject to disciplinary action.

Complaint Investigation:

The Human Resources Officer or County Administrator will review all allegations of harassment, discrimination, disparate treatment, disparate impact, and retaliation. He/she may discuss the complaint with the reporting individual to review or clarify details and gather additional information. The Human Resources Officer or County Administrator will determine if the complaint requires further investigation, and if so, will oversee the investigation to its conclusion.

Reasonable standards will be followed to respect the confidentiality of individuals involved, to the extent consistent with ensuring a complete and adequate investigation, appropriate corrective action, and in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and administrative rulings. Complete confidentiality is not possible and shall not be guaranteed. The investigatory

process may require the accused to respond to charges made against them; and data related to the complaint, investigation, and any resulting disciplinary action may be subject to release by law - as several examples which preclude any guarantees of strict confidentiality.

Complaints and investigative materials will be maintained in a file separate from involved employees' personnel files. If disciplinary action results from the investigation, the final disciplinary action will become part of the subject employee's personnel file.

Corrective Action:

Misconduct constituting a violation of this policy will be addressed appropriately in accordance with the facts and determinations of the investigation. Responsive action may include but is not

limited to: individual or group training; referral to counseling; reassignment; disciplinary action including verbal or written reprimand, suspension without pay, or termination of employment.

Conclusion:

Upon closure of the process outlined above, the Human Resources Officer or County Administrator will notify the reporting individual that the investigation is concluded, and may provide relevant information regarding the outcome, as appropriate to the situation. The Human Resource Officer or County Administrator and department head of the area from which the complaint originated may conduct additional follow-up to ensure the concern has been effectively addressed and the County's commitment to providing a respectful and inclusive workplace upheld.

Prohibited Retaliation:

Houston County forbids retaliation against anyone who makes a good faith complaint of suspected violation of this policy, or against anyone who serves as a witness or participates in an investigation. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and may be subject to additional investigation.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Respectful Workplace

SECTION:	Code of Conduct Policies Section E-2	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County is committed to promoting a respectful and professional work environment, providing employees with a workplace that is conducive to productivity and positive customer service. Respect for one another is fundamental to maintaining an efficient and effective work environment.

Policy

It is the policy of Houston County to maintain a respectful work and public service environment free from violence, discrimination, harassment, and other offensive or degrading behavior or conduct. The County will not tolerate such behavior by or toward any employee. Disrespectful or unprofessional communications and behavior can disrupt the efficient functioning of the workplace. Any employee found to have acted in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

The County shall provide a reporting process and investigative practices for reported violation of this policy.

Standards of Behavior and Expectations:

Every employee of the County has the right to work in a respectful workplace. In order to promote and sustain a workplace where all employees are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their position or status, each employee is expected to abide by these values and standards of interpersonal behavior, communication and professionalism:

1. Treat employees and others with respect, civility, and courtesy. Respect and value the contributions of all members of our workforce, regardless of status or role in the organization.
2. Work honestly, effectively and collegially with employees and others. Respond courteously and appropriately to requests from others for assistance or information.

3. Engage in non-retaliatory problem-solving processes that address concerns regarding respectful or professional communications or behavior.
4. Encourage and support all employees in developing their individual conflict management skills. Use informal means to address issues with individuals whenever possible.
5. Participate fully and in good faith in any informal resolution process or formal complaint and investigation process.
6. Have an open and cooperative approach in dealings with employees and co-workers, recognizing and embracing individual differences.
7. Recognize that differing social and cultural standards may mean that behavior that is acceptable to some may be perceived as unacceptable or unreasonable to others.
8. Abide by applicable rules, regulations, policies, and bylaws and address any dissatisfaction with, or violation of, specific policies and procedures through appropriate channels.
9. Demonstrate commitment to continuous personal and professional learning and development.
10. Demonstrate commitment to a culture where all employees cooperate and collaborate in using best practices to achieve high work-related outcomes.
11. Be responsible stewards of material and human assets to achieve excellence, innovation, and sharing of knowledge across the organization.
12. Employees in supervisory and management positions must model civility for others and clearly define expectations for how employees treat each other. Individuals in supervisory and management positions are responsive to complaints when they are brought forward.

Behavior which violates this policy includes, but is not limited to:

1. A pattern of behavior that a reasonable person would find to be demeaning, humiliating, or offensive.
2. Discriminatory behavior which includes inappropriate remarks about or conduct related to an employee's race, color, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ethnicity/national origin, disability, marital status, pregnancy, familial status, age, disability, status with regard to public assistance, genetic information, veteran or military status, local human rights commission activity, exercise of rights related to

family and medical leave, and any other characteristic or category protected by law. Also see the County's Discrimination & Harassment Prevention Policy.

3. Offensive behavior includes patterns of actions that have a negative impact on the work environment such as: vulgar obscenities, name calling, disrespectful language, or the intentional filing of an unfounded complaint under this policy.
4. Violent behavior which includes the use of physical force, harassment or intimidation, or abuse of power or authority. Making threats of violence, retribution, litigation, or financial harm.
5. Making comments or engaging in behavior directed as a personal attack on the professional conduct of others.
6. Shouting or engaging in other speech, conduct, or mannerisms that are reasonably perceived by others to represent intimidation or harassment.
7. Making or telling jokes that are intended to be, or that are reasonably perceived by others to be, crude or offensive; teasing, name calling, ridicule or making someone the brunt of pranks or practical jokes. Using sarcasm or cynicism directed as a personal attack on others.
8. Intentionally making comments or engaging in behavior that is untruthful; or spreading unsubstantiated rumors or gossip.
9. Making actual or threatened inappropriate physical contact.
10. Throwing instruments, tools, office equipment, or other items as an expression of anger, criticism, or threat, or in an otherwise disrespectful or abusive manner.
11. Engaging in any pattern of disruptive behavior or interaction that could interfere with the workplace or adversely impact the quality of services.

Procedure

Responding to Violations of this Policy:

Responding to behavior which violates this policy is most effectively handled immediately by the person(s) observing the behavior. An employee who believes that they have been treated in violation of this policy by any person in relation to employment with the County should deal with the situation in one or more of the following ways:

- A. The person who is the target or observer of the behavior should politely but firmly request that the person cease the behavior. The employee may request that a coworker or union representative accompany them. This meeting may include describing how the

behavior is disrespectful (e.g., causing feelings of intimidation, offense, or discomfort, unwanted).

- B. The person who is the target or observer of the behavior may write a statement describing the incident(s) of inappropriate behavior, a summary of the conversation with the person violating this policy, and a description of that person's response to the conversation following the incident. This statement may be provided to a supervisor or the Personnel Department as appropriate based on the severity of the situation.
- C. If an employee fears that adverse employment consequences could result from direct conversation with the offender, the employee may go to their supervisor, manager, the department head, or the Personnel Department. In the event the complaint is against
- D. their department head, the employee should report it to the Human Resources Officer. In the event of a complaint against the Human Resources Officer, it should be reported to the County Administrator. The report of such an incident should include the details of the situation, and the resolution sought.
- E. In the case of violent behavior, all employees are required to report the incident immediately to a supervisor, manager, the department head, or the Personnel
- F. Department, and to the proper legal authorities dependent upon the nature and severity of the incident.
- G. If an issue cannot be resolved by addressing the situation directly, or by working through the appropriate management and leadership team within the employee's work area, the employee may consider filing a formal complaint with the Personnel Department. See the section on "How to File a Complaint."
- H. The cooperation of all employees is required to reestablish and maintain a respectful environment. Employees must make efforts to be aware of the sensitivity of those individuals with whom they work. Disrespectful or unprofessional behavior may or may not be intentional. To ensure an efficiently functioning workplace, employees are encouraged to informally resolve concerns whenever possible.

Responsibilities of Supervisory and Management Employees:

Management's responsibilities include investigating or appropriately following up on all complaints and making necessary efforts to reestablish or provide an environment free of disrespectful behavior to protect the rights of all employees. Management should promptly consult with the Personnel Department regarding significant issues related to this policy; and if they have questions regarding how to appropriately address a concern that has come to their attention.

Supervisors and managers shall deal swiftly and vigorously with persons treating others disrespectfully. An employee who engages in disrespectful workplace behavior is subject to standard disciplinary procedures.

A supervisor or manager who becomes aware of disrespectful workplace behavior and fails to take appropriate actions against it is subject to disciplinary procedures.

A supervisor or manager who receives such a complaint shall record their actions in response to the complaint, including any investigation, correction or discipline. The records should be maintained by the supervisor/manager or the Personnel Department, as appropriate.

When conducting an investigation, management shall operate within the requirements of the Minnesota Data Practices Act, County policy, and other applicable rules and regulations.

How to File a Complaint:

All employees are encouraged to voice their concern if they feel they are being treated disrespectfully. The County offers many options when seeking assistance, such as reporting the concern to a supervisor or manager, the department head, or the Personnel Department

If the problem cannot be resolved by the employee asking the person to stop or reporting the behavior to their supervisor or manager, or to the department head, an employee may submit

a formal complaint by contacting the Personnel Department for assistance. The completed form should be submitted to the Personnel Department. Complaints must contain details of the situation and the identity of the person or persons against whom the complaint is being made.

Follow-Up and Investigation of a Complaint:

The Human Resources Officer will review the complaint, and the employee will generally be contacted within five business days.

The Human Resources Officer will discuss the complaint with the employee, review details, and gather supporting information as appropriate.

The Human Resources Officer will determine if the complaint needs to be investigated further. If it is determined that the complaint requires further action, it will be investigated to conclusion.

Results of the investigation will be compiled into a report by the investigating party and sent to the Human Resources Officer and the department head of where the complaint originated, as appropriate.

The Human Resources Officer or the department head will follow up to ensure violations of this policy have been addressed.

Prohibited Retaliation:

The County will not tolerate acts of retaliation against employees who have made a good faith report of suspected violations of this policy or any person who assists or participates in an investigation or a proceeding related to such an investigation.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Workplace Violence

SECTION:	Code of Conduct Policies Section E-3	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County is committed to providing employees with a safe workplace that is free from violence; reducing employee vulnerability to workplace violence; responding quickly to employees if workplace violence occurs; and supporting employees who experience acts of workplace violence.

Policy

Employees, customers, clients, contractors, vendors, business associates, and others should be treated with courtesy and respect; and employee interactions should be professional and appropriate to the circumstances. County employees are expected to serve angry, upset, or otherwise disgruntled customers with patience, courtesy, and respect while maintaining safety. No employee is required to tolerate physical or verbal threats to their safety, or physical or verbal abuse. Further, it is a goal of the County to maintain a work environment that provides for respectful conflict resolution.

The County is committed to:

- Providing services to the public in a professional and caring manner.
- Providing a safe environment for employees and the public.
- Reducing employee vulnerability to workplace violence.
- Responding quickly to employees if workplace violence occurs.
- Supporting employees who experience violence both at the time of, and subsequent to, the incident.

Definition

Violence is the use of harassment, intimidation, physical force, or the abuse of power or authority, where the intent is to control by causing pain, fear or hurt. The County acknowledges that employees may be exposed to violence by the very nature of their jobs in the provision of service to the public. The County acknowledges that human relationships include the potential

for conflict, which may result in violence. This includes the actions of employees, clients, other internal or external customers, vendors, or any other person. The County recognizes that violence at work, family violence, or any other type of violence may impact an employee's work performance.

Procedure

The County assumes the initiative for maintaining a safe workplace. The County retains the authority to act appropriately in performance evaluation and disciplinary procedures. The intention of these procedures is not to conflict with any other County policy or procedure.

Each department head is charged with the development, maintenance, and communication of procedures for preventing and addressing workplace violence relevant to the functions of the areas they oversee. These include procedures for prevention, incident response, and actions following an incident. The department head or their designee provides orientation, training, and support on workplace violence prevention, reporting, and response procedures pertinent to their departments and/or service delivery areas.

If an employee is threatened or assaulted, the first thing the employee should do is end the encounter and move to a secure place. If defense is necessary, it should be reasonable and proportionate to the situation with a minimum of contact with, or injury to, the individual. The County supports acts of self-defense when an employee is doing so to protect themselves. Once in a secure setting, the employee should obtain medical help if needed and report the incident to law enforcement and to their supervisor or department head. Calling 911 may be appropriate for either law enforcement or medical support.

If an employee sees or overhears a violent incident in progress, they should call for help. Calling 911 may be appropriate for either law enforcement or medical support. Management should be promptly notified.

If a violent incident occurs, the employee involved must report the incident to their supervisor or to the department head. Follow-up will vary depending on the incident.

Employees are expected to exercise sound judgment and inform their supervisor and/or the Personnel Department of potentially dangerous situations, including but not limited to situations where an individual exhibits behavior that could be a sign of a dangerous situation. Such behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Displays of signs of extreme stress, hostility, resentment, anger, or making threatening remarks.
- Displaying irrational, inappropriate, or other concerning behaviors.
- Engaging in concerning discussion of weapons, harm, or violence, or bringing weapons to the workplace.

Employees who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking outside of the workplace are supported in taking steps to secure their safety and obtain necessary services. Employees are encouraged to timely inform the Personnel Department any protective or restraining order that they have obtained that lists the workplace as a protected area. The Personnel Department can provide Employee Assistance Program and additional resources, and provide information on available leave benefits.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Code of Conduct

SECTION:	Code of Conduct Policies Section E-4	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

Houston County is committed to providing a workplace culture that prioritizes mutual respect, professionalism, safety and health, and effective workplace collaboration. The County maintains code of conduct expectations to support effective functioning of the workplace in accordance with professional standards of behavior, to ensure quality service delivery, and uphold public trust.

Policy

The County affirms its right and responsibility to develop and administer the policies, expectations, and general work rules necessary to ensure efficient operation of services, fair treatment, safe working conditions, and the overall maintenance of a respectful and effectively functioning work environment. The County retains all rights and privileges not specifically addressed in these Policies.

Employees are expected to adhere to rules and expectations of professional and ethical conduct and recognized business department in all matters associated with their County employment.

Examples of *unacceptable conduct* which may result in disciplinary action include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Conduct or performance which fails to satisfy the duties, responsibilities, quantity, quality, or safety rules of the job.
2. Criminal behavior that would raise questions about the employee's suitability for the job.
3. Insubordinate conduct, refusal to follow a supervisor's direction, or willful violation of a lawful regulation.
4. Restriction, interference, or harassment of others in the performance of job duties; engaging in behavior which distracts or disrupts the wellbeing of others or the effective functioning of the workplace.

5. Theft, gross negligence, or willful destruction or abuse of any County property or material; misappropriation, misuse, and/or mismanagement of County property or funds or data; falsifying or destroying County reports or records, including falsification of an employee's timecard; unauthorized access, removal, or misuse of County reports, records, or data; and surreptitiously recording.
6. Fighting, physical violence, making threats of violence, threatening gestures, possession of illegal and/or unauthorized weapons.
7. Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol, cannabis, drugs, or controlled substance, possession or consumption of same while on the job.
8. Excessive or unexcused absences, reporting to work late, or leaving work before the end of the scheduled shift.
9. The solicitation or acceptance of money, gifts, or valued items which may be construed as evidence of favoritism, coercion, unfair advantage, collusion or otherwise impacting the decisions of an employee in public matters.
10. The use or threatened use of political influence to exert pressure on any County employee or others for favors or to conduct actions contrary to these Policies.
11. Willful deception or misrepresentation or falsification of information on an employment application or during the pre-employment and onboarding process.
12. Reporting for a scheduled work assignment in clothing or appearance which an authorized supervisor has directed as not acceptable for the work assignment or disruptive to employees or the public.
13. Engaging in a conflict of interest and/or unapproved outside employment. Before engaging in any other employment or activity that may be or appears to be a conflict of interest, the employee shall obtain prior approval from the department head. A conflict of interest exists when the employees outside employment or activity is inconsistent, incompatible, or in conflict with County employment.
14. Misconduct or the violation of a general rule requiring the maintenance of good order and recognized business department.

The above list is not intended to be all-inclusive in defining prohibited behaviors or specifying standards of conduct or obligations which employees must observe. Houston County expects employees to observe professional and appropriate conduct at all times in association with their county employment. Violations or failure to meet appropriate conduct expectations may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Discipline and Discharge

SECTION:	Code of Conduct Policies Section E-5	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County administers a consistent and fair system of discipline to correct employee behavior or conduct, to intervene and guide employees toward performance that meets requirements, to ensure competent delivery of service, and to limit or eliminate misconduct and the associated negative effects and costs.

Policy

The County generally uses progressive discipline but maintains that any incident of employee misconduct or violation of policy may result in disciplinary action at any level, including discharge from employment, depending upon the circumstances and severity of the conduct or violation. Disciplinary action will be documented in writing and maintained in the employee's personnel file once the disciplinary action has reached its final disposition. The County retains all rights and privileges not specifically addressed in these Policies.

The supervisor shall inform the department head and the Human Resources Officer prior to initiating disciplinary action to ensure consistency with organizational practices. The specific facts and circumstances of the situation will be reviewed, and the most appropriate disciplinary action applied.

Employees shall be permitted to respond to formal disciplinary action by preparing a written response to the disciplining authority and having that response placed in their personnel file.

Disciplinary action will be in one of the following forms:

- Documented Verbal Warning
- Written Warning
- Suspension
- Demotion
- Discharge

Discharge of Non-Probationary Non-Veteran Employee:

A non-probationary employee may be removed from continued employment with the County for cause, following the use of progressive discipline or in situations where remedial action is not deemed effective or appropriate.

Discharge of a Non-Probationary Veteran:

An honorably discharged veteran, as defined in the Minnesota Veterans Preference Act, who is an employee of the County and covered by these policies, who is being considered for termination of employment by discharge, shall receive a notice of intent to discharge prior to any action being taken. The written notice shall include the basis for the intent to discharge and notice of the right to request a hearing before the Personnel Board of Appeals in accordance with the Personnel Board of Appeals Procedural Rules, or a hearing before an arbitrator in accordance with state law. Requests for a hearing in accordance with the Veterans Preference Act must be in writing to the Human Resources Officer. A veteran notified of the intent to discharge may be suspended with pay, benefits, and employment status until a final determination is made.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Grievance Procedures

SECTION:	Code of Conduct Policies Section E-6	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Policy

The County of Houston wishes to address employee grievances by providing standard procedures for their resolution.

Limitations

An employee who commences a grievance proceeding under the provisions of a collective bargaining union is not allowed to grieve the same issue a second time under these rules. Similarly commencement of a grievance proceeding under these rules shall preclude the employee from grieving the same issue under a collective bargaining agreement.

Step I:

An employee having a grievance should present the grievance to his/her immediate supervisor within seven calendar days after the event causing the grievance. The employee may be accompanied by counsel of his/her choice. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to discuss it with the employee and give an oral answer to the employee within five working days from the time the grievance was initially presented. In such cases where there is not a supervisor between the employee and the department Head, the grievance shall be presented directly to the department head as set forth in Step II.

Step II:

A grievance not resolved in Step I may be appealed to Step II. The grievance should be presented to the department head in writing. Included shall be:

1. The nature of the grievance.
2. The facts on which the grievance is based.
3. The policy or rule allegedly violated.
4. The remedy requested.

The Step II grievance should be presented to the department head within fourteen calendar days from the time of the supervisor's response.

The department head shall:

1. Investigate the grievance.
2. Discuss it with the employee.
3. Give a written answer to the employee within five working days following the meeting with the employee.

Step III:

A grievance not resolved in Step II may be appealed to Step III. The grievances should be presented in writing to the County Administrator within fourteen calendar days from the time of the department head response. The grievance shall include:

1. The nature of the grievance.
2. The facts on which the grievance is based.
3. The policy or rule allegedly violated.
4. The remedy requested.

The County Administrator, or his/her designated representative shall investigate the alleged violation, review the alleged violation with the County Board, and present the decision to the employee, in writing, within twenty calendar days following the receipt of the appealed grievance.

Time Limits

If the grievance is not presented in the time periods stated above, it is considered waived. If a grievance is not appealed to the next step within the specified time limit, it is considered settled on the basis of the last answer. If the proper authority does not answer a grievance within the time limits, the employee shall treat the grievance as denied and may immediately appeal the grievance to the next step. The time limits of each step may be extended by mutual agreement of both parties.

Grievances are disputes or disagreements as to the interpretation or application of the specific terms and conditions of a labor agreement or County policies. Grievances may be filed by any employee regardless of whether or not the employee is a member of an employee organization.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Political Activity

SECTION:	Code of Conduct Policies Section E-7	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

The County has an obligation to define and support appropriate standards of conduct for employees in the area of political activity in relation to their County position.

Policy

As public employees, County staff shall adhere to certain limitations on the use of County time and County property for political efforts.

All County employees have the right to vote as they please, to express their opinions on political subjects, and retain membership in political parties.

Candidate for Public Office:

Any non-elected department head or employee seeking public office must devote full-time energies to normal County employment and may not campaign during normal working hours.

An employee seeking public office must notify their department head and the Human Resources Officer so that a determination can be made as to whether the position the employee occupies with the County would be in conflict with the candidacy for the public office the employee is seeking.

If the employee fails to provide proper notification of their candidacy, the Human Resources Officer shall consult with the County Administrator and the County Attorney for determination of any conflict of interest. If a finding of a conflict is made, the employee shall be required to take a leave of absence without pay until the first business day following the election, at which the outcome of the election contest is determined.

Upon election, the employee must immediately notify their department head in writing. If the department head determines that the duties of the elective office conflict with the proper discharge of County responsibilities, the employee will be required to take a leave of absence or be separated from the County service.

Prohibited Activities:

The following employee political activity is strictly prohibited:

- Using official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with, or affecting the result of, an election or nomination for office.
- Using official authority or influence to compel any officer or employee to apply for membership in, or become a member of, any organization.
- Directly or indirectly coercing or attempting to coerce or command a state or local officer or employee to pay, lend, or contribute anything of value for political purposes.
- Soliciting or receiving funds during hours of employment.
- Placing or distributing campaign materials within the established election areas of the government center.
- Wearing buttons, apparel, or other regalia at work within the established election areas of the government center which feature a political party, candidate or issue which is on the ballot in the current election.

Legislative Protocol for Employees:

- Employees are expected to confine their efforts to the County's current legislative agenda if they choose to lobby on a policy issue that would affect the operations of the County.
- Any legislative participation shall be immediately communicated to the County Administrator.
- If the issue has not been addressed by the County's legislative agenda, a County Board position should be sought prior to any lobbying effort.
- An employee who lobbies in a professional capacity, either at the request of a legislator or a professional association, shall note in their testimony that they speak as a professional and not as a County representative.
- The County Administrator or designated personnel will organize the County's efforts.
- Employees do not speak for the County Board, unless specifically assigned to do so.
- When the County is paying the dues for membership in a professional association, employees shall not take a position within that professional association that is inconsistent with County Board policy.
- Employees and appointed representatives shall notify the County Administrator of a pending appointment to an advisory board or task force of a political subdivision initiated outside of the scope of County Board authority. When appropriate, the County Administrator will notify the County Board.

This policy applies to all employees and respective appointed Board members that lobby as a representative of Houston County.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Conflict of Interest

SECTION:	Code of Conduct Policies Section E-8	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

All counties in Minnesota are required to establish ethical standards of conduct for all employees and officials by setting forth those acts or actions that are incompatible with the best interests of the county, and by directing disclosure by such officials of private financial or other interests in matters affecting the county.

The Office of the State Auditor review checks to make sure that Houston County reviews their Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy with all employees and officials annually.

Policy

The proper operation of democratic government requires that public officials be independent, impartial and responsible to the people; that government decisions and policy be made in the proper channels of the government structure; that public office or public employment not be used for personal gain; and that the public have confidence in the integrity of its government.

In recognition of these goals, there is hereby established a Code of Ethics for all Employees and Public Officials of Houston County. The purpose of this Code is to establish ethical standards of conduct for all such persons by setting forth those acts or actions that are incompatible with the best interests of the county, and by directing disclosure by such employees or officials of private financial or other interests in matters affecting the county. The provisions and purpose of this Code and such rules and regulations as may be established are hereby declared to be in the best interests of Houston County.

Ethical Principles

The ethical county employee and public official accepts the responsibility that his or her mission is that of servant and steward to the public.

The ethical county employee and public official should:

- Properly administer the affairs of the county.
- Promote decisions which only benefit the public interest.

- Actively promote public confidence in county government.
- Keep safe all funds and other properties of the county.
- Conduct and perform the duties of the office diligently and promptly dispose of the business of the county.
- Maintain a positive image to pass constant public scrutiny.
- Evaluate all decisions so that the best service or product is obtained at a minimal cost without sacrificing quality and fiscal responsibility.
- Inject the prestige of the office into everyday dealings with the public employees and associates.
- Maintain a respectful attitude toward employees, other public officials, colleagues and associates.
- Effectively and efficiently work with governmental agencies, political subdivisions and other organizations in order to further the interest of the county.
- Faithfully comply with all laws, regulations and policies applicable to the county and impartially apply them to everyone.

The ethical county employee and public official should not:

- Engage in outside interests that are not compatible with the impartial and objective performance of his or her duties.
- Improperly influence or attempt to influence other officials to act in his or her own benefit.
- Accept anything of value from any source which is offered to influence his or her action as a public official.

Ethical Considerations:

Public officials and employees are to serve all people fairly and equitably without regard to their personal or financial benefit. The credibility of Houston County government hinges on the proper discharge of duties in the public interest. Public officials and employees must assure that the independence of their judgment and actions, without any consideration for personal gain, is preserved. Specific ethical considerations are enumerated below for the guidance of public officials and employees, but these do not necessarily encompass all the possible ethical considerations that might arise.

Other Offices or Employment

An elected public official shall not hold another incompatible office as that term has been interpreted from time to time by statute, the courts, and by the Attorney General. Employees shall not hold any incompatible office, nor shall they engage in any regular outside employment without notice to and approval by their department head or County Board. Elected and appointed public officials shall not hold other office or employment which compromises the performance of their elected or appointed duties without disclosure of said office or employment and self-disqualification from any particular action which might be compromised by such office or employment.

Use of Confidential Information

No employee or public official shall use information gained as an employee or public official which is not generally made available to and/or is not known to the public, to directly or indirectly gain anything of value or to further their own private interest nor shall any employee or public official accept outside employment or involvement in a business or activity that will require the employee to disclose or use confidential information of the county.

Solicitation of or Receipt of Anything of Value

A public official or employee shall not solicit or receive anything of value from any person or association, directly or indirectly, in consideration of some action to be taken or not to be taken in the performance of the person's official duties.

However, the acceptance of any of the following shall not be in violation of this section:

- Gifts of nominal value;
- Plaques or similar mementos recognizing individual services in a field of specialty or services related to a charitable cause;
- Payment of reimbursement expenses for travel or meals, not to exceed actual expenses incurred, which are not reimbursed by the County of Houston, and which have been approved in advance by the employee's Supervisor as part of their work assignment; or
- Honoraria or expenses paid for papers, talks, demonstrations or appearances made by employees on their own time, for which they are not compensated by the County of Houston.

Holding Investments

No public official shall hold any investment which might compromise the performance of the public official's duties without disclosure of said investment and self-disqualification from any particular action which might be compromised by such investment, except as permitted by statute, such as Minnesota Statute 471.88.

Representation of Others

A public official or employee shall not represent persons or associations in dealings with the county in consideration of anything of value.

Financial Interest

Where an employee or public official or a member of the employee or public official's immediate family has a financial interest in any matter being considered by the county, such interest, if known, shall be disclosed by the employee or public official. If the employee or public official has such a financial interest or if the minor child of an employee or public official has such a financial interest, the employee or public official shall be disqualified from further participation in the matter.

County Property

No employee or public official shall use or allow the use of county time, supplies, or county owned or leased property and/or equipment, for the employee's private interest or any other use not in the interest of the county, except as provided for by law or other county policy.

Special Consideration

No employee or public official shall grant any special consideration, treatment, or advantage to any citizen beyond that which is available to every other citizen.

Authority

No employee or public official shall exceed his or her authority, or breach the law, or ask others to do so.

Giving Anything of Value

No elected public official shall give anything of value to potential voters in return for their votes, promises, or financial considerations which would be prohibited by the State Minnesota Fair Campaign Practices statute.

Public Funds, etc.

No employee or public official shall use public funds, personnel, facilities, or equipment for private gain or political campaign activities.

Expenses

Employees and public officials shall provide complete documentation to support requests for expense reimbursement. Expense reimbursement shall be made in accordance with County policy.

Donations

No employee or public official shall take an official action which will benefit any person or entity because of a donation of anything of value to the County by such person or entity.

Official Action

No employee or public official shall take an official action which will benefit any person or entity where such employee or public official would not have otherwise taken such action but for the employee or public official's family relationship, friendship, or business relationship with such person or entity.

Compliance with Law

Employees and Public officials shall comply with all county policies, local ordinances and State and Federal Statutes including, but not limited to, laws governing the functioning of counties and municipalities, their elected and appointed officials, and employees.

Acceptance of Advantage by County Employee

No employee or public official of the county in direct contact with suppliers or potential suppliers of the county, or who may directly or indirectly influence the purchase of products, evaluation of contracted services, or otherwise has official involvement in the purchase or contracting process may:

- Have any financial interest or have any personal beneficial interest directly or indirectly in contracts or purchase orders for goods or services used by, or purchased for resale or furnished to the county; or
- Accept directly or indirectly from a person, firm or corporation to which a contract or purchase order has been or may be made, a rebate, gift, money or anything of value other than items of nominal value. No such employee may further accept any promise, obligation or contract for future reward.

Ethical Considerations:

The following actions by an employee or public official of the County of Houston shall be deemed a conflict of interest:

- Use or attempted use of their official position to secure benefits, privileges, exemptions or advantages for themselves or their immediate family; or an organization with which they are associated which are different from those available to the general public.
- Acceptance of other employment or contractual relationships that will affect their independent judgment in the exercise of their official duties.
- Act as an agent or attorney in any action or matter pending before the County of Houston except in the proper discharge of official duties or on their own behalf; or
- The solicitation of a financial agreement for themselves or entity other than the county when the county is currently engaged in the provision of the services which are the subject of the agreement or where the county has expressed an intention to engage in competition for the provision of the services, unless the affected county agency waives this clause.

Determine of Conflicts of Interest

When an employee or public official believes the potential for a conflict of interest exists, it is the employee's duty to avoid the situation. A conflict of interest shall be deemed to exist when a review of the situation by the appropriate personnel (department head, Human Resources Officer, County Attorney, or County Board) determines that any one of the following conditions are present:

- The use for private gain or advantage of county time, facilities, equipment or supplies; or badge, uniform, prestige or influence of county office, position or employment.
- Receipt or acceptance of any money or other things of value from anyone other than the county for the performance of an act which the employee or public official would be required or expected to perform in the regular course or hours of county employment or as part of their official county duties.
- Employment in or by a business which is subject to direct or indirect control, inspection, review, audit or enforcement by the employee or public official.

- The performance of an act in other than their official county capacity which may later be subject directly or indirectly to the control, inspection, review, audit or enforcement by the employee or public.

If the appropriate personnel determine that a conflict of interest exists, the job duty shall be assigned to another person who does not have a conflict of interest. If it is not possible to assign the job duty to another employee or public official, all interested persons shall be notified of the conflict of interest and the original employee may proceed with the job duty or assignment.

Special Considerations – Committee Members

Situations can arise where a member of a Commission, a Board, or a committee abstains from voting because of a conflict of interest, but his or her abstention becomes a vote either for or against the matter because a majority is required to pass or reject that matter. This can happen where four-fifths vote is needed to pass an issue, or the vote has to be a clear majority, and a split vote does not pass or reject. When this happens, the County Attorney must be consulted and the final vote should carry public notice explaining what took place, and how it was resolved.

Disclosure of Financial Interests – Elected Officials

Not later than ninety (90) days after the date of approval of this code, each public official of the County shall file as a public record, in the Personnel Department of the County, a statement containing the following:

- A list naming all business enterprises known by the public official to be licensed by or to be doing business with the County which the public official or any member of the public official's immediate family is connected as an employee, officer, owner, investor, creditor of, director, trustee, partner, advisor, or consultant.
- A list of the public officials and members of the public officials' immediate family's interests in real property located in the County or which may be competing with the interests of the County located elsewhere, other than property occupied as a personal residence.

Each person who enters upon duty after the date of this code into an office or position as to which a statement is required by this code shall file such a statement on forms to be provided by the County not less than thirty (30) days after the date of his/her entrance on duty.

Each person who made an initial filing shall file a new statement by January 30 of each year thereafter giving the information called for above as of the time of the new statement. If a change in financial interest or property ownership occurs between filings, a new filing shall be made within thirty (30) days of the change.

The interest of any member of the immediate family shall be considered to be an interest of a person required to file a statement by or pursuant to this ordinance.

This policy shall not be construed to require the filing of any information relating to any person's connection with or interest in any professional society or any charitable, religious, social,

fraternal, educational, recreational, public service, civil, or political organization, or any similar organization not conducted as a business enterprise and which is not engaged in the ownership or conduct of a business enterprise.

However, if any such organization seeking any action or benefit comes before a County Commission or the Board, then membership in the organization shall be a potential conflict of interest and must be reported as such to the Personnel Department by the public official in an amended disclosure statement. The other stipulations of this code then apply.

The Personnel Department shall inform each person who is required to file of the time and place for filing. The Personnel Department shall inform the Board whenever a person who is required to file a statement fails to do so.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Commercial Driver's License (CDL)

SECTION:	Code of Conduct Policies Section E-9	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

To comply with state and federal regulations and protect County employees and resources, certain employees of Houston County are expected to retain a valid CDL, including necessary endorsements, as required to perform work outlined in their job description.

Policy

Employees who drive without a valid CDL shall be considered as acting outside the scope of their employment and are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with County Personnel Rules & Regulations and the applicable Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Notification:

The County shall inform each employee of the license requirement for their job as well as the reporting requirements should that license be suspended, revoked, or modified.

Upon hire, the employee shall provide the CDL for the County to copy for its records.

Each employee required to have a CDL shall notify the County upon renewal or revocation of the license within seven (7) days of that action. If an off-duty or out-of-state action causes revocation or suspension, the employee shall notify their immediate supervisor or manager within seven (7) days of the occurrence. The supervisor or manager, or the department head, shall notify the Personnel Department

An employee who is called in to work due to emergency conditions shall notify the County if they are not fit and able to operate the motor vehicle due to impairment.

Training & Education:

The County shall notify each employee required to maintain a CDL of the current requirements to maintain such a license in orientation, and again on a periodic basis. The education should include both basic requirements and recent policy or procedure revisions.

Pre-Hearing Loss of Driving Privilege / Alternative Assignment:

If an employee who is required to maintain a CDL loses that license temporarily, the employee may be allowed to report to work only when the department head determines that work which does not require a CDL is available from the time the license is lost until the hearing is decided. The employee may use Vacation Leave, accrued compensatory time, or time off without pay for the hours that the employee is unable to work because of license suspension. This does not include working or using compensated time during any disciplinary suspension without pay. Medical or other leave time may be appropriate in some situations, including inpatient chemical dependency treatment. The employee shall address these matters with their department head and Personnel Department

The County may be able to continue the employment of the individual who has lost the CDL in situations where driving is a minor or occasional part of the job and the employee is cooperative and willing to revise schedules or other conditions to modify their assignment while the license is not valid.

Post-Conviction:

Once the employee's case has been decided by the DMV or the Courts, the employee may request alternate duties or schedules, a modified work assignment, or a leave of absence to accommodate the time the license is invalid, not to exceed 120 days. If the alternate work assignment is in a different classification and pay grade, the employee's wages shall be adjusted to reflect that classification for the duration of the assignment. An employee assigned to a temporary classification or alternative assignment, or on a leave of absence, is expected to return to their previous classification upon having their CDL restored.

If an employee loses the CDL for a period of time in excess of one year, the employee shall be discharged for just cause.

Multiple Offenses:

If an employee who is required to maintain a CDL for work loses their CDL for more than 30 days, more than once within a three (3) year period, the employee shall be discharged for just cause.

Connection with Drug & Alcohol Policy:

An employee who is required to have a CDL is also subject to the County Drug & Alcohol Testing Policy which addresses pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, random, and follow-up testing.

Purchase of Licenses:

The County will not permit the use of County funds to purchase driver's licenses for County employees. This includes reimbursement for driver's licenses purchased by County employees.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Emergency Closure of County Government Offices and Adverse Weather Conditions

SECTION:	Workplace Safety & Health Policies Section F-1	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Policy

County offices shall be open for business on all business days except legal holidays, holidays established by the County Board of Commissioners, and specific dangerous situations. County facilities will generally remain open during adverse weather. Except in the most severe emergencies, County offices will remain open and operating with full service if at all possible. Should the weather or other conditions be sufficiently severe or other dangerous situations occur, such that the interests of the public and/or employees are best served by closing County offices, the Chairperson of the board, County Administrator, Sheriff, Engineer, and Emergency Management Coordinator make such decision.

Procedure

Decisions to cancel departmental programs, events, or meetings including members of the public or those held outside of regular business hours will be made by the department head. The department head is required to promptly notify the County Administrator regarding any cancellations.

During adverse weather conditions, based on individual circumstances and subject to the employee reaching an agreement with the department head as to the severity of the inclement weather, employees should evaluate the weather and road conditions in deciding to report to work or requesting to leave early. Employees are required to follow supervisor notification procedures as defined by their department when requesting authorization for absence due to adverse weather conditions.

Employees not reporting to work due to a weather event will generally be allowed to use accrued vacation time or compensatory time. Alternatively, with supervisor approval, an employee may be permitted to modify their typical work schedule or make other reasonable schedule adjustments such as flexing their schedule during that workweek. The department head will ensure there is sufficient staff on duty for the department to function.

Sheriff's Office licensed peace officers, 911 dispatchers, correctional officers, and Highway Department employees whose jobs require a CDL are generally required to report to work regardless of conditions. There may be instances where additional critical positions may also be required to report to work regardless of conditions, as determined by the department head.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Cell Phone and Wireless Communications

SECTION:	Workplace Safety & Health Policies Section F-2	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

This policy is intended to define acceptable and unacceptable uses of wireless communications devices, including but not limited to cellular telephones and tablets, while engaged in activities or duties related to County employment. Its application is to ensure wireless communications device usage is consistent with the best interests of the County without unnecessary restriction of employees in the conduct of their duties. This policy will be implemented to prevent the improper use or abuse of wireless communications devices and to ensure that County employees exercise the highest standards of propriety in their use.

Policy

Wireless communications devices are intended for the use of County employees in the conduct of their work for the County. The County expects all employees who are required to drive as part of their job to drive safely and legally while on County business, including following the laws governing use of wireless communications devices while operating a motor vehicle.

Supervisors are responsible for the wireless communications devices assigned to their employees and will exercise discretion in their assigned use.

To ensure that wireless communications devices are used in a manner that supports and enhances effective County service and workplace performance, it is critical that the use of such devices:

- In no way limits the conduct of work of the employee or other employees.
- Does not result in any personal profit gained or outside employment served.
- It is in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
- It is in accordance with County policies and conduct expectations.

Procedure

All employees are expected to follow applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations regarding the use of wireless communications devices at all times. Employees whose job

responsibilities include regular or occasional driving and who use a wireless communications device for business use, are expected to refrain from using their wireless communications device while driving a motor vehicle, except in a legally permitted manner that will not detract from ability to safely operate the motor vehicle. Safety must come before all other concerns. Wireless communications devices shall not be used while operating machinery or heavy equipment.

- In accordance with Minnesota law, employees are required to use hands-free operations or lawfully stop in an area not designed or used for vehicular traffic and not obstructing traffic or pull off into a parking lot and safely park the vehicle, before placing or accepting a call. Employees are encouraged to refrain from discussion of complicated or emotional matters and to keep their eyes on the road while driving at all times. Special care should be taken in situations where there is traffic or inclement weather, or the employee is driving in an unfamiliar area.
- Reading text messages, composing or sending text messages while holding the device, making or receiving phone calls while holding the device, emailing, video calling, scrolling/typing, accessing a webpage, or using non-navigation applications while driving is strictly prohibited.
- In accordance with state law, there is an exception to hands free cellular phone operations to obtain emergency assistance to report a traffic accident, medical emergency or serious traffic hazard or prevent a crime from being committed. There is also a state law exception for authorized emergency vehicles while in the performance of official duties.
- Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of a wireless communications device will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

Supervisors may prohibit employees from carrying wireless communications devices during working hours, while performing specific work duties, or when entering certain work areas.

Use of public resources by County employees for personal gain and/or private use including, but not limited to, outside employment or political campaign purposes, is prohibited and subject to disciplinary action which may include termination and/or criminal prosecution, depending on the circumstances.

Incidental and occasional personal use may be permitted when this type of use is authorized by the department head. Personal calls must not interfere with working operations and are to be completed as quickly as possible. Participating in excessive or disruptive personal calls may be addressed as a performance issue.

Employees should be aware that wireless communications device data and records about County business are subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, whether the employee is using a County provided device or participating in a program that permits both County and personal use of the same device (such as an employee-owned device with County reimbursement plan). For example, in the event of a data request potentially involving wireless

device data, the County would be under the obligation to determine what information is public data and what information is private data and would need access to the employee's wireless communications device records, and potentially the device itself, in order to gather and provide the data that is requested.

The County reserves the right to inspect any wireless communications device used as part of County employment at any time in order to verify or maintain compliance with County policies, respond to data requests, or to monitor employee performance.

Employees who abuse or misuse wireless communications devices may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

Communicable Disease Prevention Management

SECTION:	Workplace Safety & Health Policies Section F-3	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

Houston County is committed to providing a safe and healthy work and community environment. In pursuit of this goal, the following Communicable Disease Prevention and Management Policy is provided to eliminate or minimize occupational exposure to communicable diseases while outlining consistent procedures for communicable disease management in the workplace.

Communicable diseases include but are not limited to tuberculosis; chicken pox; shingles; infectious mononucleosis; MRSA; severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) or other coronaviruses; measles; pertussis (whooping cough); meningitis; diphtheria, pandemic influenza and other diseases as reportable to the Minnesota Department of Health. The County may choose to broaden this definition within its best interest based on available data and/or in accordance with information received through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or other qualified health authorities. Each case of communicable disease is different and will, therefore, be treated according to the individual facts and circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

The scope of this policy covers communicable diseases that pose a direct threat, or a significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of the individual or others that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation. The application of this policy is not strictly limited to this definition however and will be assessed based on the specific facts and circumstances of the particular scenario at hand and in accordance with information received through the CDC or other qualified health authorities.

Where applicable, Houston County's policies addressing applicable employee leaves of absence should be consulted, as well as federal, state, and local health authorities.

Responsibilities

Employees Responsibilities:

1. In all cases of health-related absence due to a communicable disease that poses a direct threat or its potential, or that meets criteria of comparable gravity as defined or

communicated by a qualified health authority such as the CDC, the affected employee must notify the Personnel Department immediately of such condition. Notice should be provided via email, phone, fax or other non-in-person methods.

2. Anyone who discovers evidence of, or obtains knowledge of, a communicable disease in the workplace that could pose a direct threat or its potential, or that meets criteria of comparable gravity as defined or communicated by a qualified health authority such as the CDC, should report such findings to the Personnel Department
3. Help prevent the spread of communicable disease in the workplace by practicing general hygiene and precautionary measures including staying home when sick and proper handwashing.

Department Management Responsibilities:

1. Management should be sensitive to employees with these condition(s) and ensure that they are treated appropriately in accordance with County policies, official health and safety guidance, and in accordance with applicable law. Precautions should be taken to ensure that an employee's condition does not present a health and/or safety threat to other employees, clients, or the public.
2. Treat employees' health condition and information as personal and private. Health data is private data and may not be released to the public or to fellow employees without a strict observance of data privacy rights of the employee.
3. Contact the Personnel Department for assistance with managing a situation that may fall within the scope of this policy to ensure that each situation is handled appropriately and in accordance with current legal guidance.
4. Be sensitive and responsive to employees' concerns regarding communicable disease and workplace exposure, offering employee education available through federal, state, and local health authorities.

Personnel Department Responsibilities:

1. As appropriate to the situation and in collaboration with federal, state, or local health authorities, provide education as available to management and employees on
2. communicable diseases that are impacting the workplace. May assist in coordinating training or organizational response initiatives.
3. Provide referral to and/or consult with federal, state, and local health authorities as needed.
4. Provide or facilitate consultation to assist employees in managing leaves and other benefits.

5. As appropriate to the situation, consult with County Facility / Maintenance Department to appropriately disinfect workspaces.

Workplace Health and Safety

The United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)'s General Duty Clause, 29 U.S.C. § 654 requires employers to provide a workplace free from recognized hazards. If the County receives notice that an employee has a communicable disease that could endanger the health of others in the workplace, or poses a direct threat to the individual or to others, it shall make decisions regarding a reasonable accommodation, if any, on a case-by-case basis, based on the health and physical conditions of the employee, and the health and safety of other persons with whom the employee will interact.

Houston County decisions involving persons who have communicable diseases shall be based on current and informed medical judgments concerning the disease, the risks of transmitting the illness to others, the symptoms and special circumstances of each individual who has a communicable disease, and a careful weighing of the identified risks and the available alternatives for responding to an employee with a communicable disease. Federal, state, and/or local health authorities may be consulted as needed.

An employee may be excluded from the workplace when:

- a) Public health officials isolate or quarantine an employee, or
- b) Public health officials or a qualified healthcare provider advise that the employee should or must be absent from work to prevent disease transmission to others, or
- c) Additional isolation or quarantine recommendations or requirements become available from federal, state, or local health authorities.

In the instance of isolation, quarantine, or recommended period of absence, it is the employee's responsibility to provide Houston County with acceptable confirmation from a public health or other medical official of any isolation or quarantine period, or recommended or mandated period of absence, via email, phone, fax or other non-in-person methods. Standard reporting, documentation, or verification requirements may be modified by the County in accordance with specific circumstances and current guidance by federal, state, or local health authorities.

If any of the above conditions a), b), or c) occur, the employee may be advised not to report to work for a specified period of time. In such cases, Houston County may require an employee to take available paid leave or unpaid leave until the specified period of time ends and until the employee meets criteria to safely return to work based on the guidance of a qualified medical authority appropriate to the situation.

An employee may return to work when criteria appropriate to the situation are met. This will generally mean that an employee may return to work:

- Following provision of a release to return to work by a qualified medical professional, or in certain situations based on meeting criteria to safely return as defined by a qualified medical authority, as appropriate to the situation; and
- Upon verification of required documentation and authorization by the Human Resources Officer and
- When there is no current risk of transmission, or direct threat of the communicable disease to others; and
- Provided the employee is able to continue to perform the job position's essential functions with or without reasonable accommodation.

Houston County reserves the right to exclude a person with a communicable disease from the workplace facilities, programs, and functions if a reasonable determination is made that such restriction is necessary for the welfare of the person who has the communicable disease and/or the welfare of others within the workplace or members of the public. Such actions will be taken based upon recommendations and/or requirements from federal, state, or local health authorities or guidance from a qualified healthcare provider.

Unless otherwise specified, usual attendance and leave policies and procedures, including authorized telework/remote work arrangements, as well as applicable provisions of collective bargaining agreements will remain in place. Individuals who believe they may face particular challenges reporting to work during a communicable disease outbreak should take steps to develop any necessary contingency plans in coordination with their supervisor and the Personnel Department.

Data relating to matters of employee health and medical concerns will be handled in accordance with the law.

Houston County prohibits illegal discrimination, harassment and retaliation against employees who have a communicable disease.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

DOT Drug and Alcohol Testing for Commercial Drivers

SECTION:	Workplace Safety & Health Policies Section F-4	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

Purpose

Houston County has a vital interest in maintaining safe, healthful, and efficient working conditions for employees, as well as safe roadways for all community members and travelers. The County recognizes that individuals who are impaired because of drugs and/or alcohol may jeopardize the safety and health of other workers, as well as themselves, and other community members and travelers. Alcohol and drug abuse can cause unsatisfactory job performance, increased tardiness and absenteeism, increased accidents and workers' compensation claims, among other workplace concerns. The use, possession, manufacture, sale, transportation, or other distribution of controlled substances or controlled substance paraphernalia; and the unauthorized use, possession, transportation, sale, or other distribution of alcohol are contrary to this policy.

Policy

In response to regulations issued by United States Department of Transportation (DOT), the County has established this Policy on Alcohol and Controlled Substances applicable to employees who hold a commercial driver's license (CDL) or commercial learner's permit (CLP) to perform their duties.

Given the significant dangers of alcohol and controlled substance use, each applicant and driver must abide by this policy as a term and condition of hiring and continued employment. Moreover, the County is required by federal law to implement and maintain a policy which addresses certain requirements related to drug and alcohol use and associated testing for its CDL drivers.

Procedure

To ensure this policy is clearly communicated to all drivers and applicants, and in order to comply with applicable federal law, drivers and applicants are required to review this policy, sign the "Acknowledgment of DOT Drug and Alcohol Policy" form, and return this documentation to the Personnel Department

Because changes in applicable law and the County's practices and procedures may occur from time to time, this policy may change in the future, and nothing in this policy is intended to be a contract, promise, or guarantee the County will follow any particular course of action, disciplinary, rehabilitative, or otherwise, except as required by law. This policy does not in any way affect or change the status of any at-will employee.

Any revisions to federal or state law will take precedent over this policy to the extent the policy has not incorporated those revisions.

Person's Subject to Testing and Types of Tests:

All employees are subject to testing whose job duties include performing "safety-sensitive duties" on behalf of the County in commercial motor vehicles that:

1. Have a gross combination weight rating or gross combination weight of 26,001 pounds or more, whichever is greater, inclusive of a towed unit(s) with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 pounds, whichever is greater; or
2. Have a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 26,001 or more pounds whichever is greater; or
3. Are designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver; or
4. Are of any size and are used in the transportation of materials found to be hazardous for the purposes of the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act (49 U.S.C. § 5103(b)) and which require the motor vehicle to be placarded under the Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR Part 172, Subpart F).

The following functions are considered safety-sensitive:

- All time waiting to be dispatched to drive a commercial motor vehicle
- All time inspecting, servicing, or conditioning a commercial motor vehicle
- All time driving at the controls of the commercial motor vehicle
- All other time in or upon a commercial motor vehicle (except time spent resting in a sleeper berth)
- All time loading or unloading a commercial motor vehicle, attending the same, giving or receiving receipts for shipments being loaded or unloaded, or remaining in readiness to operate the vehicle
- All time repairing, obtaining assistance, or attending to a disabled commercial motor vehicle.

The County may test any applicant to whom a conditional offer of employment has been made and any driver for controlled substance and alcohol under any of the following circumstances:

Pre-Employment Testing:

All applicants, including current employees seeking a transfer, promotion, or demotion, applying for a position where duties include performing safety-sensitive duties described above, will be required to take a drug test prior to the first time a driver performs a safety-sensitive function for the County, or in the new position. A driver may not perform safety-sensitive functions unless the driver has received a controlled substance test result from the Medical Review Officer (“MRO”) indicating a verified negative test result. In addition to pre-employment-controlled substance testing, applicants will be required to authorize in writing former employers to release alcohol test results of .04 or greater, positive controlled substance test results, refusals to test, other violations of drug and alcohol testing regulations, and completion of return to duty requirements within the preceding three (3) years.

The County will contact the candidate’s DOT regulated previous and current employers within the last three (3) years for drug and alcohol test results as referenced above and review the testing history if feasible before the employee first performs safety-sensitive functions for the County. Effective June 1, 2025, the County will also conduct a full query of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s (FMCSA) Clearinghouse for all candidates. In addition, at least once every 365-day period, the County will conduct a limited query of the Clearinghouse for each currently employed CDL driver.

If the limited query reveals that the Clearinghouse has information about resolved or unresolved drug and alcohol program violations by a candidate or current employee, the candidate or employee will be asked to provide electronic consent to a full query of the Clearinghouse. In the event a full query of the Clearinghouse reveals unresolved violation information for a candidate or current employee, the driver will not be permitted to perform safety-sensitive functions, including the operation of a commercial motor vehicle and, in the case of a candidate, may have their conditional offer of employment rescinded or, in the case of a current employee, may be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

Post-Accident Testing:

As soon as is practicable following an accident involving a commercial motor vehicle operating on a public road, the County will test each surviving driver for controlled substances and alcohol when the following occurs:

- The accident involves a fatality; or
- The driver receives a citation for a moving traffic violation from the accident and an injury is treated away from the accident scene; or
- The driver receives a citation for a moving traffic violation from the accident and a vehicle is required to be towed from the accident scene.

The following chart summarizes when DOT post-accident testing needs to be conducted:

Type of accident involved	Citation issued to the DOT covered CDL driver?	Test must be performed by the County
Human fatality	YES	YES
	NO	YES
Bodily injury with immediate medical treatment away from the scene	YES	YES
	NO	NO
Disabling damage to any motor vehicle requiring tow away	YES	YES
	NO	NO

A driver subject to post-accident testing must remain readily available or the driver will be deemed to have refused to submit to testing. This requirement to remain ready for testing does not preclude a driver from leaving the scene of an accident for the period necessary to obtain assistance in responding to the accident or to obtain necessary medical care.

Post-Accident Controlled Substance Testing:

Drivers are required to submit a urine sample for post-accident controlled substance testing as soon as possible. If the driver is not tested within thirty-two (32) hours after the accident, the County will cease its attempts to test the driver and prepare and maintain on file a record stating why the test was not promptly administered.

Post-Accident Alcohol Testing:

Drivers are required to submit to post-accident alcohol testing as soon as possible. After an accident, consuming alcohol is prohibited until the driver is tested. If the driver is not tested within two (2) hours after the accident, the County will prepare and maintain on file a record stating why the test was not administered within that time. If eight (8) hours have elapsed since the accident and the driver has not submitted to an alcohol test, the County will cease its attempts to test the driver and prepare and maintain on file a record stating why the test was not administered.

The County may accept the results of a blood or breath test in place of an alcohol test and urine test for the use of controlled substances if:

- The tests are conducted by federal, state, or local officials having independent authority for the test; and
- The tests conform to applicable federal, state, or local testing requirements; and
- The test results can be obtained by the County.

Whenever such a test is conducted by a law enforcement officer, the driver must contact the County and immediately report the existence of the test, providing the name, badge number, and telephone number of the law enforcement officer who conducted the test.

Random Testing:

Every driver will be subject to unannounced alcohol and controlled substance testing on a random selection basis. Drivers will be selected for testing by use of a scientifically valid method under which each driver has an equal chance of being selected each time selections are made. These random tests will be conducted throughout the calendar year. Each driver who is notified of selection for random testing must cease performing safety-sensitive functions and report to the designated test site immediately. It is mathematically possible that a driver may be selected and tested more than once, and others not at all, based on following a valid random selection method and the fact that all drivers are included in the selection pool for each draw. If a driver is selected for a random test while the driver is absent, on leave or away from work, that driver may be required to undergo the test upon return to work.

Federal law requires the County to test at a rate of at least fifty percent (50%) of its average number of drivers for controlled substance each year, and to test at a rate of at least ten percent (10%) of its average number of drivers for alcohol each year. These minimum testing rates are subject to change by the DOT.

Reasonable Suspicion Testing:

When a supervisor has reasonable suspicion to believe a driver has engaged in conduct prohibited by federal law or this policy, the County will require the driver to submit to an alcohol and/or controlled substance test.

The County's determination that reasonable suspicion exists to require the driver to undergo an alcohol test will be based on "specific, contemporaneous, articulable observations concerning the appearance, behavior, speech, or body odors of the driver." In the case of controlled substances, the observations may include indications of the chronic and withdrawal effects of a controlled substance.

The required observations for reasonable suspicion testing will be made by a trained supervisor or other person designated by the County who has received appropriate training in identification of actions, appearance and conduct of a driver which are indicative of the use of alcohol or controlled substance. These observations leading to an alcohol or controlled substance test, will be reflected in writing and signed by the supervisor or other trained individual who made the observations. The record will be retained by the County. The person who makes the determination that reasonable suspicion exists to conduct testing, will not be the person conducting the testing, which shall instead be conducted by another qualified person.

Alcohol testing is authorized only if the observations are made during, just before, or just after the driver has ceased performing safety-sensitive functions. If a reasonable suspicion alcohol test is not administered within two (2) hours following the determination of reasonable suspicion, the County will prepare and maintain on file a record stating the reasons the alcohol test was not promptly administered. If a reasonable suspicion alcohol test is not administered within eight (8) hours following the determination of reasonable suspicion, the County will

prepare and maintain on file a record stating the reasons the alcohol test was not administered and will cease attempts to conduct the alcohol test.

Notwithstanding the absence of a reasonable suspicion test, no driver may report for duty or remain on duty requiring the performance of safety-sensitive functions while the driver is under the influence of, or impaired by, alcohol, as shown by the behavioral, appearance, speech, and performance indicators of alcohol use, nor will the County permit the driver to perform or continue to perform safety-sensitive functions until (1) an alcohol test is administered and the driver's alcohol concentration is less than .02; or (2) twenty-four (24) hours have elapsed following the determination of reasonable suspicion.

Return-to-Duty Testing:

The County reserves the right to impose discipline against drivers who violate applicable FMCSA or DOT rules or this policy, subject to applicable personnel policy and collective bargaining agreements. Except as otherwise required by law, the County is not obligated to reinstate or requalify such drivers for a first positive test result.

Should the County consider reinstatement of a DOT covered driver, the driver must undergo a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) evaluation and participate in any prescribed education/treatment, and successfully complete return-to-duty alcohol test with a result indicating an alcohol concentration of less than 0.02 and/or or a controlled substance test with a verified negative result, before the driver returns to duty requiring the performance of a safety-sensitive function. The SAP determines if the driver has completed the education/treatment as prescribed.

The employee is responsible for paying for all costs associated with the return-to-duty test. The controlled substance test will be conducted under direct observation.

Follow-Up Testing:

The County reserves the right to impose discipline against drivers who violate applicable FMCSA or DOT rules or this policy, subject to applicable personnel policies and collective bargaining agreements. Except as otherwise required by law, the County is not obligated to reinstate or requalify such drivers.

Should the County reinstate a driver following a determination by a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) that the driver is in need of assistance in resolving problems associated with alcohol use and/or use of controlled substance, the County will ensure that the driver is subject to unannounced follow-up alcohol and/or controlled substance testing. The number and frequency of such follow-up testing will be directed by the SAP and will consist of at least six (6) tests in the first twelve (12) months following the driver's return to duty. Follow-up testing will not exceed sixty (60) months from the date of the driver's return to duty. The SAP may terminate the requirement for follow-up testing at any time after the first six tests have been administered, if the SAP determines such test is no longer necessary. The employee is responsible for paying for all costs associated with follow-up tests.

Follow-up alcohol testing will be conducted only when the driver is performing safety-sensitive functions, or immediately prior to or after performing safety-sensitive functions.

Cost of Required Testing:

The County will pay for the cost of pre-employment, post-accident, random, and reasonable suspicion controlled substance and alcohol testing requested or required of all job applicants and employees. The driver must pay for the cost of all requested confirmatory re-tests, return-to-duty, and follow-up testing.

Required Prior Controlled Substance and Alcohol Checks for Applicants:

The County will conduct drug and alcohol checks of applicants for employment to drive a commercial motor vehicle. Applicants must execute consent forms authorizing the County to obtain the required information from current and prior employers and from the FMCSA Clearinghouse. The County will obtain, pursuant to the applicant's written consent, information on the applicant's alcohol tests with a concentration result of 0.04 or greater, positive controlled substance test results, and refusals to be tested within the preceding three (3) years which are maintained by the applicant's previous employers.

The County will obtain all information concerning the applicant which is maintained by the applicant's previous employers within the preceding three (3) years pursuant to DOT and FMCSA controlled substance and alcohol testing regulations, as well as information maintained in the FMCSA's Clearinghouse pursuant to the applicant's electronic consent provided within the Clearinghouse.

In addition, the County will require the applicant to report whether they have tested positive or refused to test, on any pre-employment drug or alcohol test administered by an employer to which they applied, but where they did not obtain, safety-sensitive transportation work covered by DOT agency drug and alcohol testing rules during the past three years. The County will review such records, if feasible, prior to the first time a driver performs safety-sensitive functions.

Prohibited Conduct:

The following conduct is explicitly prohibited by applicable DOT and FMCSA regulations and therefore constitutes violation of County policy.

Driver Under the Influence of Alcohol When Reporting for Duty or While On-Duty:

No driver may report for duty or remain on duty requiring the performance of safety-sensitive functions while having an alcohol concentration of 0.04 or greater. Drivers reporting for duty or remaining on duty to perform safety-sensitive functions while having an alcohol concentration of 0.02, but less than 0.04, will be removed from duty for 24 hours, escorted home and placed on vacation leave, [OR paid time off (PTO) leave,] or compensatory time leave, or other appropriate leave of absence for hours missed from work.

On-Duty Use of Alcohol:

No driver performing safety-sensitive functions may use alcohol while on duty.

Pre-Duty Use of Alcohol:

No driver may perform safety-sensitive functions within four (4) hours after using alcohol. If an employee has had alcohol within four (4) hours, the driver is required to promptly notify their supervisors, and such notification must be provided before performing any safety-sensitive functions.

Alcohol Use Following an Accident:

No driver required to take a post-accident alcohol test may use alcohol for eight (8) hours following the accident, or until the driver undergoes a post-accident alcohol test, whichever occurs first.

Refusal to Submit to a Required Alcohol or Controlled Substance Test:

No applicant or driver may refuse to submit to pre-employment, post-accident, random, reasonable suspicion, or follow-up alcohol or controlled substance testing.

In the event an applicant or driver does in fact refuse to submit to required alcohol or controlled substance testing, no test will be conducted. Refusal by a driver to submit to controlled substance or alcohol testing will be considered a positive test result, will cause disqualification from performing safety-sensitive functions, and may appear on the driver's permanent record.

Drivers who refuse to submit to testing will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. In accordance with the FMCSA Clearinghouse reporting requirements, beginning January 6, 2020, the County will report a driver's refusal to submit to a DOT test for drug or alcohol use to the Clearinghouse within three (3) business days. If an applicant refuses to submit to pre-employment controlled substance testing, any applicable conditional offer will be withdrawn.

For purposes of this section, a driver is considered to have refused to submit to an alcohol or controlled substance test when the driver:

- Fails to provide adequate breath for alcohol testing without a valid medical explanation after the driver has received notice of the requirement for breath testing.
- Fails to provide adequate urine for controlled substance testing without a genuine inability to provide a specimen (as determined by a medical evaluation), after the driver has received notice of the requirement for urine testing.
- Fails to report for testing within a reasonable period of time, as determined by the County.
- Fails to remain at a testing site until testing is complete.
- In the case of directly observed or monitored collection, fails to permit observation or monitoring.

- Fails or declines to take a second test as required by the County and/or collector.
- Fails to undergo a medical examination as directed by the County pursuant to federal law.
- Refuses to complete and sign the alcohol testing form, to provide a breath or saliva sample, to provide an adequate amount of breath, or otherwise fails to cooperate in any way that prevents the completion of the testing process.
- Engages in conduct that clearly obstructs the test process.

Altering or Attempting to Alter a Urine Sample or Breath Test:

A driver altering or attempting to alter a urine sample or controlled substance test, or substituting or attempting to substitute a urine sample, will be subject to providing a specimen under direct observation. Both specimens will be subject to laboratory testing. In such case, the employee may be subject to immediate termination of employment and any job offer made to an applicant will be immediately withdrawn.

Controlled Substance Use:

No driver may report for duty or remain on duty requiring the performance of safety-sensitive functions when the driver uses any controlled substance, except when the use is pursuant to the instructions of a licensed medical practitioner who has advised the driver in writing the substance does not adversely affect the driver's ability to safely operate a commercial motor vehicle. Drivers must forward this information regarding therapeutic controlled substance use to the MRO immediately after receiving any such advice. The MRO may, but does not have to, certify the driver.

Cannabis / Marijuana / THC:

All employees covered by this policy are regulated by federal law, and federal law preempts state laws related to cannabis. State initiatives have no bearing on the Department of Transportation's regulated drug testing program. The DOT's Drug and Alcohol Testing Regulation, 49 CFR Part 40, does not authorize the use of Schedule I drugs, including cannabis, for any reason.

Having a medical marijuana card and/or a cannabis prescription from a physician does not allow any employee to use or possess that drug in the County's workplace. The federal government classifies cannabis as an illegal drug. *There is no acceptable concentration of marijuana metabolites in the urine or blood of an employee who performs safety-sensitive duties for the County.* Employees and applicants are still subject to being tested under the County's DOT Drug and Alcohol Policies, as well as subject to being disciplined up to and including termination of employment, suspended, and/or having an offer of employment withdrawn after testing positive for cannabis.

DOT regulated CDL holders should be aware:

- There is no currently accepted medical use of marijuana for safety-sensitive DOT regulated drivers. Therefore, Medical Review Officers (MROs) will not verify a drug test

as negative based on information that a physician recommended the employee use medical marijuana when states have passed medical marijuana initiatives.

- Any product, including “cannabidiol” or CBD products, with a concentration of more than 0.3% THC remains classified as marijuana, a Schedule I drug under the Controlled Substances Act.
- The labeling of CBD products may be misleading because the products could contain higher levels of THC than what the product label states. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not currently certify levels of THC in CBD products, so federal oversight is not in place to ensure the labels are accurate.
- CBD use is not an acceptable explanation for a laboratory-confirmed marijuana positive test result. Therefore, Medical Review Officers will verify a drug test indicating marijuana as positive, even if an employee reports they only used a CBD product.
- It remains unacceptable for any CDL holder subject to the Department of Transportation’s drug testing regulations to use cannabis / marijuana / THC.

Controlled Substance Testing:

No driver may report for duty, remain on-duty, or perform a safety-sensitive function if the driver tests positive for controlled substance.

Collection and Testing Procedures:

Drivers are required to report immediately upon notification to the collection site. For random tests conducted off site, employees may use a county vehicle to drive to the collection site. Drivers will be expected to provide a photo ID card for identification to the collection staff. All drivers will be expected to cooperate with collection site personnel requests to remove any unnecessary outer garments such as coats, sweaters or jackets and will be required to empty their pockets. Collection personnel will complete a Federal Custody and Control Form (CCF), which drivers providing a sample will sign.

Alcohol Testing:

Employees will be tested for alcohol just before, during, or immediately following performance of a safety-sensitive function. Screening tests for alcohol concentration will be performed utilizing a non-evidential screening device included by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration on its conforming products list (e.g., a saliva screening device) or an evidential breath testing device (“EBT”) operated by a trained breath alcohol technician (BAT) at a collection site. If a driver’s first attempt is positive (with an alcohol concentration of .02 or greater), the driver will be asked to wait at least 15 minutes and then be tested again. The driver may not eat, drink or place anything in their mouth (e.g., cigarette, chewing gum) during this time. Any results less than 0.02 alcohol concentration is considered a negative test result.

If the driver attempts and fails to provide an adequate amount of breath, the driver will be referred to a physician to determine if the driver’s inability to provide a specimen is genuine or constitutes a refusal to test. Alcohol test results are reported directly to the County by the collection site staff.

Controlled Substance Testing:

The County will use a "split urine specimen" collection procedure for controlled substance testing. Collection of urine specimens for controlled substance testing will be conducted by an approved collector and will be conducted in a setting and manner to ensure the driver's privacy.

At the collection site, the driver will be given a sealed container and must provide at least 45 ml of urine for testing. Once the sample is provided the collection personnel will check the temperature and color and look for signs of contamination. The urine is then split into two separate specimen containers (A, or "primary;" and B, or "split") with identifying labels and security seals affixed to both. The collection facility will be responsible for maintaining a proper chain of custody for delivery of the sample to a DHHS-certified laboratory for analysis. The laboratory will retain a sufficient portion of any positive sample for testing and store that portion in a scientifically acceptable manner for a minimum 365-day period.

If an employee fails to provide a sufficient amount of urine to permit a controlled substance test (45 milliliters of urine), the collector will discard the insufficient specimen, unless there is evidence of tampering with that specimen. The collector will urge the driver to drink up to 40 ounces of fluid, distributed reasonably over a period of up to three hours, or until the driver has provided a sufficient urine specimen, whichever occurs first.

If the driver has not provided a sufficient specimen within three hours of the first unsuccessful attempt, the collector will cease efforts to attempt to obtain a specimen. The driver must then obtain, within five calendar days, an evaluation from a licensed physician, acceptable to the MRO, who has expertise in the medical issues raised by the employee's failure to provide a sufficient specimen. If the licensed physician concludes the driver has a medical condition, or with a high degree of probability could have a medical condition, which precluded the driver from providing a sufficient amount of urine, the County will consider the test to have been canceled. If a licensed physician does not make such a determination, the County will consider the driver to have engaged in a refusal to test and will take appropriate disciplinary action under this policy.

The primary specimen is used for the first test. If the test is negative, it is reported to the MRO who then reports the result, following a review of the CCF Form for compliance, to the County. If the initial result is positive or non-negative, a "confirmatory retest" will be conducted on the primary specimen. If the confirmatory re-test is also positive or non-negative, the result will be sent to the MRO. The MRO will contact the driver to verify the positive or non-negative result. If the MRO is unable to reach the driver directly, the MRO must contact the County who will direct the driver to contact the MRO.

Review of Test Results:

The MRO is a licensed physician with knowledge and clinical experience in substance abuse disorders and is responsible for receiving and reviewing laboratory results of the controlled substances test as well as evaluating medical explanations for certain drug test results. Prior to making a final decision to verify a positive or non-negative test result, the MRO will give the driver or the job applicant an opportunity to discuss the test result, typically through a phone call. The MRO, or a staff person under the MRO's supervision, will contact the individual directly, on a confidential basis, to determine whether the individual wishes to discuss the test result. If the employee or job applicant wishes to discuss the test result:

- The individual may be required to speak and/or meet with the MRO, who will review the individual's medical history, including any medical records provided.
- The individual will be afforded the opportunity to discuss the test results and to offer any additional or clarifying information which may explain the test result. If the employee or job applicant believes a mistake was made at the collection site, at the lab, or on a chain-of-custody form, or that the drug test results are caused by lawful substance use, the employee should tell the MRO.
- If there is some new information which may affect the original finding, the MRO may request the laboratory to perform additional testing on the original specimen in order to further clarify the results; and
- If the MRO upholds the positive, adulterated, or substituted drug determination, that test result will be provided to the individual. There is no opportunity to explain a positive alcohol test provided in the DOT regulations.

A final determination will be made by the MRO that the test is either negative, test cancelled, positive, and/or a refusal to test because of adulteration or substitution, and the County will be so advised.

The driver can request the MRO to have the split specimen (the second "B" container) tested at the driver's expense. This includes all costs that may be associated with the re-test. There is no split specimen testing for an invalid result. The driver has seventy-two (72) hours after they have been notified of the positive result to make this request. If the employee requests an analysis of the split specimen, the MRO will direct the laboratory to send the split specimen to another certified laboratory for analysis.

If an employee has not contacted the MRO within seventy-two (72) hours, the employee may present information documenting that serious injury, illness, lack of actual notice of the verified test result, inability to contact the MRO, or other circumstances unavoidably prevented the employee from making timely contact. If the MRO concludes there is a legitimate explanation for the employee's failure to contact within seventy-two (72) hours, the MRO will direct the analysis of the split specimen.

If the results of the split specimen are negative, the County may pay for all costs associated with the re-test and there will be no adverse action taken against the employee or job applicant.

Notification of Test Results

Employees:

The County will notify a driver of the results of random, reasonable suspicion, and post-accident tests for controlled substance if the test results are verified positive and will inform the driver which controlled substance or substances were verified as positive. Results of alcohol tests will be immediately available from the collection agent.

Right to Confirmatory Retest:

Within seventy-two (72) hours after receiving notice of a positive controlled substance test result, an applicant or driver may request through the MRO a re-analysis (confirmatory retest) of the driver's split specimen. Action required by federal regulation as a result of a positive controlled substance test (e.g., removal from safety-sensitive functions) will not be stayed during retesting of the split specimen. If the result of the confirmatory re-test fails to reconfirm the presence of the controlled substance(s) or controlled substance metabolite(s) found in the primary specimen, or if the split specimen is unavailable, inadequate for testing, or untestable, the MRO will cancel the test.

Dilute Specimens:

Dilute Negatives Creatinine concentration of specimen is equal to or greater than 2 mg/dL, but less than or equal to 5 mg/dL. If the County receives information that a driver has provided a dilute negative specimen, the County will direct a recollection, pursuant to the MRO's direction, under direct observation.

Consequences for Drivers Engaging in Prohibited Conduct

Job Applicants:

Any applicable conditional offer of employment will be withdrawn from a job applicant or employee seeking a transfer, promotion, or demotion who refuses to be tested or tests positive for controlled substance pursuant to this policy.

Employees:

Drivers who are known to have engaged in prohibited behavior with regard to alcohol misuse or use of controlled substance, as defined in this policy, are subject to the following consequences:

- **Removal from Safety-Sensitive Functions:**

No driver may perform safety-sensitive functions, including driving a commercial motor vehicle, if the driver has engaged in conduct prohibited by federal law. No driver who is found to have an alcohol concentration of 0.02 or greater but less than 0.04 may perform or continue to perform safety-sensitive functions for the County, including driving a commercial motor vehicle, until the start of the driver's next regularly scheduled duty, but not less than twenty-four (24) hours following administration of the test. If a driver tests positive under this policy or is found to have an alcohol concentration of .02 or greater but

less than .04, the driver will be removed from safety-sensitive duties and escorted home. The driver should not drive home but be escorted to their home. The driver will then be placed on leave such as vacation, [PTO], compensatory time, or other appropriate leave for hours missed from work.

- **Notification of Resources Available:**

The County will advise each driver who has engaged in conduct prohibited by federal law or who has a positive alcohol or controlled substance test of the resources available to the driver [including but not limited to the County's Employee Assistance Program (EAP)], in evaluating and resolving problems associated with the misuse of alcohol and use of a controlled substance, including the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of Substance Abuse Professionals (SAPs) and counseling and treatment programs. The County will provide this SAP listing in writing at no cost to the driver.

- **Discipline:**

The County reserves the right to impose whatever discipline the County deems appropriate in its sole discretion, up to and including termination of employment for a first occurrence, or any subsequent occurrence, against drivers who violate applicable FMCSA or DOT rules or this policy, subject to applicable personnel policies and collective bargaining agreements. Except as otherwise required by law, the County is not obligated to reinstate or requalify such drivers following a first positive confirmed controlled substance or alcohol test result.

- **Evaluation, and Return to Duty Testing:**

Should the County wish to consider reinstatement of a driver who engaged in conduct prohibited by federal law and/or who had a positive alcohol or controlled substance test, the driver must undergo an SAP evaluation, participate in any prescribed education/treatment, and successfully complete return-to-duty alcohol test with a result indicating an alcohol concentration of less than 0.02 and/or or a controlled substance test with a verified negative result, before the driver returns to duty requiring the performance of a safety-sensitive function. The SAP will determine what assistance, if any, the driver needs in resolving problems associated with alcohol misuse and controlled substance use and will ensure the driver properly follows any rehabilitation program and submits to unannounced follow-up alcohol and controlled substance testing.

- **Follow-Up Testing:**

If the driver passes the return-to-duty test, the driver will be subject to unannounced follow-up alcohol and/or controlled substance testing. The number and frequency for such follow-up testing will be as directed by the SAP and will consist of at least six tests in the first twelve months. These tests will be conducted under direct observation.

- **Refusal to Test:**

All drivers and applicants have the right to refuse to take a required alcohol and/or controlled substance test. If an employee refuses to undergo testing, the employee will be considered to have tested positive and may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and

including termination of employment. Refer to the section on *Refusing to Test* discussed earlier in this policy.

- **Responsibility for Cost of Evaluation and Rehabilitation:**

Drivers will be responsible for paying the cost of evaluation and rehabilitation, including but not limited to services provided by a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP), recommended or required by the County or FMCSA or DOT rules, except to the extent that such expense is covered by an applicable employee benefit plan or imposed on the County pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement.

- **Reporting to the FMCSA's CDL Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse:**

In accordance with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse reporting requirements effective January 6, 2020, the County will report the following information to the Clearinghouse within three business days:

- A DOT alcohol confirmation test result with an alcohol concentration of 0.04 or greater.
- A negative DOT return-to-duty test result.
- The driver's refusal to submit to a DOT test for drug or alcohol use.
- An "actual knowledge" violation which may include actual knowledge a driver has used alcohol or controlled substances based on the employer's direct observation, information provided by the driver's previous employer(s), a traffic citation for driving a CMV while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance, or an employee's admission of alcohol or controlled substance use except as provided in 49 CFR § 382.121 of:
 - On duty alcohol use pursuant to § 382.205.
 - Pre-duty alcohol use pursuant to § 382.207.
 - Alcohol use following an accident pursuant to § 382.209.
 - Controlled substance use pursuant to § 382.213; and
- Reports of negative return-to-duty (RTD) test results and the successful completion of a driver's follow-up testing plan as ordered by an SAP.

Change of Status or Loss of CDL for Traffic Violations in Commercial and Personal Vehicles:

Effective August 1, 2005, the FMCSA established strict rules affecting when CDL holders can lose their CDL for certain traffic offenses in a commercial or personal vehicle. Employees are required to notify their supervisor immediately if the status of their CDL license changes in any way.

Maintenance and Disclosure of Records:

Except as required or authorized by law, the County will not release driver information that is contained in records required to be maintained by this policy or FMCSA and DOT regulations. Beginning on January 6, 2020, the County will be required to query and report to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse prior to hiring new drivers, to conduct annual checks of existing CDL

drivers, and to report certain violations of the DOT drug and alcohol testing program for holders of CDLs.

A driver is entitled, upon written request, to obtain copies of any records pertaining to the driver's use of alcohol or a controlled substance, including any records pertaining to the driver's alcohol or controlled substance tests.

Policy Contact for Additional Information:

If you have any questions about this policy or the County's controlled substance and alcohol testing procedures or resources available to employees, you may contact the Personnel Department to obtain additional information.

Definitions:

Accident:

Means an occurrence involving a commercial motor vehicle operating on a public road which results in a fatality; bodily injury to any person who, as a result of the injury, immediately receives medical treatment away from the scene of the accident; or one or more motor vehicles incurring disabling damage as a result of the accident, requiring the vehicle to be transported away from the scene by a tow truck or other vehicle. The term "accident" does not include an occurrence involving only boarding and alighting from a stationary motor vehicle; an occurrence involving only the loading or unloading of cargo; or an occurrence in the course of the operation of a passenger car or a multipurpose passenger vehicle unless the vehicle is transporting passengers for hire or hazardous materials of a type and quantity that require the motor vehicle to be marked or placarded in accordance with 49 CFR § 177.823; 49 CFR § 382.303(a); 49 CFR § 382.303(f).

Alcohol Concentration (or Content):

Means the alcohol on a volume of breath expressed in terms of grams of alcohol per 210 liters of breath as indicated by an evidential breath test. 49 CFR § 382.107.

Alcohol Use:

Means the consumption of any beverage, mixture, or preparation, including any medication, containing alcohol. 49 CFR § 382.107.

Applicant:

Means a person applying to drive a commercial motor vehicle. 49 CFR § 382.107.

Breath Alcohol Technician or BAT:

Means an individual who instructs and assists individuals in the alcohol testing process and operates an evidential breath testing device (EBT). 49 CFR § 40.3.

County:

Means County of Houston

County Premises:

Means all job sites, facilities, offices, buildings, structures, equipment, vehicles and parking areas, whether owned, leased, used or under the control of the County.

Collection Site:

Means a place designated by the County where drivers present themselves for the purpose of providing a specimen of their urine or breath to be analyzed for the presence of alcohol or controlled substances. 49 CFR § 40.3.

Commercial Motor Vehicle:

Means a motor vehicle or combination of motor vehicles used in commerce to transport passengers or property if the motor vehicle (1) has a gross combination weight rating or gross combination weight of 26,001 or more pounds, whichever is greater, inclusive of a towed unit(s) with a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 pounds, whichever is greater; or (2) has a gross vehicle weight rating or gross vehicle weight of 26,001 or more pounds, whichever is greater; or (3) is designed to transport sixteen (16) or more passengers, including the driver; or (4) is of any size and is used in the transportation of materials found to be in the transportation of materials found to be hazardous for the purposes of the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act (49 USC § 5103(b)) and which require the motor vehicle to be placarded under the Hazardous Materials Regulation. (49 CFR Part 172, Subpart F; 49 CFR § 382.107.)

Confirmation (or Confirmatory) Test:

For alcohol testing means a second test, following a positive non-evidential test, following a positive non-evidential (e.g., saliva) screening test or a breath alcohol screening test with the result of 0.02 or greater, that provides quantitative data of alcohol concentration. For controlled substance testing, "Confirmation (or Confirmatory) Test" means a second analytical procedure to identify the presence of a specific controlled substance or metabolite which is independent of the screen test and which uses a different technique and chemical principal from that of the screen test in order to ensure reliability and accuracy. 49 CFR § 382.107.

Controlled Substance:

Means those substances identified in 49 CFR § 40.85. Marijuana, amphetamines, opioids, (including heroin), phencyclidine (PCP), cocaine, and any of their metabolites are included within this definition. 49 CFR § 382.107; 49 CFR § 40.85.

Department of Transportation or DOT:

Means the United States Department of Transportation.

DHHS:

Means the Department of Health & Human Services or any designee of the Secretary, Department of Health & Human Services. 49 CFR § 40.3.

Disabling Damage:

It means damage which precludes departure of a motor vehicle from the scene of the accident in its usual manner in daylight after simple repairs, including damage to motor vehicles that could have been driven, but would have been further damaged if so driven. Disabling damage does not include damage which can be remedied temporarily at the scene of the accident without special tools or parts, tire disablement without other damage even if no spare tire is available, headlight or taillight damage or damage to turn signals, horn or windshield wipers which make them inoperative. 49 CFR § 382.107.

Driver:

Means any person who operates a commercial motor vehicle. This includes, but is not limited to: full-time, regularly employed drivers; temporary, casual, intermittent, or occasional drivers; leased drivers and independent owner-operator contractors who are either directly employed by or under lease to the County or who operate a commercial motor vehicle at the direction of or with the consent of the County; and Commercial Learner's Permit (CLP) drivers. For purposes of pre-employment testing, the term driver includes a person applying to drive a commercial motor vehicle. 49 CFR § 382.107.

Drug:

Has the same meaning as "controlled substance."

Employee Seeking a Transfer, Promotion, or Demotion:

Refers to an employee who is not subject to DOT regulations seeking a transfer, promotion, or demotion to a different position that will subject them to DOT regulations in the sought-after position.

Evidential Breath Testing Device or EBT:

Means a device approved by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for the evidential testing of breath and placed on NHTSA's "Conforming Products List of Evidential Breath Measurement Devices." 49 CFR § 40.3.

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration or FMCSA:

Means the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration of the United States Department of Transportation.

Medical Review Officer or MRO:

Means a licensed physician (medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy) responsible for receiving laboratory results generated by a controlled substance testing program who has knowledge of substance abuse disorders and has appropriate medical training to interpret and evaluate an individual's confirmed positive or non-negative test result together with the individual's medical history and any other relevant biomedical information. 49 CFR § 40.3

Performing [a Safety-Sensitive Function]:

Means any period in which a driver is actually performing, ready to perform, or immediately available to perform any safety-sensitive functions. 49 CFR § 382.107.

Positive Test Result:

Means a finding of the presence of alcohol or controlled substance, or their metabolites, in the sample tested in levels at or above the threshold detection levels established by applicable law.

Reasonable Suspicion:

Means a belief a driver has engaged in conduct prohibited by the FMCSA controlled substance and alcohol testing regulations, except when related solely to the possession of alcohol, based on specific contemporaneous, articulable observations made by a supervisor or County official who has received appropriate training concerning the appearance, behavior, speech or body odors of the driver. The determination of reasonable suspicion will be made in writing during, just preceding, or just after the period of the workday that the driver is required to be in compliance with this policy. In the case of a controlled substance, the observations may include indications of the chronic and withdrawal effects of a controlled substance.

Safety-Sensitive Function:

Means all time, from the time a driver begins to work or is required to be in readiness to work, until the time the driver is relieved from work and all responsibility for performing work. Safety-sensitive functions include:

- All time at a County building, terminal, facility, or other property, or on any public property, waiting to be dispatched, unless the driver has been relieved from duty by the employer;
- All time inspecting equipment as required by 49 CFR § 392.7 and § 392.8 or otherwise inspecting, servicing, or conditioning any commercial motor vehicle at any time;
- All time spent at the driving controls of a commercial motor vehicle in operation;
- All time, other than driving time, in or upon any commercial motor vehicle except time spent resting in a sleeper berth (a berth conforming to the requirements of 49 CFR § 393.76);
- All time loading or unloading a vehicle, supervising, or assisting in the loading or unloading, attending a vehicle being loaded or unloaded, remaining in readiness to operate the vehicle, or in giving or receiving receipts for shipments loaded or unloaded; and
- All time repairing, obtaining assistance, or remaining in attendance upon a disabled vehicle. 49 CFR § 382.107.

Screening Test (also known as Initial Test):

In alcohol testing, means an analytical procedure to determine whether a driver may have a prohibited concentration of alcohol in their system. Screening tests may be conducted by

utilizing a non-evidential screening device included by the National Highway Traffic Administration on its conforming products list (e.g., a saliva screening device) or an evidential breath testing device (EBT) operated by a trained breath alcohol technician (BAT). In controlled substance testing, "Screening Test" means an immunoassay screen to eliminate "negative" urine specimens from further consideration. 49 CFR § 382.107.

Substance Abuse Professional or SAP:

Means a licensed physician (medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy), licensed or certified psychologist, licensed or certified social worker, licensed or certified employee assistance

professional, or licensed or certified addiction counselor (certified by the National Association of Alcoholism and Controlled Substance Abuse Counselors Certification Commission) with knowledge of and clinical experience in the diagnosis and treatment of alcohol and controlled substance-related disorders. 49 CFR § 40.281.

Houston County Policies and Procedures Manual

A Workplace Accident And Injury Reduction (AWAIR) Program

SECTION:	Workplace Safety & Health Policies Section F-5	EFFECTIVE:	[Date]
AUTHORITY:	[Resolution Number]	REVISED:	[Date]

A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction (AWAIR) Program

Houston County affirms that employees are our most valued resource. Ensuring employee safety in the performance of their work is of the utmost importance, and this objective is the basis of Houston Counties AWAIR Program, establishing workplace safety and health as one of our organization's highest priorities. The success of the safety program requires clearly defined goals, specific objectives and identification of those who will share the responsibility of accomplishing the goals and objectives set forth.

It is the responsibility of all employees to be aware of unsafe acts in all work areas that can produce injuries. No employee is required to work at a job they know is not safe. It is the responsibility of all employees of Houston County to be diligent in detecting hazards, and in turn, controlling them, including informing your supervisor immediately of any situation beyond your ability or authority to correct.

Goals and Objectives:

Central to our AWAIR program are the goals and objectives, we as a County have established for the overall safety and health program. The goals provide the direction for our program and state what we are striving to achieve. The goals are specific to Houston County. The County has established objectives, which are specific actions that will be taken in an effort to achieve our safety and health program goals.

Goal: We will establish and maintain a culture that is committed to workplace safety and health.

Objectives:

- 1. Regular safety committee meetings will be conducted at least on a quarterly basis to inform employees about specific workplace safety and health issues, and to build an overall awareness of employee safety and health, including review of incident reports.*
- 2. Safety committee meetings will include both employee and management representatives who will serve a two-year term.*

3. *Safety committee agendas will be established, and the meetings will be facilitated to gather input from employees and management relating to workplace safety and health topics.*
4. *Resources regarding a specific health or safety "toolbox topic" will be distributed monthly and discussed at team meetings.*
5. *Safety rules will be actively enforced throughout the organization.*

Roles and Responsibilities:

A. Everyone at Houston County:

1. All employees, including supervisors, managers, department heads and Elected Officials, must follow all safety rules at all times.

B. Employees:

1. Employees must promptly report any safety and health hazards they observe to their supervisor or Safety Committee Representative, Manager or other applicable person.
2. An employee's first priority is to perform each job task safely. If an employee is unsure how to perform the task safely, the employee must consult with their supervisor.
3. Employees must wear personal protective equipment as required for their protection, routinely inspect personal protective equipment for damage/wear and tear, and maintain the equipment in a sanitary manner.
4. Employees must report all accidents and near misses to their supervisor immediately upon occurrence.

C. Management:

1. Supervisors must discuss any current safety issues with their employees at the beginning of the work shift or at regularly scheduled staff meetings as appropriate.
2. Supervisors will address all safety concerns raised by staff by initially investigating the issue, assessing the concern, and taking appropriate corrective action whenever necessary. Corrective action can include ordering new equipment, issuing maintenance work orders or consulting with the Safety Officer, the Safety Committee, Human Resources Officer, or County Management.
3. Immediately upon learning of an accident or near miss, the supervisor must initiate an investigation and submit the completed accident investigation report to the Safety Officer / Human Resources Officer.
4. Supervisors will actively and constructively participate in all Safety Committee inspections of their assigned areas.

5. Discuss the positive effects of safety committee activities, on a one-on-one basis and/or in group meetings.
6. Support safety training for all employees.
7. Respond to safety recommendations in a timely manner.
8. Communicate to all employees and supervisors the importance of workers' safety and health throughout the organization.
9. County Management will review all safety concerns brought forward by the Safety Officer, department head, the Safety Committee, and/or supervisors and take appropriate action.
10. County Management will review the AWAIR program and any recommended revisions from the Safety Committee at least annually, make the appropriate revisions, and work with the Safety Officer, the Safety Committee and supervisors to communicate the revisions throughout the organization.
11. County Management also establishes the importance of the AWAIR program, both by the priority they give workplace safety and health issues and through the example they set by initiating safety and health improvements, correcting hazards, enforcing safety rules, rewarding excellent performance in safety and health, and by following all safety rules.

D. Human Resources Officer:

1. The Human Resources Officer is designated as the Safety Officer and will serve as the lead person in the organization for safety and health issues and will also serve as chairperson of the Safety Committee.
2. The Safety Officer must review pertinent facts from all accident investigation reports with the Safety Committee and take appropriate action to prevent recurrence. Incident data will be shared in a manner that protects individual privacy and maintains compliance with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.
3. The Safety Officer will coordinate and oversee, in cooperation with first-line supervision and/or department heads, all safety training required by regulation or identified by management, supervisors or the Safety Committee as required to assure a safe workplace.
4. The Safety Officer will recommend improvements in facilities, machinery, equipment, raw materials and personal protective equipment to County Management.

5. The Safety Officer will be responsible for the annual review of this program/policy and documentation of findings. The annual review of the policy is vital to ensuring that Houston County is making progress toward the established goals.

E. Safety Committee:

1. The Safety Committee will conduct regular meetings and area inspections to review accident reports, identify hazards and address all safety concerns raised by employees, supervisors, or the Safety Officer.
2. The Safety Committee will review the AWAIR program at least annually and make recommendations concerning updates and revisions to the program to County Management and the Safety Officer.
3. Safety Committee members each represent their work area and, therefore, should address all safety concerns brought to them by their coworkers. These concerns should be handled by initially investigating the issue with the supervisor to determine if the
4. concern is valid and whether it can be immediately corrected, and as necessary and appropriate, bring the issue to the Safety Officer or the full Safety Committee.

F. Elected and Appointed Officials:

1. Elected/Appointed Officials will support and reinforce the importance of safety and health throughout the County.
2. Elected/Appointed Officials will provide the resources to improve safety and health throughout the organization. This includes providing employees and supervisors with the authority to identify and correct hazards, the budget to purchase new equipment or make repairs when necessary, the training required to work safely and to recognize hazards, and the systems to ensure repairs are made, materials ordered, and other improvements accomplished.

Enforcement of Safety and Health Programs:

Enforcement of safe work practices should be fair, consistent throughout the County, and based on established policy. Management and supervision should be conscious of the examples they set for the workplace and should follow the same workplace safety and health rules as the rest of the workforce.

Employees will be trained and instructed regarding workplace safety expectation. Supervisors will monitor and coach employees to ensure that proper safety practices are followed. Unsafe or unhealthy work behaviors by any employee shall be corrected in a timely manner, in accordance with the severity of the violation.

Violation of safety rules and safe work procedures may be subject to disciplinary action. The County may follow progressive discipline for violations of workplace health and safety policy,

rules and procedures but reserves the right to issue any level of discipline it deems appropriate based on the specific facts and circumstances.

Not only should negative behavior be discouraged, but positive behavior should be reinforced. Exceptional performance or efforts in workplace safety and health should be recognized by supervisors and County Management.

Hazard Identification, Analysis and Control:

Houston County will use the following steps to identify, analyze and control hazards:

- *Conduct walk-around inspections by supervisors, management and/or the Safety Committee members. Inspections should be conducted on a regular basis to identify both newly developed hazards and any previously missed.*
- *Conduct periodic or as-needed industrial hygiene monitoring and sampling for agents such as hazardous substances, noise levels, and heat.*
- *Establish and periodically review and update Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) or Job Safety Analysis (JSA) identifying workplace hazards and safety controls associated with particular jobs or tasks*
- *Develop and implement job hazard identification checklists*
- *Encourage and follow up on employee reporting of workplace safety and health hazards*
- *Encourage and review employee hazard abatement suggestions*
- *Identify regular scheduling for, and timely conduct and document, preventative maintenance inspections*
- *Evaluate opportunities for, and implement, appropriate engineering controls*
- *Evaluate opportunities for, and implement, appropriate administrative controls*
- *Provide, and monitor appropriate use of, required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*
- *Provide management and employee training]*

The following forms and checklists can be accessed on the “Workplace Health and Safety” page of the County’s employee help desk, and are available in printed format upon request from the Personnel Department:

- *Hazard Inventory*
- *Safety Inspection Checklist*
- *Report of Unsafe Conditions*
- *Hazard Elimination Evaluation Control Worksheet*
- *Job Hazard Analysis / Job Safety Analysis**
- *Indoor Environmental Audit*
- *Certification of Employee Training*
- *Accident/Injury Investigation]*

*Job Hazard Analysis (JHA), also known as Job Safety Analysis (JSA):

The steps for creating a JHA are:

- 1. List all the job steps or tasks the worker must perform to complete the job. The list is created by watching the employee perform the operation in question, recording each step of the process and reviewing the list with the employee for completeness.*
- 2. Review each step to determine what safety and health hazards are or could be present; these should be listed as well. Further observation may be necessary to assure all possible hazards are identified.*
- 3. Determine what measures can eliminate or lessen the risk of injury or illness to the employee from the identified hazards. These measures may include: engineering controls, such as guarding or ventilation; work practices; administrative controls, such as job rotation; and personal protective equipment.*

Communication:

All managers and supervisors are responsible for communicating with all workers about occupational safety and health in a form readily understandable by all workers. The County's communication system encourages all workers to inform their managers and supervisors about workplace hazards without fear of reprisal. Our communication system may include one or more of the following approaches:

- New worker orientation including a discussion of safety and health policies and procedures
- Review of the County's program
- Employee and management training
- Regularly scheduled safety meetings
- Posted or distributed safety information
- A system for workers to inform County Management about workplace hazards

Accident Investigation:

Accident investigations are a key component of the County's AWAIR program, with the goal of hazard identification, correction of deficiencies, and prevention of future incidents. In addition to conducting investigations of incidents in which injury or property damage has occurred, investigations should also be completed regarding near-miss or close call situations.

The investigation should begin as soon as possible following an incident, and no later than 48 hours after the event. Any existing or remaining hazards in the area or related to the incident should be assessed and promptly controlled.

The incident investigation will be conducted by the supervisor, Safety Officer and Safety Committee Member.

The incident investigation should focus on identifying and correcting the root cause of the incident. Conducting a root cause analysis will assist in identifying underlying or systemic issues



HR, Pay, & Workforce Management

ORDER FORM

Order Type: Quote
Date: 05 Nov, 2025

Quote#: Q-374272
Expires: 20 Nov, 2025
Sales Executive: Rachel Adelberg
Effective Date: Effective as of the date of last signature of this Order

Customer Legal Name:
MINNESOTA COUNTIES COMPUTER COOPERATIVE

Customer Legal Address:
100 EMPIRE DR STE 201
SAINT PAUL, MN 55103-1885 USA

Bill To: MINNESOTA COUNTIES COMPUTER COOPERATIVE
100 EMPIRE DR STE 201
SAINT PAUL, MN 55103-1885 USA

Bill To Contact:

Ship To: COUNTY OF HOUSTON
304 S MARSHALL ST RM 111
CALEDONIA, MN 55921-1324 USA

Ship To Contact: Brent Parker

Ship to Phone: 507-500-1532
Ship to Mobile:
Contact: Brent Parker
Email: bparker@hocomn.gov

Currency: USD
Customer PO Number:
Solution ID: 6099346
Initial Term: 36 months from Billing
Start Date
Uplift Percent: 3 %

Shipping Terms: Shipping Point
Ship Method: FedEx Ground
Freight Term: Prepay & Add
Renewal Term: 12 months
Payment Terms: Net 45 Days

Billing Start Date: 60 Days from the Effective Date

Services

Billing Frequency: Quarterly in Advance

Services	Quantity	PEPM	Monthly Price	Annual Price
UKG BRYTE AI FOR READY	165	USD 1.00	USD 165.00	USD 1,980.00
UKG READY ACA MANAGER	165	USD 0.25	USD 41.25	USD 495.00
UKG READY ACCRUALS MANAGER	165	USD 1.00	USD 165.00	USD 1,980.00
UKG READY ATTESTATION	165	USD 0.25	USD 41.25	USD 495.00
UKG READY BENEFITS	165	USD 2.75	USD 453.75	USD 5,445.00
UKG READY HR	165	USD 3.00	USD 495.00	USD 5,940.00
UKG READY INTEGRATION HUB	1	USD 0.00	USD 0.00	USD 0.00
UKG READY LEAVE	165	USD 0.75	USD 123.75	USD 1,485.00
UKG READY PAYROLL	165	USD 3.00	USD 495.00	USD 5,940.00
UKG READY PEOPLE INSIGHTS	165	USD 1.00	USD 165.00	USD 1,980.00
UKG READY PERFORMANCE	165	USD 0.50	USD 82.50	USD 990.00
UKG READY RECRUITING	165	USD 0.50	USD 82.50	USD 990.00
UKG READY SCHEDULER	165	USD 2.00	USD 330.00	USD 3,960.00
UKG READY TIME	165	USD 4.00	USD 660.00	USD 7,920.00
UKG READY PAYROLL SERVICES	165	USD 1.75	USD 288.75	USD 3,465.00
Total Price			USD 3,588.75	USD 43,065.00

Professional Services - Fixed Fee

Billing Frequency: Billed 100% upon signature of the order form

Professional Services - Fixed Fee	Billing Role	Quantity	Unit Price	Total Price
UKG READY LAUNCH FIXED FEE	Grouped	1	USD 17,655.00	USD 17,655.00
Total Price				USD 17,655.00

Quote Summary



Item	Total Price
Minimum Monthly SaaS Service & Equipment Rental Fee	USD 3,588.75

Item	Total Price
Minimum Annual SaaS Service & Equipment Rental Fee	USD 43,065.00

Item	Total Price
Total Fixed Fees	USD 17,655.00

Order Notes:

After the Initial Term, the Subscription Fee shall increase per annum by the Uplift amount set forth above.

GENERAL TERMS:

This Order is subject to and governed by the terms and conditions of the Public Sector Master Terms and Conditions dated 02/24/2025 between UKG and Customer, as amended (hereafter "Agreement").

UKG will provide the Services in accordance with the Services Descriptions and Statements of Work ("SOW") located at the following link, except if an SOW is attached to this Order, then the attached SOW shall control over the link SOW:
www.ukg.com/services-descriptions

All Customer Data (as defined in the Agreement) will be secured and protected as set forth in the Technical and Organizational Measures of UKG's Data Processing Addendum. Any personal data provided to UKG through the Subscription Services will be processed in accordance with UKG's Data Processing Addendum located at:
www.ukg.com/ukg-unified-dpa

The Subscription Fees for the applicable monthly Minimum Quantities are due on the Billing Frequency stated on the Order Form and invoiced thirty (30) days in advance of the quarter. To reconcile the actual employee counts, promptly following the end of each month starting from the Billing Start Date, UKG will invoice Customer for the actual number of employees in each month that exceeded the Monthly Minimum Quantity.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Order to be executed by their authorized representatives and shall be effective as of the date of the last signature below.

COUNTY OF HOUSTON

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

MINNESOTA COUNTIES COMPUTER COOPERATIVE

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Kronos SaaS, Inc.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____



The monthly price on this Order Form has been rounded to two decimal places for display purposes. As many as eight decimal places may be present in the actual price. Due to the rounding calculations, the actual price may not display as expected when displayed on your Order Form. Nonetheless, the actual price on your invoice is the true and binding total for this order for purposes of amounts owed for the term.



Statement of Work for County of Houston

This Statement of Work (SoW) outlines the scope of services to be provided by UKG (Ultimate Kronos Group) for the implementation of the Subscription Services in the Order.

The scope of services described herein are fixed price based and subject to the same terms and conditions as the corresponding UKG Order. Unless otherwise defined herein, words and expressions defined in the Order shall have the same meaning in this Statement of Work.

UKG's Launch methodology ("Launch") provides proven and repeatable processes that are supported with UKG standard tools, templates and proven training paths that deliver a successful launch of the Subscription Services. UKG and the Customer will collaborate throughout the Launch process performing tasks such as requirements workshops, system configuration, data conversion, integration configuration, testing cycles, production support, and project management.

With Launch, UKG uses its proven methodology to provide training and services to deploy the Subscription Services. Launch will be delivered as described in this document.

1. Introduction to Launch

Deployment Strategy

The deployment of Subscription Services is a collaborative endeavor. UKG will work with the Customer to determine the most logical and efficient deployment plan based upon Subscription Services purchased, and Launch duration outlined in this document. This best practice approach will be tailored to Customer's business objectives.

Launch Methodology

The Launch methodology provides a framework that generally describes how the project will progress from the start to finish. The project team follows this framework to transition Customer's existing human capital management and workforce management (if applicable) functions from Customer's legacy provider to UKG Ready. UKG's deployment methodology includes the following phases:

Launch Phase	Description
Welcome	Preliminary preparation involves four basic elements: UKG's internal readiness and team assignments, Customer preparation, a project team initial kick off meeting and ensure system access.
Requirements	UKG will perform a discovery process by interviewing the Customer's subject matter experts from different functional areas. Information that has been gathered during the requirements phase is used to determine the current system set up, the new system definition requirements and allow UKG to determine the best fit between the Customer's business requirements and the Subscription Services. A project timeline will be provided once requirements have been collected.
Build	This phase is designed to configure UKG Ready per the purchased Subscription Services, build interfaces, and migrate employee data into UKG Ready from legacy system. This phase will also provide unit testing to ensure that each iteration delivers a fully configured component of the system.
Test	Testing involves functional testing and user acceptance testing for the applicable Subscription Services; including, but not limited to, parallel testing, dual maintenance, and validation.
Go-Live	This phase consists of UKG assisting the Customer with the first live processing, the rollout of the Subscription Services and transition to UKG's Global Support team.



2. Roles and Responsibilities

A successful Launch assumes Customer participation throughout the project as referenced in the *Roles and Responsibilities* sections of this document. UKG and the Customer's roles and responsibilities are described below.

A check mark in the grid below indicates each respective party's primary responsibilities.

Activities	UKG	Customer
Project Management		
Review the scope of services with Customer including contract documents and resource assignments	√	√
Manage UKG team's project resources, budget, and scope/deliverables to ensure they are being met per the project timeline	√	
Manage Customer team's project resources, budget, and scope/deliverables to ensure they are being met per the project timeline		√
Create status reports and facilitate status calls with project team	√	
Partner together to identify, manage, and resolve project issues	√	√
Provide Customer communications and general project-related management activities	√	
Create change management and training for managers and employees		√
Welcome Phase		
Provide Customer access to the Subscription Services as contracted in the Order	√	
Share project goals and success criteria with UKG project team		√
Participate in the kick-off meeting	√	√
Assist in defining necessary Customer resources and a training plan as part of the project plan	√	
Key project resources attend recommended training course(s) throughout implementation		√
Requirements Phase		
Gather all available policy, procedure documentation, and business use cases to complete the data collection process		√
Describe the expected solution, business processes, and business rules for all employee groups in scope during requirements meeting(s)		√
Facilitate rapid review, feedback, and signoff on all project documentation as required to meet project deadlines		√
Lead meeting(s) to gather business requirements and document configuration needs	√	
Provide Customer with a detailed project plan	√	
Build Phase		
Complete mutually agreed upon UKG configuration tasks and complete unit testing to validate configuration	√	√
Share data translations and field mapping specifications for all required fields in the UKG import templates for data conversion	√	
Provide source data for production processing in the UKG approved import template formats		√
Review and approve imported data according to the agreed upon schedule		√
Create interfaces as defined during the Requirements phase of Launch	√	
Supply technical support required for system integration and data conversion	√	√
Complete all administrative training through Learning Center in UKG Ready		√
Create a plan for manager and end-user training		√
Test Phase		
Complete interface data validation	√	√
Perform functional/user acceptance and system testing	√	√



Activities	UKG	Customer
Execute manager and end-user training		√
Go-Live Phase		
Provide production support and post-live support for transition to UKG's Global Support team	√	
Perform project wrap-up activities, including closing open issues	√	√

3. **Deliverables**

Below are the key project deliverables and related acceptance criteria that UKG will deliver in each phase of the implementation.

Deliverable	Activity	Acceptance Criteria
Welcome Phase		
Aligned expectations	UKG will transition the customer project from Sales to Delivery Services	Customer confirms project expectations aligns with Sales order
Project team transition	UKG will assign the Launch team to the specifics of the project	UKG and Customer prepare project for engagement with the Launch team
Requirements Phase		
Detailed Project Plan	UKG will refine and update the initial project plan	Customer receives and accepts the detailed project plan
Project Requirements Document	UKG will provide Project Requirements Document	Customer receives and completes SOC (System and Organization Controls) sign off on the Project Requirements Document in UKG Ready
Completed Integration Specifications Document(s)*	Customer will review Integration Synopsis Document(s) with UKG	Customer reviews the document(s) prior to development of interface(s)
Build Phase		
UKG Ready configuration	UKG builds UKG Ready based on Requirements Document	UKG completes internal testing prior to hosting Build Review Call(s)
Build Review Call(s)	Customer to attend Build Review Call(s) hosted by UKG	Customer confirms the system is built according to the Requirements Document
Completed imports of all applicable employee data	Customer will review imported data with UKG and perform data validation	Customer confirms the system is built according to the Requirements Document
Completed Integration Development*	UKG completes the development of applicable integration(s) based on the approved Integration Synopsis Document(s)	UKG completes internal testing and validation prior to moving to customer/3 rd party testing and validation
Test Phase		
Complete Payroll Compare for 1 st Test Parallel. Provide issues resolution for 1 st parallel compare	Customer will participate in parallel testing and validate results	Customer confirms that all parallel testing results are accurate, and issues are resolved
Complete Payroll Compare for 2 nd Test Parallel. Provide issues resolution for 2 nd parallel compare	Customer will participate in parallel testing and validate results	Customer confirms that all parallel testing results are accurate, and issues are resolved
Complete UKG Ready Testing	Customer will participate in UKG Ready testing and review results	Customer confirms that all testing is accurate through SOC (System and Organization Controls) sign off in UKG Ready
Completed Import of Check History, Balances, and all other Go	Customer review imported data with UKG and perform data validation	Customer confirms that all imported employee data is accurate





Deliverable	Activity	Acceptance Criteria
Live Relevant Imports		
Completed Internal and External Testing of Integration(s)*	Customer will partner with external vendor(s) if applicable to complete all functional testing	Customer confirms that the integration(s) is working as designed. UKG will schedule and deploy based on this confirmation
Go-Live Phase		
Live Punching/Processing of UKG Ready	Customer will confirm decision to go live prior to Subscription Services target active date or when system is ready for active use	Customer completes SOC (System and Organization Controls) sign-off for relevant Subscription Services in UKG Ready

**Note: Financial based integrations (e.g., 401k export) are provided in alignment with go live. All other interfaces are delivered as available.*

4. Training

Effective training is the key to high user adoption rates. Training resulting in self-sufficient administrators, managers, and employees increases the efficiency of use of the Subscription Services and Customer's business processes.

UKG's training model includes a role-based learning plan. Each role within Customer's organization has a specific set of courses required at specific points in Launch. Having role-based training classes ensures the Customer's team members are trained on the processes they will use in their day-to-day interactions with Ready Subscription Services.

The timing of this training is key. UKG aims to provide the training with as little time between training delivery date and system usage as possible. This provides for Customer's users to have an opportunity to reinforce the training through real-life application before they begin to lose the skills gained in training. End users (e.g., Managers and Employees) use a train the trainer model for learning. Customer is responsible for train-the-trainer learning for their managers and employees unless otherwise defined in the *Launch Guidelines/Assumptions* section of this document.

Core Training	UKG Delivered Value Includes Access To:
Administrator and Super User Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Center, UKG Ready's learning management system and training delivery platform, for each user. Learning experiences found within include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interactive self-paced, on-demand modules ○ "How to" videos and snippets ○ Printable job aids • Recommended learning plan(s) aligned to each user's roles within UKG Ready • Online, public instructor-led class(es) • "Train the Trainer" enablement and materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Editable templates and tools to be leveraged by the administrators to deliver manager and employee training ○ Manager and employee-focused job aids for common tasks within UKG Ready
Change Management and User Adoption Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change management training for the project team on building a change management plan for Customer's organization • Change management toolkit that includes pre-populated templates and supporting resources to be leveraged to deliver Customer's change management plan





5. Project Team Composition

Resource allocation and commitment are key drivers for a successful Launch. UKG uses employee resources and may use trained and approved consulting services resources (“Certified Partners”) to assist in the performance of the Launch or consulting services under this Order Form. Customer hereby authorizes access by UKG, its affiliates, and Certified Partners to the Customer information necessary to perform such services which may include access to Customer’s Confidential Information and Customer Data.

The team roles and key responsibilities are listed below. UKG will provide experienced industry experts specializing in specific areas of Launch. Customer will provide resources as described below in the Customer Team Resources section or as otherwise mutually agreed to in the project plan.

UKG Team Resources

Resource	Key Responsibilities
Services Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKG project sponsor • Gains commitment for all project resources
Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary point of contact • Responsible for achieving project objectives by coordinating with all project resources on the timely completion of project tasks • Develops and manages project schedule • Identify and develop project risk mitigation plan • Communicates overall project status and provides project reporting • Serves as initial point of escalation for all project related issues and coordinates activities needed for resolution
Time Solution Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary UKG resource and functional UKG Ready Time expert • Customer’s day-to-day point of contact for all system-related service requests • Completes Subscription Services configuration life cycle per the Launch methodology
HR (Human Resources) Solution Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary UKG resource and functional UKG Ready HR (Human Resources) expert • Customer’s day-to-day point of contact for all system-related service requests • Completes Subscription Services configuration life cycle per the Launch methodology
Payroll Solution Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary UKG resource and functional UKG Ready Payroll expert • Customer’s day-to-day point of contact for all system-related service requests • Completes Subscription Services configuration life cycle per the Launch methodology
Benefits Solution Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary UKG resource and functional UKG Ready Benefits expert • Customer’s day-to-day point of contact for all system-related related service requests • Completes Subscription Services configuration life cycle per the Launch methodology
Talent Acquisition, Comp, Performance Solution Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary UKG resource and functional UKG Ready Talent and Compensation expert • Customer’s day-to-day point of contact for all system-related related service requests • Completes Subscription Services configuration life cycle per the Launch methodology

Resource	Key Responsibilities
Integration Consultant (As applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for integration file creation and delivery Works together with Customer to determine requirements for integration(s), deploys and schedules completed interface(s).
Customer Success Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary point of contact for post-live services related activities and transition to support

Customer Team Resources

Resource	Key Responsibilities
Executive Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer project sponsor Gains commitment for all project resources Provides executive-level support to the project team Ensures that the needs of the project team are well represented and met by the steering committee
Project Manager/Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary point of contact Responsible for achieving project objectives by coordinating with Customer project resources on the timely completion of project tasks Communicates overall project status and provides project reporting to Customer steering committee if applicable Serves as Customer's initial point of escalation for all project related issues and coordinates activities needed for resolution Identify and manage project risks Channels the team's activities toward Subscription Services configuration and executing the project
Time Subject Matter Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer's primary time representative and designated decision maker for time tracking
HR (Human Resources) Subject Matter Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer's primary HR representative and designated decision maker for HR
Payroll Subject Matter Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer's primary payroll representative and designated decision maker for payroll
Benefits Subject Matter Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer's primary benefit representative and designated decision maker for benefits
Talent Acquisition Subject Matter Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer's primary talent acquisition representative and designated decision maker for talent acquisition
Education and Change Management Resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer's primary resource and designated decision maker for end user training and change management
System Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer's primary resource for Subscription Services configuration and system knowledge
Technical Resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer's primary resource for technical issues related to data conversion, integrations, network, and Subscription Services security
Other Subject Matter Experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer's primary resource and designated decision maker in their specific specialty area



6. Launch Guidelines

The following guidelines were used in preparing this Statement of Work:

- General Guidelines

- The assigned UKG Project Manager will provide a finalized projected timeline once the requirements phase has been completed.

Note: The average launch duration for a full-suite core Subscription Services project is up to four months from project kickoff. Actual project duration may be compressed or elongated as influenced by customer preparation and engagement, configuration of solution design, or additional value-added Subscription Services ordered.

- Financial-based integrations (e.g., 401k export) are provided in alignment with go live.
- The customer and UKG team are to complete tasks as indicated in the roles and responsibilities of this document and as assigned in the final project plan by mutually agreed upon due dates.
- UKG will communicate with the Customer's project manager as the appointed point of contact responsible for all project management, communication, and preparation among all customer's parties (e.g., staff, vendors, consultants) and for any escalation and resolution.
- Customer holds sole responsibility for troubleshooting system(s) or hardware not provided by UKG.
- Changes in the scope of the launch or requirements are subject to review and may have an impact on the project timeline or cost. If additional work is required, a Change Order or new Statement of Work must be scoped, quoted, and signed.
- UKG will support up to two (2) in-production payroll processing periods, then transition customer engagement to UKG's Global Support team for post-implementation support.

- Delivery Guidelines

- All project work and resource delivery are supported through a virtual (offsite) UKG Launch team; the customer's team is not required to travel to UKG for any part of the Launch process.
- If onsite work is preferred or required, exceptions can be requested from the UKG Services Manager. UKG has consulting service solutions that are not included as part of Launch but can be purchased as a value-added service.
- When travel is agreed upon as part of a custom Launch or service request, UKG will deliver the scope of this project utilizing a blended approach. A blended approach combines onsite and remote resources.
- For any UKG travel to a customer's location, travel expenses are not included and will be invoiced separately as incurred.



7. Subscription Services Assumptions

The following assumptions were used in preparing this Statement of Work, where available for purchase, if ordering:

Subscription Services	Assumptions
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UKG Ready Time

Deployment gets you started with the ability to accept punches and pay employees accurately through these core components:

- Total Cost Centers
- Profiles
 - Timesheets
 - Time off requests
 - Pay Prep
 - Security
 - Points
- Pay Calculations
 - Up to 20 calculations will be configured by the UKG project team
- Tables
 - Rate
 - Holiday
- Manager Levels
- Employee Perspectives Scorecards
- Workflows
 - Time Off Requests
 - Timesheet Change Requests
- Schedules
 - Daily Rules
 - Work Schedule Profiles
- Pay Periods
- Counters
- Time Off Categories
- Reports
 - Includes 61 commonly used pre-configured reports**
- Timekeeping Admin Training

**Up to five (5) additional customer-specified reports will be configured by the UKG project team using the standard functionality in the software. The customer can continue to configure as many as needed.

Core functionality deployment gets you started by establishing HR as the system of record for employees, one of the most important foundational components through:

UKG Ready HR

- Core employee demographics
- Onboarding
- Checklists
 - Up to 10 will be configured by the UKG project team, however the Customer can configure as many as needed
- Personnel management
- Workflows
 - Up to 10 will be configured by the UKG project team, however the Customer can configure as many as needed
- HR documents & forms
 - Up to 10 custom forms will be configured by the UKG project team, however the Customer can configure as many as needed
- Incident tracking
- Certification / Credential
- Asset management
- Compliance reporting
- Standard reporting
- One-Time data load using customer-supplied data for current year in a standard UKG-supplied format
- Interface bundle using customer supplied data in standard file formats
- HR Admin Training

Deployment gets you started with the end-to-end payroll process with the ability to calculate gross-to-net, pay employees, adjust, and export data needed tax filing (if using a provider other than UKG Payroll Services) through:

UKG Ready Payroll*

*Recommend UKG Ready Payroll Services

- Configuration of up to 5 EINs
- Pay Period Profiles
- Up to two Parallel Payroll Tests
- Company Tax Setup (Jurisdictions)
- Custom Exports/Reports
- Company Deduction Types
- Company Earning Types
- Configure Default Banks
- Workers Comp Types
- Payroll History up to 4 Quarter of Current Year
- All Payroll Configurations Include:
 - Standard Dashboard Widgets
 - Global Payroll Settings
 - Standard Notifications
 - GL (General Ledger) Set Up
 - In-house manual check printing
 - Employee Imports
- Vendor Payments (ACH/Check)
- Payroll Administrative Training

Note: If UKG Payroll Services has not been purchased, UKG will configure tax filing

Subscription Services	Assumptions
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options for one of the following vendors – ADP, BSI, Ceridian.

Deployment prepares you to manage post payroll calculation functions utilizing the services as indicated in the Payroll Processing Addendum through:

UKG Ready Payroll Services*

*Requires UKG Ready Payroll

- Election of services
- Confirmation of Funding method
- Testing of Funding bank account
- Tax Account ID, Frequency & Rate (Note: Services can only be provided for tax accounts with valid Tax ID provided)
- Balancing Current Year Payroll Tax Payments
- Collection of Power of Attorney forms for all jurisdictions
- Delivery policy configuration
- Shipping account authorization and configuration
- Confirmation Multi-state new hire registration, if applicable
- Master Vendor maintenance
- Payroll Processing Notifications
- Tax Code configuration verification reporting
- UKGPS New administrator training

Note: Customer must provide all requested information, including year-to-date payroll and tax payment information, valid tax account IDs for all active tax jurisdictions, and requested Power-of-attorney forms.

Enables data to flow between UKG Ready and 3rd party applications and/or vendors. UKG will deliver up to three (3) additional interfaces as part of this project.

UKG Ready Integration Hub

Included with any above-listed Subscription Services, as available and required

The customer is responsible for providing import files to UKG in the standard UKG Ready format and utilizing the standard UKG Ready delivery method. Each direction (To/From) any 3rd party system and UKG is considered a separate interface.

Interfaces will be accomplished via standard flat-file exchange. Customer will work with UKG and 3rd party vendors to facilitate design, testing, and validation. Examples of interfaces/integrations that can be supplied under this project include:

All Benefit and Financial integrations require Benefits Hub, a service of UKG Ready.

- Schedule Import/Export
- Punch Import/Export
- Demographic Import/Export
- Accruals Import/Export

The included interfaces will expire if not identified by Launch Go Live.

Note: Non-templated, bidirectional, custom reports and/or API (Application Programming Interface) based integrations are not included in the scope of this project. If such services or reports are required, a separate quote will be provided.

UKG Leave Manager*

*Recommend being used with UKG Ready Time, Accruals & HR

Adds comprehensive leave administration through:

- Federal & state leave policy enforcement
- Employer-specific leave policy enforcement
- Qualifying questionnaire
- Leave eligibility, type & duration determination
- Leave hour interface with timesheets

Subscription Services	Assumptions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave case routing workflow • Leave case life cycle monitoring • Employee self-services leave request & history • Standard reporting & email notification alerts <p>One-Time data load using customer-supplied data of current leave cases, leave case entries & entitlement balances in a standard UKG-supplied format</p> <p>Provides proactive administration of your ACA (Affordable Care Act) compliance strategy across the UKG Ready solution through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Configurable time periods & rules • Set measurement periods & hours threshold • Calculation of employee ACA (full-time (FT) status • Identify employees ACA standing by month • Flag part-time (PT) employees approaching ACA FT status • Flag ACA FT employees no longer qualifying • Calculation of plan's affordability (Requires UKG Payroll) • Settings for minimum value plan (Requires UKG HR) • Year-End government compliant forms • Standard ACA compliance reporting • One-Time Data load using customer-supplied data of employee hours for look back in a standard UKG-supplied format
<p>UKG Ready ACA Manager*</p> <p>*Recommend being used with UKG Ready Time, HR & Payroll</p>	
<p>UKG Ready Accruals*</p> <p>* Requires UKG Ready Time and/or Payroll</p>	<p>Adds comprehensive accrual administration to UKG Ready Time by automatically enforcing your time-off policies through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent enforcement of policy • Configurable calculation methods & grants • Time-Off routing & approval workflow (requires Timekeeper) • Time-Off requests at data collection devices • Automatic updates to schedule & timecard (requires Timekeeper) • Visibility to projected balances • Automatic balance reduction (requires Timekeeper or Payroll) • View time-off calendars for groups • Mobile access • One-Time data load using customer-supplied data for current year in a standard UKG -supplied format • Configure Accruals profiles and assign them to employees
<p>UKG Scheduler*</p> <p>*Requires UKG Ready Time</p>	<p>Provides automated tools and high-quality information to create accurate schedules aligning staffing requirements with budget and business demand through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule build based on demand • Fill w/best-fit employee preferences & skills • Configurable color-coded scheduling views • Budgeting constraint visibility • Configurable routing & approval workflow • Tools for determining schedule effectiveness • Cost of schedule

Subscription Services	Assumptions
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Provides documentation proof of compliance for required administration to UKG Time by automatically enforcing your policies through:

UKG Ready Attestation*

- Configurable questions & response choices
- Automated notification & reminders
- Several employee prompts with workflows
 - Prompts differ based on attestation prompt
- Workflows**
- Functionality for the InTouch Clock vs. the Web may differ
- Full Audit Report

* Requires UKG Ready Time

**Up to three (3) of each, as needed, will be configured by the UKG project team. The customer can continue to configure as many as needed.

Deployment gets you started with the end-to-end benefit administration process with the ability to automate carrier connectivity through:

UKG Ready Benefits*

- Employee Self-Service capabilities including open enrollment/life events
- Dependent and beneficiary record keeping
- One time data load of benefit enrollments, including dependents and beneficiaries
- Benefit maintenance training
- Five (5) carrier feeds including benefit providers, COBRA connectivity to a TPA (Third Party Administrator), and Financial Connectivity
- Smart Forms
- Standard Reporting

*Requires UKG Ready HR for benefit plan feeds and UKG Ready Payroll for retirement/401(k) feeds

The included interfaces will expire if not identified by Launch Go Live.
 Note: Each file needed, even to the same vendor, counts as one (1) feed.

Provides performance management process from defining programs and guidelines through budgeting and modeling to routing proposals for approval through:

UKG Ready Performance Management*

- Full Performance Configuration**
- Performance Development - Customer will be trained on how to setup Goal Categories, Goal Types and how to assign them to Employees. Customers will be responsible for the setup of each development area.
- Succession Planning
 - Succession Metrics
 - Up to 5 Succession Profiles will be configured by the UKG project team, however the Customer can configure as many as needed
 - Customer will be trained on how to assign succession profiles to employees and manage the metrics

*Requires UKG Ready HR

**Up to three (3) review profiles will be configured by the UKG project team. The customer can continue to configure as many as needed.

Subscription Services	Assumptions
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<p>UKG Recruiting*</p> <p>*Requires UKG Ready HR</p>	<p>Provides proactive administration of your Recruitment strategy across the UKG Ready solution through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant Configuration • Applicant Administration • Job Requisitions • Workflows** • Checklists** • Questionnaires** • Tracking/recruitment custom forms** • Talent tracking: training, skills, certifications • Communication and Notification templates** • Standard reporting <p>**Up to five (5) of each, as needed, will be configured by the UKG project team. The customer can continue to configure as many as needed.</p>
<p>UKG Ready Bryte AI</p>	<p>UKG will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with configuring access to Bryte Assist through security settings • Provide guidance on how to upload documents to Bryte Assist • Share best practices for using Bryte Assist effectively <p>Note: Bryte AI does not currently support the automatic generation of responses based on localized content-specific rules or policies unless those are uploaded. We also recommend that customers encourage their user base to provide clear feedback if Bryte AI ever provides incorrect information. For any issues, Customer Administrators should submit tickets via the appropriate UKG channels, following the established escalation process and SLA requirements.</p>

8. Service Requests

Requests for change to this Statement of Work or the project it covers must be submitted to your project manager in writing or in the form of an electronic service request. Any of the following items will be considered out of scope and require a service request:

- Material changes in the scope or effort (i.e., # of deployments or EIN's, request of onsite assistance, etc.)
- Material changes in the number or type of deliverables to meet the defined scope of effort (i.e., additional integration, profiles, etc.)
- Additional historical data loading (HR Data or Payroll/Check Data)
- Changes to the project resource requirements
- Changes to the Launch duration, i.e., changes to scheduled dates after acceptance of the Project Plan



- Projects placed on hold may incur re-engagement or other re-work fees and may result in a change of consultant(s).

UKG will estimate the time and costs needed to implement the change and the impact it may have on the delivery of the project. UKG will perform the requested work once the service request has been completed and signed by the Customer.

9. **Completion Criteria**

The project covered under this Statement of Work will be considered complete when any one of the following completion criteria is met, and no further Subscription Services configuration work is to be done as part of the originally ordered implementation. If additional work is required, a Change Order or new Statement of Work must be scoped, quoted, and signed.

- The customer has affirmed approval in writing
- The system has been used to generate, retain, or export data that is used to produce a live pay statement for an active employee
- Material changes to the project resource requirements
- Material changes to the Launch duration

Houston County Agenda Request Form

Date Submitted: November 12, 2025 Board Date: November 18, 2025

Person requesting appointment with County Board: Brian Pogodzinski

Issue:

Non-State Aid cities are required to have a county sponsor and support projects applying for Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) grant funding.

Attachments/Documentation for the Board's Review:

Separate resolutions for Houston and Caledonia are attached.

Justification:

Neither Caledonia or Houston can apply for LRIP funds without having Houston County sponsor and support their projects.

Action Requested:

Request approval of:

- Resolution of Support for the City of Houston LRIP application.
- Resolution of Support for the City of Caledonia LRIP application.

For County Use Only			
<u>Reviewed by:</u>	_____ County Auditor	_____ County Attorney	_____ Zoning Administrator
	_____ Finance Director	_____ County Engineer	_____ Environmental Services
	_____ IS Director	_____ Other (indicate dept)	_____
<u>Recommendation:</u>			
<u>Decision:</u>			

All agenda request forms must be submitted to Allison Wagner at BOC@co.houston.mn.us by 12:00 p.m. on Thursday in order to be considered for inclusion on the following week's agenda. The Board will review all requests and determine if the request will be heard at a County Board meeting.

*****CERTIFICATION*****

STATE OF MINNESOTA

COUNTY OF HOUSTON

I, Polly Heberlein, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Houston County Board of Commissioners dated _____.

WITNESS my hand and the seal of my office this ____ day of _____, 2025.

(SEAL)

Polly Heberlein, Houston County Interim Auditor/Treasurer

RESOLUTION NO. 25-40

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FROM SPONSORING AGENCY

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR AND AGREEMENT TO SPONSOR THE CITY OF CALEDONIA PURSUIT OF 2025 LOCAL ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FUNDING FROM MnDOT FOR THE WARRIOR AVENUE EXTENSION PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Warrior Avenue Extension Project (“Project”) includes North Warrior Avenue between Trunk Highway 76 (“TH 76”) and the Courtney Drive; and

WHEREAS, the Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) administered by the Minnesota Department of Transportation makes available up to \$1,500,000 to apply towards projects on local roads that are regionally significant, result in safety improvements, address transportation deficiencies, and contribute to economic development; and

WHEREAS, the Warrior Avenue Extension project is regionally significant, results in safety improvements, addresses transportation deficiencies, and contributes to economic development for the following reasons:

- 1) By providing direct access to TH 76 for local and commercial traffic,
- 2) By reducing significant congestion at the intersection of Esch Drive and Trunk Highway 44/76 (“TH 44/76”), especially during peak school times,
- 3) By providing a paved surface with a 10-ton capacity,
- 4) By expanding pedestrian facilities,
- 5) By connecting with a planned Houston County bike route to Beaver Creek Valley State Park, and
- 6) By expanding access to commercial and industrial properties; and

WHEREAS, the project would not be financially feasible for the City without LRIP funding; and

WHEREAS, the Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) requires a city, such Caledonia, that is not a State Aid city, to have a county sponsor and the support of the County Board; and

WHEREAS, City of Caledonia understands that it will be responsible for all costs not covered by LRIP funding, including all engineering, inspection, administration, and construction costs over the funding cap; and

WHEREAS, City of Caledonia will maintain the road for the lifetime of the improvements; and

WHEREAS, the proposed year for project construction is 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
AS FOLLOWS; that

1. The County supports the City of Caledonia's pursuit of Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) funds for the construction of North Warrior Avenue between TH 76 and Courtney Drive.
2. The County agrees to sponsor the City of Caledonia's Local Road Improvement Program application to MnDOT.

*****CERTIFICATION*****

STATE OF MINNESOTA

COUNTY OF HOUSTON

I, Polly Heberlein, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Houston County Board of Commissioners dated _____.

WITNESS my hand and the seal of my office this ____ day of _____, 2025.

(SEAL)

Polly Heberlein, Houston County Interim Auditor/Treasurer



HOUSTON COUNTY
 304 South Marshall Street
 Caledonia, MN 55921
 TEL (507) 725-5836

2026 Board Meeting Schedule

<i>1-Jan</i>	<i>New Year's Day (Employee Holiday)</i>	<i>3-Jul</i>	<i>Independence Day (Employee Holiday Observed)</i>
6-Jan	9:00 Full Board Meeting		
13-Jan	9:00 Workgroup Session	7-Jul	9:00 Full Board Meeting
<i>19-Jan</i>	<i>ML King Day (Employee Holiday)</i>	14-Jul	9:00 Workgroup Session
20-Jan	9:00 Full Board Meeting	21-Jul	9:00 Full Board Meeting
27-Jan	9:00 Full Board Meeting	28-Jul	9:00 Full Board Meeting
3-Feb	9:00 Full Board Meeting	4-Aug	9:00 Full Board Meeting
10-Feb	9:00 Workgroup Session	11-Aug	9:00 Workgroup Session
<i>16-Feb</i>	<i>President's Day (Employee Holiday)</i>	18-Aug	9:00 Full Board Meeting
17-Feb	9:00 Full Board Meeting	25-Aug	9:00 Full Board Meeting
24-Feb	9:00 Full Board Meeting	1-Sep	9:00 Full Board Meeting
3-Mar	9:00 Full Board Meeting	<i>7-Sep</i>	<i>Labor Day (Employee Holiday)</i>
4-5 Mar	AMC Legislative Conference	8-Sep	9:00 Workgroup Session
10-Mar	9:00 Workgroup Session	15-Sep	9:00 Full Board Meeting
17-Mar	9:00 Full Board Meeting	22-Sep	9:00 Full Board Meeting
24-Mar	9:00 Full Board Meeting	29-Sep	No Meeting
31-Mar	No Meeting	6-Oct	9:00 Full Board Meeting
3-Apr	<i>Spring Holiday (Employee Holiday)</i>	13-Oct	9:00 Workgroup Session
7-Apr	9:00 Full Board Meeting	20-Oct	9:00 Full Board Meeting
14-Apr	9:00 Workgroup Session	27-Oct	9:00 Full Board Meeting
21-Apr	9:00 Full Board Meeting	3-Nov	9:00 Full Board Meeting
28-Apr	9:00 Full Board Meeting	10-Nov	9:00 Workgroup Session
5-May	9:00 Full Board Meeting	<i>11-Nov</i>	<i>Veteran's Day (Employee Holiday)</i>
12-May	9:00 Workgroup Session	17-Nov	9:00 Full Board Meeting
19-May	9:00 Full Board Meeting	24-Nov	9:00 Full Board Meeting
<i>25-May</i>	<i>Memorial Day (Employee Holiday)</i>	<i>26-27 Nov</i>	<i>Thanksgiving (Employee Holiday)</i>
26-May	9:00 Full Board Meeting	1-Dec	9:00 Full Board Meeting
2-Jun	9:00 Full Board Meeting	8-Dec	AMC Conf No Workgroup Session
9-Jun	9:00 Workgroup Session	15-Dec	9:00 Full Board Meeting
16-Jun	9:00 Full Board Meeting	22-Dec	9:00 Full Board Meeting
<i>19-Jun</i>	<i>Juneteenth (Employee Holiday)</i>	<i>24-25 Dec</i>	<i>Christmas Eve/Day (Employee Holiday)</i>
23-Jun	9:00 Full Board Meeting	29-Dec	9:00 Full Board Meeting
30-Jun	No Meeting		

Full Board Meetings occur in the County Board Meeting Room, 2nd floor, Historic Courthouse Building, Caledonia, MN. Agenda, board packets, and minutes are stored at the Historic Courthouse Building and shared on the Houston County website, as are video recordings, when available.

The County Board conducts workgroup sessions to receive information from staff or outside agencies regarding current or upcoming issues or projects in advance of requests to take formal action. The County Board does not take formal action during workgroup meetings. The County Board will normally hold workgroup sessions at 9:00 in Rm. 222 of the Historic Courthouse Building, Caledonia, MN, but may move to other locations and times, as appropriate. If changed, the County will announce the changed time and location during the preceding full board meeting and reflect the change in the published agenda for said meeting. These meetings are not video recorded, but agenda and minutes will be available via the county website.



Commissioner Warrants 2025/11/18

From Lynn Colsch <LColsch@HoCoMN.gov>

Date Thu 11/13/2025 11:19 AM

To HoCo BOC <BOC@HoCoMN.gov>

Cc Carol Lapham <CLapham@HoCoMN.gov>; Eliana Babinski <EBabinski@HoCoMN.gov>; Susan Tostenson <STostenson@HoCoMN.gov>

REQUEST APPROVAL FOR PAYMENT

**2025/11/18 COMMISSIONER'S
WARRANTS:**

VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT
ABILITY BUILDING COMMUNITY	2,807.72
ACENTEK	4,393.71
ADVANCED CORRECTIONAL HEALTHCAR	15,977.04
BOLTON & MENK INC	4,500.00
BRUENING ROCK PRODUCTS INC	7,005.86
CALEDONIA OIL CO INC	4,650.00
CALEDONIA/CITY OF	14,883.15
CEDA	7,285.33
COMPUTER FORENSIC SERVICES LLC	48,301.41
ENTERPRISE FM	11,199.61
HOUSTON COUNTY TREASURER	10,940.06
HOUSTON COUNTY TREASURER	21,666.13
INTERSTATE BILLING SERVICES	5,574.04
KARPEL SOLUTIONS, INC.	7,593.38
LIBERTY TIRE RECYCLING LLC	3,361.25
MIENERGY COOPERATIVE	2,040.53
MINNESOTA ENERGY RESOURCES	3,157.49
MN COUNTIES INTERGOVERNMENTAL TR	2,500.00
MN STATE AUDITOR	8,710.50
MN STATE TREASURER	4,826.00
MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS INC	11,895.50
OLYMPIC BUILDERS GENERAL CONTRAC	94,901.20
RICHARD'S SANITATION LLC	26,219.07
SIEMENS INDUSTRY INC	2,988.00
SOUTHERN MINNESOTA INSPECTION CO	2,128.60
SUBSURFACE INC	53,880.00

TWIN VILLAGE LLC	2,248.99
WEX BANK	6,979.52
WIEBKE TIRE CO	2,379.75
	<hr/>
	394,993.84
49 VENDORS PAID LESS THAN \$2000.00	26,291.40
	<hr/>
	421,285.24
PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	261,733.60
	<hr/>
	<u>683,018.84</u>

Lynn Colsch
Finance Clerk
Houston County
304 South Marshall Street
Caledonia MN 55921
507-725-5825
LColsch@HoCoMN.gov