

# TORRANCE COUNTY

## ORDINANCE 2000-1

**An ordinance establishing Torrance County Personnel Policies  
Adopted by the Torrance County Commission**

State of New Mexico  
County of Torrance

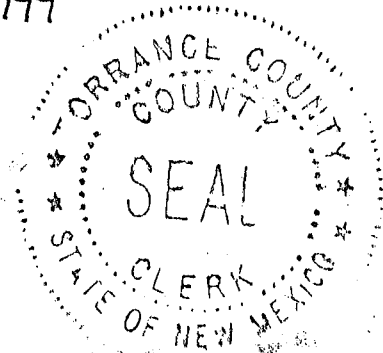
I hereby certify that this instrument was  
filed for record on the 24 day  
of May A.D., 2000  
at 10:42 o'clock A M and duly  
recorded in book 287 at page 736-799

Witness my hand and Seal of Office

Linda Swan

County Clerk, Torrance Co., N.M.

Marina Starke, Deputy



## SECTION 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

**1.1. PURPOSE.** The purpose of this personnel policy manual is to establish consistent, basic policies and practices concerning relations between Torrance County and its employees. This personnel policy manual further establishes the formal grievance procedure available to regular employees to hear grievances with respect to demotions, dismissals and suspensions. The provisions of this personnel policy governing merit and the grievance of disciplinary actions do not apply to employees appointed by elected officials who serve at the discretion of the elected official.

**1.2. SCOPE.** Definite rules and regulations cannot be readily formulated for every possible problem and situation. This ordinance serves as a general basis and guide for the proper, efficient, and effective administration of personnel matters of the employees of Torrance County. The Personnel Rules contained herein replace and supersede all previously issued Personnel Rules and Regulations applicable to employees of Torrance County.

**1.3. AMENDMENT OF POLICY.** There shall be no Resolution or other action of the Board of County Commissioners or other county officials, which is inconsistent with this policy, except by amendment of this Ordinance as required by law. The Board of County Commissioners reserves the right to amend this personnel policy manual at its discretion.

**1.4. EMPLOYEE KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION OF POLICY.** The Payroll Department shall provide a copy of this policy to present employees and to all new employees with instructions to read and know of all provisions of these rules. Employees shall sign for the copy upon receipt.

**1.5. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY.** Individuals will not be discriminated against on the basis of race, age, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, physical or mental handicap or medical condition, in consideration for employment, duration of employment, compensation, terms conditions, or privileges of employment by Torrance County. Torrance County has committed itself to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act which protects qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

**1.6. ADMINISTRATION BY COUNTY MANAGER.** The County Manager is delegated the authority to administer the personnel system and the terms of this personnel policy manual and its amendments, and all future approved personnel policies and operating procedures.

**1.7. PRONOUNS.** All pronouns used in this Personnel Policy Manual shall include the masculine, feminine, and neuter gender, shall include the singular and plural, and the context of this Personnel Policy Manual shall be read accordingly.

**SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS**

**2.1. ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE WITH PAY.** Leave with pay granted at the department head's discretion for good cause with the County Manager's approval.

**2.2. ANNIVERSARY DATE.** A day twelve (12) months from an employee's date of hire.

**2.3. ANNUAL LEAVE.** Leave with pay granted to a regular or qualified appointed employee after accrual at a specific rate.

**2.4. APPEAL.** Written request that a decision of a formal grievance be reconsidered at a further stage in the grievance procedure.

**2.5. APPLICANT.** A person who has made formal application on an official county personnel application form for a position in the county service.

**2.6. APPOINTED EMPLOYEE.** Appointed employees include: the Chief Deputy appointed by the County Assessor, Clerk, and Treasurer; the Undersheriff and the Executive Secretary appointed by the Sheriff; the County Manager and the DWI Coordinator appointed by the County Commission. All appointed employees shall work forty (40) hours per week and shall submit bi-weekly timesheets.

**2.7. COMPENSATORY TIME.** Time off granted for hours worked beyond a nonexempt employee's regular work hours. Compensatory time may be granted in lieu of overtime pay to a nonexempt employee as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act, on the basis of one and one-half (1 1/2) hours compensatory time for each hour of overtime physically worked in excess of forty (40) hours in one work week.

**2.8. COUNTY BUSINESS.** The performance of duties of a county position at an employee's normal workstation or at a location authorized by the county.

**2.9. DEMOTION.** A personnel action which reduces the employee's responsibilities and pay. Demotions may be voluntary or may be the result of disciplinary actions.

**2.10. DEPARTMENT HEAD.** The elected official or appointee of the County Commission who has responsibility for supervising and administering a department of county government as determined and designated by the County Commission.

**2.11. DISMISSAL.** An action, which terminates an individual's employment with the county.

**2.12. DUE PROCESS.** The right granted to a full-time regular employee who has completed the probationary period to pre- and post-disciplinary hearings, for actions of suspension, demotion, or dismissal.

**2.13. ELECTED OFFICIAL.** An individual elected by popular vote or appointed to fill vacancies in elective office (i.e., County Commissioner, County Clerk, County Treasurer, County Sheriff, County Assessor, and Probate Judge.)

**2.14. EXEMPT EMPLOYEE.** All executive, administrative, and professional employees as defined in Department of Labor regulations relating to the Fair Labor Standards Act, and whose compensation is based on a fixed annual salary. Exempt employees are not entitled to overtime pay or compensatory time off. Exempt employees include Assistant County Manager, Communications Director, Senior Citizen's Coordinator, Lieutenant and above in the Sheriff's Department.

**2.15. FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE.** All employees in the County Clerk's, Treasurer's, Assessor's, Manager's, and the Sheriff's Office who work forty (40) hours per week, and all other employees in the Road and Dispatch departments who work thirty-six (36) hours per week are considered full-time employees. All employees in the Senior Citizens department who work thirty-two (32), thirty-six (36), and forty (40) hours per week are also considered full-time employees.

**2.16. GRIEVANCE.** A complaint of an employee concerning actions taken by management which result in loss of pay to the employee or which results from dissatisfaction with the working conditions or relationships. There are two types of grievances: formal and informal. Each type will be subject to its own hearing procedures.

**2.17. HIRING BOARD.** A three to five person board created to conduct interviews of applicants for a specific job opening. This board consists of the County Manager, Assistant County Manager, the appropriate Department Head and any other applicable personnel.

**2.18. INSUBORDINATION.** The conduct of an employee constituting defiance, disobedience, dissension, rebelliousness, or resistance to supervision, which will be the subject of disciplinary action.

**2.19. LAYOFF.** (Reduction in Force) The involuntary separation of an employee from the county service without fault on the part of the employee, due to reorganization, lack of work, or lack of funds.

**2.20. MEDICAL DISABILITY TERMINATION.** The termination of an employee from county employment when the employee is unable to perform the essential functions of the position due to a physical or mental condition.

**2.21. NONEXEMPT EMPLOYEES.** All employees who are not exempt employees as defined in Department of Labor regulations relating to the Fair Labors Standards Act. Nonexempt employees shall receive overtime pay or compensatory time off for actual hours physically worked in excess of forty- (40) hour per workweek.

**2.22. PART-TIME EMPLOYEE.** An employee paid by the hour that may be called on short notice or an occasional basis. A part-time employee generally works less than forty (40) hours per week.

**2.23. PERFORMANCE REVIEW.** The written objective review made by the employee's supervisor of an employee's performance relating to the employee's assigned duties.

**2.24. PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEE.** A full-time employee hired to fill a regular position who has not yet completed the six- (6) month probationary period of employment during which time the employee is terminable-at-will.

**2.25. PROMOTION.** Transfer to a position requiring higher responsibilities and salary.

**2.26. REGULAR EMPLOYEE.** A full-time employee who has completed the probationary period, who shall be disciplined only for cause, and who is entitled to all the rights and benefits of the Torrance County Personnel Policy Manual. A regular employee must be specifically designated as such on a payroll change form that will be made part of the employee's personnel file.

**2.27. SICK LEAVE.** Leave with pay granted to a regular or qualified appointed employee, after accrual at a specific rate, when personal illness or quarantine keeps the employee from performing the duties of the position or when an employee's relative, who is related by marriage or blood, or where a relationship is established by judicial decree, is ill.

**2.28. SICK LEAVE ABUSE.** Use of accrued sick leave for non-medical problems. Employees abusing sick leave may be disciplined up to and including dismissal.

**2.29. SUSPENSION.** An enforced leave of absence without pay, not to exceed 10 working days, for disciplinary reasons, or pending determination of the grievance procedure.

**2.30. TEMPORARY POSITION.** A temporary employee is hired on either a full-time or part-time basis to a seasonal position or to a position established for a period of no more than six (6) months.

**2.31. TERMINABLE-AT-WILL.** A terminable-at-will employee is one who fills an appointed, temporary, or part-time position, or is one who has not completed his probationary period. A terminable-at-will employee serves at the discretion of the county, and his employment can be terminated without cause. A terminable-at-will employee cannot grieve suspension, demotion, dismissal, or other disciplinary actions.

**2.32. TRANSFER.** The transfer of an employee from one department or office to another department or office in the county service, or to a position in another geographic location or to a position having the same salary.

### SECTION 3. EMPLOYMENT STATUS

**3.1. FULL-TIME REGULAR EMPLOYEE.** A full-time regular employee is one who has completed the probationary period and who normally is scheduled to work the number of hours set forth in paragraph 2.15. A full-time regular employee is eligible for all rights and benefits provided by the county. A full-time regular employee cannot change to part-time status without the approval of the County Manager.

**3.2. PART-TIME EMPLOYEE.** A part-time employee is paid by the hour. A part-time employee generally works less than forty (40) hours per week. A part-time employee does not accrue annual or sick leave and is not eligible for any other type of leave provided by the County.

**3.3. APPOINTED EMPLOYEE.** The appointees of elected officials are as follows: the County Manager, and the DWI Coordinator to the County Commission, the Undersheriff and Executive Secretary to the Sheriff, and the Chief Deputies to the County Assessor, Clerk, and Treasurer. Appointees of Elected Officials shall receive a salary set by the County Commission. Appointed employees are considered exempt employees as defined in the Department of Labor regulations relating to the Fair Labor Standards Act. Appointed employees are terminable-at-will and cannot avail themselves of the grievance procedure set forth herein, but are entitled to all other benefits provided by the county, unless otherwise provided.

**3.4. EXEMPT EMPLOYEE.** The exempt employees are as follows: Administrative Assistant to the County Manager, Senior Citizen's Coordinator, Communications Director, Lieutenant and above in the Sheriff's Department. Exempt employees shall receive a fixed annual salary set by the Department Head and the County Manager. Exempt employees are not entitled to overtime pay or compensatory time off. Exempt employees are entitled to all other benefits provided by the County.

**3.5 PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEE.** The purpose of the probationary period is to evaluate the employee's ability, potential, and performance. A full-time probationary employee is one who is hired to fill a regular position who has not yet completed the six (6) month probationary period of employment, with the exception of law enforcement and dispatch, during which time he is terminable-at-will and may not avail himself of the grievance procedure set forth herein, but is entitled to all other county benefits provided herein with the exception of a personal day. Probationary employee shall accrue annual and sick leave at the same rate as a regular full-time employee, but may not use any of the annual leave during that (6) six month period. See section 3.5.G.



- A. To determine whether an employee has satisfactorily completed the probationary period, the employee's department head will review the employee's performance and the employee's ability to work with the public, peers, supervisors, and management. A probationary employee shall be reviewed at the end of the probationary period, and be evaluated at any other time during the probationary period.
- B. An employee hired to fill a law enforcement or dispatch position shall obtain the statutorily required certification for the position. Failure to obtain such certification within the one- (1) year period bars the employee from becoming a regular employee of those departments and shall result in the employee's dismissal.
- C. If an employee does not satisfactorily complete the probationary period, the employee will be dismissed. Proposed dismissal of a probationary employee must be discussed with the County Manager and the Personnel Officer.
- D. An employee who fills a temporary position and is subsequently hired to fill a regular position shall serve the required probationary period. The beginning date of the probationary period is the date the employee changes from temporary to probationary status.
- E. A former Torrance County employee rehired more than six (6) months after termination, or rehired at any time to fill a different position, shall serve the required probationary period.
- F. If the employee is hired to a full-time position, the first day of work in that position shall be used in computing the beginning of the probationary period.
- G. Accrued annual leave may not be used by a probationary employee during that (6) six-month probationary period and is not payable if terminated during that period.

**3.6 TEMPORARY EMPLOYEE.** A temporary employee is hired on either a full-time or part-time basis to a seasonal position or to a position established for a period of no more than six (6) months. A temporary employee who is terminable-at-will, is not entitled to grieve personnel actions, does not receive county benefits, and does not accrue leave.

**SECTION 4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

**4.1. RECRUITMENT POSTING PROCEDURE.** Whenever filling a vacant position, the Department Head must submit a "Request to Hire" form to the Personnel Officer. Within two (2) days of receipt of the request, the Personnel Officer will post the opening within the Courthouse. At the same time that the position is posted within the County, the position may also be advertised in the local newspaper at least once.

**4.2. PERMISSION FOR TRANSFER.** No county employee or department head can deny another county employee who is not the subject of a disciplinary action, permission to apply for a job vacancy in any other county office or department for which the employee is qualified.

**4.3. APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITY.****A. Submission of Applications**

Applications for employment shall be accepted in the County Manager's Office during normal business hours. Applicants shall be considered for positions for which they have applied and are qualified. Applications must be submitted on the employment application form provided by the county with any other applicable documents attached.

**B. Proof of Qualification**

The applicant is responsible for furnishing proof of qualifications or possession of any license, certification, or degree when these requirements are necessary and set forth in the job description.

**C. Immigration Act Compliance**

The applicant is responsible for furnishing proof of identification and right to work in accordance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. If the applicant cannot furnish the required documentation, then the applicant is ineligible for work.

**D. Certification**

The applicant is responsible for signing the employment application and certifying as to the truth of all statements made in the application.

**E. Referral to Department Head**

The Personnel Officer will deliver applications to the department heads when the required advertising time has expired.

**4.4. SELECTION.** Selection shall be made by the hiring board and will be based on the following: skills, educational background, experience, personal interview, references, and results of employment examinations.

**A. Employment Reference Checks**

References provided by the applicant **shall** be checked by the Personnel Office prior to hiring. Applicants will be asked to sign a written authorization on the employment application for the county to check references. Only those applicants who sign this written authorization will be considered for the position for which they have applied.

**B. Driver's License Checks**

All applicants are subject to a motor vehicle check to verify that they have a valid New Mexico driver's license. If the applicant has an out of state driver's license, they must obtain a New Mexico driver's license prior to employment with the County. If an applicant's driver's license is suspended, revoked or not valid for any reason, they cannot be considered for County employment that required a valid driver's license.

**C. Criminal History Check**

All applicant's selected for interview will be asked to sign a written authorization for the County to conduct a criminal history check through the N.C.I.C. system. Any applicant that refuses to sign the written authorization will not be considered for employment with the county. If the criminal history check reveals a felony or misdemeanor conviction as described in NMSA 1978, 28-2-1 or 10-1-3, Et seq., the applicant is ineligible for hire with the county.

**D. Physical Examinations and Drug Testing**

Applicants to whom positions have been offered shall be required to undergo medical examinations, which may include urinalysis, blood testing, and radiographic examination. Drug testing will be done for all new hires. Employment medical examinations must be completed and reviewed before the employee can report to work. Offers of employment are contingent upon the physician's statement that the individual can perform the assigned duties and tasks of that position and is drug free. The Personnel Officer will arrange all physical and drug testing

appointments. Employment medical examinations will be paid for by the county. The County Manager may approve a conditional hire of an applicant pending the results of the physical and drug test in exceptional circumstances.

**D. Law Enforcement Entrance Exam**

All applicants for a law enforcement position must successfully complete the law enforcement entrance exam to be considered for employment with the county. The law enforcement entrance exam consists of a physical agility test, written exam and interviews by the hiring board.

**4.5. INELIGIBILITY FOR HIRE OR REHIRE.** An applicant shall be considered ineligible for hire or rehire by Torrance County if the applicant has/is:

- A. Made any false statement or omission on the employment application.
- B. Unable to furnish proof of identification and right to work as defined by section 4.3(C).
- C. Refused to sign authorization for reference checks.
- D. Not met the requirements of the position.
- E. Failed to complete employment examinations or other requirements as directed by the county.
- F. Not met the criteria for insurance or bonding as required by County or State law.
- G. Been dismissed from county service as a result of a disciplinary measure.
- H. Not been certified by a physician that the applicant can perform the physical requirements of the position.
- I. Does not have a valid New Mexico driver's license.
- J. Failure to provide a written two week notice of resignation of a previous county position.
- K. Been convicted of a felony as described in NMSA 1978, 28-2-1, et seq. (1987 Repl. Pamp.) or convicted of a felony or infamous crime

**SECTION 6. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT****6.1. PERFORMANCE REVIEW****A. Probationary Performance Review**

The department head shall discuss performance with the employee during the probationary period. The employee must receive a performance review of satisfactory or better at the end of the probationary period before the employee can become a regular employee entitled to all of the rights and benefits of that status. See also paragraph 3.3 (B). **Status change from a probationary employee to a regular employee shall be noted on a payroll change notice.**

**B. Other Performance Reviews**

All county employees shall have a performance review upon an annual basis, but any employee may be reviewed at any time for the following conditions.

1. A change of job description (increases or decreases of current responsibilities).
2. Recommendations of any type of salary increase or decrease.
3. Demotion or suspension.

All performance reviews shall be documented and placed in the employee's personnel file. Performance reviews must be signed by the employee and the Department Head.

**C. Employee rebuttal**

The employee may submit in writing a rebuttal statement to the performance review, which will become a part of the performance review. The rebuttal shall be submitted within 10 days of the review.

**D. Unsatisfactory Review**

In the event an employee receives a performance review that is unsatisfactory, the employee shall be provided with written information that specifies the areas of deficient performance and steps for improvement. The employee shall be warned that failure to meet reasonable performance standards of the position within a set time period

which is not to exceed ninety (90) days may result in disciplinary action or dismissal. An employee who receives an unsatisfactory review shall be re-evaluated within ninety (90) days, and, if performance remains unsatisfactory, the necessary actions will be taken. (Refer to Section 7.1 Basis For Employee Discipline).

**6.2. PROHIBITED POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.** All employees are prohibited from the following activities.

- A. Using official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or a nomination for office, or for any other political purpose.
- B. Directly or indirectly coercing, attempting to coerce, commanding or advising a state or county officer or employee to pay, lend or contribute anything of value to a party, committee, or organization, agency, or person for a political purpose.
- C. Threatening to deny promotions to any employee who does not vote for certain candidates, requiring employees to contribute part of their pay to a political fund, influencing subordinate employees to buy tickets to political fund-raising events and similar events, advising employees to take part in political activity and matters of a similar nature.
- D. Engaging in political activity while on duty or campaigning on county property.

### **6.3. NEPOTISM**

#### **A. Definition of Nepotism**

Nepotism, for purposes of this personnel-policy manual, is defined as the practice of giving preferential treatment in areas of employment including, but not limited to selection, benefits, pay, promotion, and discipline to an employee's near relative. For purposes of this nepotism policy, near-relatives are defined as the employee's spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, first cousins, and all like-relations of the employee's spouse, and any former spouse (s), or unrelated persons sharing a spousal relationship. This definition is to cover any person related to the employee by birth, adoption, or marriage.

#### **B. Prohibited Practices**

The practice or appearance of nepotism is prohibited. Near-relatives shall not work in the same department when there is a supervisory relationship between them. Any problems arising from such a situation should be referred to the County Manager for review. Near-relatives cannot fill or be promoted into a position which requires supervision by a near relative. Neither shall any Elected Official or county employee give employment as clerk, deputy, or assistant, or other class of departmental employee to any near relative when that person's compensation is six hundred (\$600.00) dollars or more per year. NMSA 1978, 10-1-10 (1987 Repl. Pamp.). Any exceptions to this rule must be approved by the County Commission.

#### **6.4. CONFLICTS**

##### **A. Conflict Ban**

No employee shall engage in any business or transaction or accept private employment or other public employment which is incompatible with the proper discharge of the employee's responsibilities, or which gives the appearance of impropriety.

##### **B. Notification and Termination of Outside Employment**

Notification of an employee who is currently employed outside, and who intends to continue employment along with employment by the county shall have written approval from the Department Head stating that there is no conflict. Upon the request of the department head, no employee shall continue in supplementary/outside employment if such employment has a negative impact on the employee's job performance, or creates a liability exposure to the county.

#### **6.5. SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

##### **A. Prohibition of Sexual Harassment**

Employees of Torrance County are prohibited from sexually harassing any other county employee (s). Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual attention or such attention when submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term of an individual's employment; submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or such conduct has the purpose of affecting or unreasonably interfering with

an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

**B. Policy Regarding Sexual Harassment**

Torrance County is committed to enforcing a policy prohibiting sexual harassment that:

1. Provides for a work environment free from all forms of sexual harassment.
2. Applies to the actions of all county employees, elected and appointed officials, and volunteers.
3. Ensures that appropriate corrective measures, up to and including dismissal and appropriate legal action, will be taken if this policy is violated.
4. Establishes a complaint procedure that is fair and confidential, and protects against retaliation for filing, or testifying as a witness to a complaint.
5. Ensures that all complaints are investigated promptly, thoroughly, and fairly.
6. Ensures that all elected officials, department heads, and supervisors are fully aware of their responsibilities under this policy.

**C. Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures**

1. Employees of Torrance County are encouraged to resolve complaints of sexual harassment by reporting them to the County Manager, the Personnel Officer, or the County Attorney. The County Manager, the Personnel Officer, or County Attorney shall document the complaint and provide a copy to the complaining employee and the County Manager. All such complaints shall be kept in a confidential file.
2. The County Manager and the Personnel Officer and/or County Attorney shall meet with the alleged harasser immediately and in no event more than three (3) working days from the filing of the complaint. The purpose of the



meeting will be to investigate the matter and, if necessary, take prompt corrective action. The investigation shall be complete, confidential, and well documented. The principles of progressive discipline, up to and including dismissal from county employment, shall be followed by the supervisor for a person who is determined to have violated the sexual harassment policy. The discipline will vary depending on the nature of the activity of which was complained.

3. Nothing in these procedures shall prohibit the employee from filing a complaint directly with the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity office or the New Mexico Human Rights Division. This avenue should be used when the employee feels that he/she cannot obtain appropriate relief within the steps as explained above. However, employees are encouraged to seek consultation with the County Manager, the Personnel Officer, or County Attorney before filing a formal sexual harassment complaint.

**6.6. DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE AND TESTING POLICY.** Torrance County is committed to a goal of a drug and alcohol free work place in compliance with the Drug-Free Work Place Act of 1988.

**A. Prohibitions**

1. The manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a "controlled substance" by employees is prohibited while on duty, in a county vehicle, or on county premises. A "controlled substance" means any substance, possession of which is a crime under the New Mexico Controlled Substances Act.
2. The consumption or possession of alcohol by an employee is prohibited while on duty, in a county vehicle, or on county premises.
3. No employee will report to work, attempt to perform assigned duties, drive county vehicles or operate county equipment if they are under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance.
4. No supervisor shall allow an employee to report for work, perform assigned duties, drive county vehicles or operate

county equipment if a reasonable suspicion exists that the employee is under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance.

5. Before performing duties, it is the responsibility of the employee to report to their supervisor any use of a prescription drug or over-the-counter drug that may impair their job performance. Supervisors will send the employee home on sick leave in such cases or provide a job which the employee can safely perform.

#### **B. Employment Drug Testing**

A successful employment applicant for any county position including part-time and temporary employees will be tested for alcohol or drugs when he reports for his medical examination. A confirmed positive test result shall be grounds for rejecting the applicant.

#### **C. Reasonable Suspicion Testing**

1. When a supervisor has reasonable suspicion to believe an employee is under the influence of a controlled substance or alcohol, or such are in the employee's possession, the employee will immediately submit to a breathalyzer exam or substance screening. Reasonable suspicion may include but not limited to:
  - a. Job accidents requiring medical treatment and/or damage to property including county property, where the employee is a contributing factor to the accident.
  - b. Evidence of alcohol or drugs or paraphernalia discovered at the employee's work place.
  - c. Any employee showing signs of erratic behavior, changes in mood altered appearance or speech patterns, smell of alcohol on breath and person, an increase in absenteeism, tardiness, and deterioration of work performance.
2. When the supervisor determines that reasonable suspicion exists, the employee shall be notified privately, but in the

presence of at least one witness, that he must submit to an alcohol or drug detection test immediately.

3. The supervisor must notify the County Manager as soon as possible of any specific indicators observed and obtain approval to test the employee. The supervisor must then follow up with written documentation supporting the finding that reasonable suspicion existed. This documentation must be forwarded to the County Manager within twenty-four (24) hours of the reasonable suspicion test.
4. The county will provide transportation to and from the testing site for the employee required to submit to a reasonable suspicion test.
5. All employees required to submit to a detection test based on reasonable suspicion will be prohibited from returning to work pending the test results. The employee will be required to take annual or sick leave during this period.
6. Refusal to submit to any reasonable suspicion detection testing is sufficient grounds for termination.

**D. Random Drug Testing**

Employees must submit to an alcohol or drug detection test when their name is drawn. The names of all employees will be placed in a pool and shall be drawn at random for testing.

1. Alcohol Detection Testing
  - a. Random alcohol detection testing will be done on a monthly basis and will be 10% of all employees.
  - b. Each employee who is notified of selection for random alcohol detection testing must proceed immediately to the test site.
  - c. All alcohol testing will be administered by a Law Enforcement Officer who is certified to operate a breathalyzer.

- d. The county may use saliva testing for initial determination of alcohol concentration, at its discretion. Any such testing must be performed by a qualified technician and positive results must be confirmed by the same procedure as an initial breath alcohol test.
- e. When an alcohol detection test yields a BAC between 0.02 and 0.039 a confirmation test must be conducted. Upon confirmation of a BAC between 0.02 and 0.039, the employee will be placed on administrative leave pending disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- f. When an alcohol detection test yields a BAC between 0.00 and 0.02 a confirmation test must be conducted. Upon confirmation of a BAC between 0.00 and 0.02, the employee may be re-assigned to a non-safety-sensitive position or suspended pending disciplinary actions up to and including termination.
- g. When an alcohol detection test yields a BAC of 0.04 or greater a confirmation test must be conducted. Upon confirmation of a BAC of 0.04 or greater the employee will be put on administrative leave pending termination.

## 2. Drug Detection Testing

- a. Random drug detection testing will be done on a monthly basis and will be 10% of all employees.
- b. Each employee who is notified of selection for random drug detection testing must proceed to the test site immediately.
- c. All drug detection testing will be performed by a certified laboratory.
- d. When a drug detection test yields a positive result, the results will be forwarded to a Medical Review Officer for confirmation.

- e. Upon confirmation of a positive result, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**6.7. REFUSAL TO SUBMIT TO ALCOHOL AND DRUG TESTING.** Refusal by the employee to submit to any alcohol and/or drug detection testing will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

**6.8. POSITIVE RESULTS OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG TESTING.** The guidelines established by the National Institute of Drug Abuse will be used to determine whether an employee tests positive. If an employee tests positive for drugs or alcohol, the employee will be suspended from employment without pay. The employee will be encouraged to successfully complete an approved drug/alcohol rehabilitation program. The employee shall be responsible for paying the cost of the rehabilitation program unless the employee has insurance coverage for such treatment. Upon the employee's return to work after completion of the drug/alcohol rehabilitation program, the employee shall be required to randomly test for drugs/alcohol for a period of two (2) years. If the employee tests positive during this testing period, the employee shall be terminated. If the employee successfully completes this two (2) year testing period, all records of the previous tests and related case documents shall be destroyed after three (3) years from the initial positive test. Any employee can be disciplined for a positive alcohol or drug detection test up to and including termination

**6.9. RETESTING.** An employee who tests positive on a drug/alcohol test may elect to have, at the employee's expense, a retest of the original sample at a drug testing laboratory of the employee's choosing, provided the request is made in writing within twenty-four (24) hours of the employee receiving notice of a positive test result. The county shall pay for the retest if the retest is negative.

**6.10. CONFIDENTIALITY.** No laboratory reports or test results shall appear in the employment personnel file unless they are a part of a disciplinary action, but shall be placed in a special locked file.

## SECTION 7. EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

### 7.1. BASIS FOR EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

#### A. Just Cause Discipline

Disciplinary actions for regular employees are based on just cause in order to promote the efficiency of the services rendered by the county and the operation of its respective departments and offices. Disciplinary actions will be consistent with governing laws and regulations and will be taken without regard to race, age, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, physical or mental handicap or medical condition. No employee will be disciplined for refusing to perform an unlawful act.

#### B. Definition of Just Cause

Just cause is defined as any conduct, action or inaction arising from, or directly connected with, the employee's work which is inconsistent with the employee's obligation to the county and reflects the employee's disregard of the county's interest. Just cause includes, but is not limited to, inefficiency, incompetence, misconduct, negligence, insubordination, performance which continues to be inadequate after reasonable efforts have been made to correct the performance problems, or conviction of a felony or misdemeanor as described in NMSA 1978, 28-2-1 et seq.

#### C. Disciplinary Action

Any department head may take disciplinary action against an employee under the department head's authority, consistent with this personnel policy manual. All disciplinary actions must be furnished in writing to the Personnel Officer for placement in the employee's file with signature of the recipient acknowledging receipt of the action.

#### D. Consultation with County Manager and Personnel Officer

Dismissal, demotion, and suspension require consultation with the County Manager, the Personnel Officer, and the employee's Department Head before implementation. Whenever such consultation is not practical because of urgent circumstances, necessary action may be taken and the situations reviewed with the County Manager and Personnel Officer as soon as practical.

**7.2. PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE.** An employee shall be progressively disciplined if appropriate. Each case of inadequate performance or act of

misconduct shall be judged individually. All actions involving substandard work performance, leading up to and including dismissal require progressive warnings. The step of corrective action used depends on the severity of the infraction and the employee's previous work record. Because of the serious nature of some infractions, the first disciplinary action may be suspension or dismissal.

**A. Verbal Reprimand.**

A verbal reprimand is used for minor infractions such as informing the employee that his actions, behavior or conduct needs to change. A verbal reprimand is not grievable. Causes of verbal reprimands include, but are not limited to:

1. substandard work performance
2. repeated absence or tardiness

**B. Written Reprimand**

1. An employee shall receive a written reprimand because the deficiency or infraction is of a greater degree than that for which a verbal reprimand may be used or if a verbal reprimand was not effective. Causes for written reprimands include, but are not limited to:
  - a. the causes listed for verbal reprimands
  - b. refusal to carry out orders
  - c. sleeping on the job
  - d. failure to follow safety rules
  - e. failure to follow other county rules and procedures
  - f. insubordination
2. Written reprimands shall be placed in the employee's personnel file by the Personnel Officer after the Department Head has provided the employee with a copy of the statement. The employee will be asked to acknowledge having read the comments by signing the statement. If the employee refuses to sign, a witness will attest in writing that

the statement was presented to the employee for signature. The witness' signature indicates that the employee received the statement, but does not necessarily indicate concurrence with its content. The employee may respond with a written rebuttal, which shall be placed in the employee's personnel file. The placement of a written reprimand in an employee's personnel file is not grievable.

3. At the employee's request, the written reprimand may be removed from the employee's personnel file twenty-four (24) months after the employee received the reprimand, provided the employee has not received another written reprimand or other disciplinary action during the twenty-four (24) month period.

#### **C. Suspension**

An employee may be suspended without pay for a single serious offense or for continued inadequate job performance or misconduct after previous attempt(s) to correct the conduct have failed. Such suspension will not exceed ten (10) working days. Suspension of a regular employee is subject to Torrance County grievance procedures. Causes for suspensions include, but are not limited to:

1. the causes listed for written reprimands
2. continued instances of poor performance
3. negligent damage to property and/or person(s)

#### **D. Demotion**

An employee may be demoted for continued inadequate job performance after previous attempt(s) to correct the conduct have failed, provided that there exists a lower position in the County and the employee is capable of performing such job. Demotion is not an appropriate disciplinary action for an employee who has a record of excessive absences or tardiness. Demotion of a regular employee is subject to Torrance County grievance procedures.

#### **E. Dismissal**

Dismissal is the final consequence when progressive discipline has failed to change unacceptable behavior or performance. Dismissal is also



appropriate when the employee has engaged in other behavior that is of a serious nature, which is unacceptable for county employees, even though the employee has not been previously disciplined. The dismissal of an employee is subject to Torrance County grievance procedures. Causes for dismissal shall include, but are not limited to:

1. All causes listed for written reprimand, suspension, and demotion if continuing after attempts to correct have failed.
2. Theft of county property or unapproved use of county property for personal reasons.
3. Conviction of a job related felony or misdemeanor as described in the Criminal Offender Employment Act, NMSA 1978, 28-2-1 et seq.
4. Serious acts of negligence causing damage to persons or county property.
5. Deliberate falsification of information on the employee's job application or other county records.
6. Unlawful manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing or using controlled substances or alcohol on the job or reporting to work under the influence of an unlawful controlled substance or alcohol.
7. Intentional abuse or destruction of county equipment.
8. Refusal to carry out reasonable orders.
9. Failure to meet standards of substance abuse rehabilitation programs.

The above examples are typical of the types of infractions sometimes encountered but are not inclusive of all situations, which may arise. The county reserves the right to exercise judgment and render disciplinary action or dismissal as determined appropriate based on the circumstances of each case.

**7.3. CONDITIONS OR ACTIONS NOT GRIEVABLE.** The following matters are not grievable:

- A. Disputes as to whether or not an established county practice or policy is good.
- B. Matters where a method of review is mandated by law.
- C. Matters where the county is without authority to act or does not have the ability to provide a remedy.
- D. Release of temporary employees prior to or at the end of their anticipated employment period.
- E. The dismissal of probationary employees prior to the expiration of their probationary period.
- F. The dismissal of part-time or appointed employees at any point during their employment with the county.
- G. The layoff of an employee due to reorganization, lack of work, or lack of funds.
- H. The placement of a written reprimand in the employee's personnel file.

**7.4. PRE-DETERMINATION HEARINGS** An employee notified of possible suspension, demotion or dismissal or loss of pay shall be entitled to a pre-determination hearing before the appropriate department head or elected official.

**A. NOTICE**

An employee shall be notified in writing at least 48 hours prior to date and time of determination hearing. The notice shall disclose the reasons for the proposed disciplinary action and all evidence supporting the reasons, and shall state the time, place, and date of the hearing.

**B. IMMEDIATE ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE**

An employee may be placed on administrative leave with pay pending the outcome of the pre-determination hearing.

**C. HEARING PROCEDURE**

The hearing shall be informal and shall be conducted by the employee's department head or elected official. Legal counsel will not be allowed; however, an employee may be accompanied by another employee. The purpose of the hearing is to provide the employee with a reasonable opportunity to address or refute the reasons for the proposed disciplinary action. Employees may respond to the notice of disciplinary action in writing lieu of appearing at the hearing.

**D. WAIVER**

The Hearing may be waived by the employee in which case the disciplinary action is effective immediately.

**E. DECISION**

The department head or elected official shall render a final decision within three (3) days of the hearing or receipt of the written response to the disciplinary hearing.

**F. APPEAL**

An employee dissatisfied with the decision may file an appeal through the formal grievance process.

## SECTION 8. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

**8.1. INFORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE** The purpose of the informal grievance procedure is to provide employees with a fair and equitable process for resolving complaints or problems with general working conditions. Most grievances should be resolved at the lowest possible level and as informally as possible. The following procedures should be the last resort in addressing problems in the work place.

**Step I.** The affected employee shall discuss the problem with the first line supervisor and attempt to work out a solution. No written documentation is required and it is anticipated that most problems will be resolved at this level.

**Step II.** If the problem is not resolved by the supervisor, the employee may file a written complaint with the elected official or department head who shall intervene in an attempt to resolve the problem. The department head or elected official shall generally meet with the affected employee and shall issue a written finding, which shall serve as the final decision.

**8.2. FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE** If an employee is not satisfied with the decision from the pre-determination hearing, they may file a written request for a formal grievance hearing. The formal grievance procedure applies only to those employees appealing suspension without pay, demotion, or dismissals.

### A. FORMAL GRIEVANCE HEARING OFFICER

Three (3) Hearing Officers will be appointed by the County Manager to hear formal grievances. The hearing officers shall not be employees of the county and shall be familiar with personnel procedures, management, and/or law. The hearing officers need not reside in Torrance County.

### B. REQUEST FOR APPEAL

An employee may file a request for a formal grievance hearing within three (3) working days after receipt of a pre-termination hearing decision. The written request shall state specifically the reasons for disagreements with the decision reached at the pre-termination hearing.

### C. HEARING SCHEDULE

The County Manager shall schedule a formal grievance hearing within ten (10) working days of receipt of a formal written request, if the issue is eligible for consideration under the formal grievance procedure. However, for reasonable cause, the hearing date may be extended.

**D. FORMAL GRIEVANCE HEARING**

The following persons are required to be present at all grievance hearings unless otherwise excused by the hearing officers or by agreement of the parties: The County Manager and/or designee, the County's designated legal representative(s), the department's designated representative, the grievant, and grievant's representative (if any). The County shall present its case, including witnesses, documentation and other evidence first, and the grievant shall then be allowed to present grievant's case. Both sides may present any rebuttal evidence; opening and closing statements may be made at the option of the respective parties. The rules of evidence will be interpreted and applied loosely. Each side shall pay their own legal fees and costs. The hearing will be open to the public unless the grievant requests it to be closed.

**E. FINAL DECISION**

The Hearing Officers will issue a final decision in writing within five (5) working days of the formal hearing unless extended for reasonable cause. Notice of any extension shall be given to the grievant.

- 8.3. COMPLAINTS REGARDING DISCRIMINATION** Complaints regarding discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, should be referred to the County Manager for prompt investigation and resolution.

## SECTION 9. COMPENSATION AND BENEFIT PROGRAM

**9.1. HOURS OF WORK.** Employees will work their scheduled hours pursuant to work schedules established by their department heads. Except as otherwise provided, employees will not be paid for travel time from home to the site of their work within Torrance County or from the work site to their home. Actual work periods may fluctuate at the discretion of the department heads. Part-time employees are scheduled to work pursuant to scheduling set forth by their department heads.

Non-exempt Road Department employees who are assigned to work beyond thirty miles from their place of permanent residence shall be allowed a maximum of 1/2 hour per day of paid travel time. Under no circumstances shall an employee be entitled to claim reimbursement for the cost of travel to and from work without specific advance supervisor approval. The allowed travel time shall not be permitted to increase the total time worked per week so as to qualify for overtime pay. Eligible employees shall be at their job sites at the scheduled starting time, and leave may be granted for up to 1/2 hour at the end of the day, in compensation for allowable travel time. Actual travel time in excess of 1/2 hour a day shall not be allowed for compensation as leave time or wages, whether or not the employee is traveling in a county vehicle. All Road Department employees electing to receive the use of a county vehicle for purposes of traveling to and from their home and work shall agree to the following:

- A. The value of the use of the county vehicle shall be treated as taxable income in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code.

**9.2. BREAKS.** Full-time employees take a one- (1) hour lunch break. Road department employees take a one-half (1/2)-hour lunch break. Full-time employees are entitled to two (2) fifteen minute breaks per day; employees working four (4) hours or less per day are entitled to one (1) fifteen minute break per day. Only supervisors may determine that breaks should be limited or delayed because of an emergency or unusual conditions.

**9.3. PAY PERIODS AND TIMESHEETS.** Employees shall be paid Bi-weekly, every other Thursday. Timesheets must be submitted prior to the issuance of paychecks.

### A. Employee's Responsibilities

All employees are responsible for the following:

1. To accurately record all work time on the appropriate timesheet.
2. To attach applications for leave to their timesheets when approved leave is taken.
3. To attach overtime/compensatory time authorization forms to their timesheet.
4. To complete and turn in timesheets to their supervisor by the designated time.

#### **B. Department Head's Responsibilities**

All Department Head's are responsible for the following:

1. To verify their employee's time worked.
2. To sign all timesheets, applications for leave, and overtime/compensatory time authorization forms.
3. To check all timesheets for completion and accuracy.
4. To deliver their department's timesheets to the Payroll Officer by the time designated by the County Manager's Office.

#### **C. Failure to Comply**

If an employee or Department Head fails to meet their responsibilities as stated above, their pay check will be held by the Payroll Officer until the issue is resolved.

#### **D. Distribution of Pay Checks**

Pay checks will be distributed to the Department Head only. No paychecks will be given out to employees by the Payroll Department.

**9.4. OVERTIME PAY.** Overtime pay shall be paid only when overtime work is authorized by the department head, and to nonexempt employees, budget permitting. Employees working overtime without proper authorization may be subject to disciplinary action. The rate shall be one and one-half (1 1/2) times regular pay for each hour of overtime and such payment shall be made only in cases when a non-exempt employee works over forty (40) "actual work hours" in

a normal work week. **Holiday, vacation, sick and other leave hours will not be considered "actual work hours"**. Overtime hours worked will be recorded for each non-exempt employee and submitted to the Payroll Officer for each pay period on the designated forms.

**A. Exception to Forty (40) "Actual Work Hours" Rule**

All non-exempt full-time Sheriff's Deputies will receive overtime pay for special projects or emergency situations authorized by the Sheriff's Department even if the deputy has not "actually worked" forty (40) hours in that work week. Special projects will include D.U.I. checkpoints, radar surveys, traffic safety education training classes, bicycle rodeos, seat belt enforcement, or any other programs that will be reimbursed by a grant or other available resources.

**9.5 SHIFT DIFFERENTIAL.** Shift differential pay will be given only for the number of "actual work hours" per shift. All deputies and dispatchers who work on the swing or graveyard shift will receive shift differential. The shift differential rates are as follows:

- A. Swing shift (4:01 p.m. to 12:00 a.m.) - thirty-five cents (.35) per hour
- B. Graveyard shift (12:01 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.) - forty-five cents (.45) per hour

**9.6. COMPENSATORY TIME.** Compensatory time is time off for hours worked beyond the employee's regular work hours. A nonexempt employee may, at the discretion of the department head, accrue compensatory time in lieu of overtime payment at the rate of one and one half (1 1/2) hours of time for each hour worked in excess of forty (40) "actual work hours". Any hours worked in excess of the employee's regular hours, but less than forty (40) hours, shall be considered straight compensatory time. Compensatory time hours accrued and taken off shall be recorded for each nonexempt employee and submitted to the Payroll Officer each pay period on the designated forms. Compensatory time shall be accrued only above thirty (30) minutes.

**9.7. FINAL PAY CHECK.** An employee who resigns shall receive a final paycheck on the first regularly scheduled payday following the employee's effective date of resignation. Any employee who is dismissed shall receive a final paycheck by 5:00 P.M. on the fifth (5) day following dismissal, and verification that all county items have been returned. Day one begins the day of dismissal and includes Saturday and Sunday. In case of death, final salary and compensation for unused annual leave shall be paid to the employee's named beneficiary or if unnamed, to the employee's estate.



**9.8. PERSONAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT.** An employee in a designated job with the county may be required to wear special equipment or clothing to perform the job function. An employee who requires special equipment or clothing shall be provided the special clothing or protective equipment or an allowance by the county. Any employee who does not wear their special equipment or clothing when required shall be subject to disciplinary action.

**9.9. GRATUITIES.** All employees are prohibited from accepting gifts or other considerations from vendors given with the intent of modifying the employee's performance of duties or encouraging the employees to make purchases from the vendor involved. Employees will maintain the highest moral standards and any attempt to influence an employee's performance by a vendor or other person will be reported to the department head.

**9.10. PER DIEM AND MILEAGE.** All payments of per diem and mileage allowance to county employees will be made pursuant to policies established by the State of New Mexico. In no event shall any per diem allowances for travel by a county employee in connection with the employee's regular job duties within the boundaries of Torrance County without the express advance approval of the department head.

**9.11. PERA BENEFITS.** All county employees, except temporary employees, are required to join the Public Employees Retirement Association of New Mexico (PERA). Copies of the latest PERA rules and provisions may be obtained in the office of the Personnel Officer.

**9.12. INSURANCE BENEFITS.** The county offers medical and life insurance benefits to all full-time, appointed, and exempt employees. Medical and life insurance benefits are also available to part-time employees who work 20 or more hours per week and who are scheduled to be employed longer than six months. The county pays a portion of the premium for such benefits. Insurance plans may be changed at the discretion of the County Commission. Specific benefits of the current policy may be obtained from the Payroll Officer.

SECTION 10. LEAVE AND HOLIDAYS

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**10.1. AUTHORIZED LEAVE.** Leave is any authorized absence, with or without pay, during regularly scheduled work hours, which is approved by the department head. The department head is responsible for the maintenance and transmittal of leave records to the Payroll Officer.

**10.2. UNAUTHORIZED LEAVE.** Absence without approved leave is subject to disciplinary action and loss of pay.

**10.3. HOLIDAYS.** Legal Holidays will be designated by the Board of County Commissioners in January of each year. The following condition will apply with respect to holidays and holiday pay:

- A. Only full-time non-exempt employees are entitled to holiday pay. Part-time, temporary appointed and exempt employees are not entitled to holiday pay. Holiday pay shall be one additional hour of pay for every hour "actually" worked on the shift, if the employee's shift begins on the holiday.
- B. If a holiday falls on an employee's day off, the employee shall be granted an additional day off which shall be scheduled with the employee's supervisor within thirty (30) days of the holiday. This holiday provision only applies to the Dispatch and Sheriff's Department.
- C. When a holiday falls during an employee's vacation, the day shall be counted as a holiday, and not a vacation day.
- D. In order to receive pay for a designated legal holiday, an employee must be at work or on paid leave status on their scheduled workday immediately preceding and following the holiday. An employee absent without leave on their scheduled work day before or after a holiday will not receive pay for that holiday.
- E. When a holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday, and if the holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday.

**10.4. ANNUAL LEAVE WITH PAY.** Full-time county employees accrue annual leave according to the following schedule: (Note Section 3.5G)

HOURS PER PAY PERIOD	ACCRUAL RATE PER PAY PERIOD	YEARS OF SERVICE
64	2.46	Less than 3 years of service
64	2.95	3 or more but less than 7
64	3.68	7 or more but less than 11
64	4.43	11 or more but less than 15
64	4.92	15 or more years of service
72	2.77	Less than 3 years of service
72	3.32	3 or more but less than 7
72	4.15	7 or more but less than 11
72	4.99	11 or more but less than 15
72	5.54	15 or more years of service
80	3.08	Less than 3 years of service
80	3.69	3 or more but less than 7
80	4.61	7 or more but less than 11
80	5.54	11 or more but less than 15
80	6.15	15 or more years of service

**SICK LEAVE ACCRUAL RATE: 3.69 PER PAY PERIOD**

Annual leave must be taken within the calendar year. Employees are only allowed to carry over forty (40) hours of annual leave to the next calendar year.

- A. An employee does not accrue annual leave for time worked in excess of forty (40) hours per week.
- B. Annual leave will not be granted in advance of accrual.
- C. Upon termination from county employment, an employee shall be paid for the employee's unused accrued annual leave, unless that employee is still in the probationary period.
- D. An employee may take annual leave just before the employee's separation from county employment.
- E. Annual leave should be requested and approved in advance. Reasonable effort will be made to accommodate the employee's request, though approval will be subject to advance notification and the needs of the department. If vacation time is requested by one or more employees at the same time, seniority will rule.

- F. Part-time and temporary employees do not accrue annual leave.
- G. A full-time regular employee may donate their annual or compensatory time to another full-time regular employee only when the following conditions apply:
  - 1. The employee donating the time has enough time accrued.
  - 2. The employee receiving the time has exhausted all of their time.
  - 3. The employee receiving the time has to be on leave because of a health condition (either personal or immediate family), family emergency, or an other valid reason approved by the department head.
- H. Appointed employees will accrue annual leave at a rate of 4.61 hours per pay period.

**10.5. SICK LEAVE WITH PAY.** Leave with pay is granted to a regular, exempt or appointed employee when a medical reason, such as described in 10.6 below, keeps the employee from performing the duties of the position.

- A. All full-time employees shall accrue 3.69 hours per pay period of sick leave.
- B. Accrued sick leave is capped at 480 hours. At no time will any employee be allowed to have more than 480 hours of sick leave.
- C. There shall be no sick leave paid upon termination.
- D. Part-time and temporary employees do not accrue sick leave.
- E. Abuse of sick leave is subject to disciplinary action.
- F. An employee cannot take sick leave just before the employee's separation from county employment without a physician's certificate or receipt of doctor's visit.
- G. Appointed employees accrue sick leave at a rate of 4.61 hours per pay period.

**10.6. SICK LEAVE AUTHORIZATION.** Sick leave may be authorized by the employee's supervisor when an employee is unable to perform normal job duties due to medical considerations, including, but not limited to: illness, injury, pregnancy, prearranged medical or dental examination, quarantine, therapy, counseling, and treatment, or when an employee's relative, who is related by marriage or blood, or where a relationship is established by judicial decree, is ill and requires the personal attention of the employee. Authorization is subject to the approval of the department head. An employee may be terminated for abusing sick leave.

**10.7. MEDICAL CERTIFICATION.**

**A. Physician's Certificate**

A physician's certificate or receipt of doctor's visit is required when the employee is absent from work for more than three consecutive days, or when sick leave of more than three consecutive days is used due to the serious illness of a relative, who is related by marriage or blood, or where the relationship is established by judicial decree.

**B. Physical Examination**

The county may request that an employee have a medical examination when it appears to the department head that he cannot perform the essential functions of his position, when a pattern of sick leave develops, or when an employee advises the department head that he cannot perform his job for medical reasons.

**10.8. REPORTING SICK LEAVE.** Sick leave shall be reported to the employee's supervisor by the employee or an immediate family member on a daily basis and as soon as possible but no longer than thirty (30) minutes after the beginning on the employee's work shift unless the nature of the illness requires extended leave certified by the employee's physician and of which the employee's supervisor is notified.

**10.9. USE OF SICK LEAVE DURING PROBATIONARY PERIOD.** Probationary employees accrue sick leave in the manner set forth in 10.5 above. Use of sick leave shall be approved by the employee's supervisor on a day by day basis during the probationary period.

**10.10. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE.** In the event of the death of an employee's spouse, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, sibling, aunt or uncle the employee shall be entitled to bereavement leave with pay not to exceed three

days, upon approval of the department head. Relationship by marriage or adoption is considered the same as blood.

**10.11 ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE WITH PAY.** Leave with pay and travel pay may be authorized by the department head to allow employees to attend meetings of boards and commissions when the employee's attendance is on the behalf of the county and in the best interest of the county. If the employee is paid by the board or commission for his attendance, the county shall pay the employee his regular salary less the amount received by the employee from the board or commission. Administrative leave with pay may also be granted by a department head pending disciplinary action.

## **10.12. OCCUPATIONAL INJURY TIME/WORKERS COMPENSATION**

### **A. Workers Compensation**

Employees injured on the job or suffering from occasional diseases, as defined in the New Mexico Worker's Compensation Statute, shall receive Worker's Compensation benefits as prescribed by law. An employee may elect to continue group health coverage, with the employee and the employer paying their respective share of the premium, during an unpaid leave of absence for which worker's compensation is being paid for up to a period of four months, provided however, all other eligibility requirements must continue to be met for the period of continuation of coverage.

### **B. Pre-existing Injury**

All newly hired employees shall be required to complete a certificate of pre-existing condition form. This form must be certified by a physician.

### **C. Injury Leave Pay**

An employee injured on the job may use accrued annual or sick leave for each regularly scheduled work day after the injury occurs for all such days not paid by workers compensation. If the employee is on workers compensation time for more than four weeks, and is entitled to compensation for the first seven days and has used accrued annual or sick leave for the first seven days of injury, the workers compensation payments received for all such days shall be paid directly to the county by the workers compensation carrier. In that event, annual or sick leave used by the employee upon the county's receipt of the reimbursement by workers compensation after the expiration of the statutory waiting period.

**D. Medical Procedure**

An employee, who incurs a job related injury/illness, must go to the county designated physician, who will treat the employee, or will refer the employee to another physician, depending on the nature of the problem. In circumstances of medical emergency, the employee should go to the nearest medical facility. Treatment subsequent to the emergency treatment will be coordinated by the Assistant County Manager.

**E. Return to Work**

An employee shall return to his former position or be reassigned to a comparable position if the employee's physician certifies that the employee can return to work within six (6) months. If an employee is unable to perform his assigned duties with reasonable accommodations the employee will be medically terminated.

**F. Modified Work Schedule**

1. An employee returning from Worker's Compensation disability may return to light duty if an appropriate position is available and the employee's physician certifies that the employee can return to a modified work schedule.
2. Light duty is defined either as performing the same job as the employee held before the injury, or as performing the duties of another position for which the employee is qualified, for fewer than eight (8) hours each day or having reduced physical requirements for the full day or less than the full day.
3. The times and conditions of light duty will be determined by the employee's department head in conjunction with the County Manager.

**G. Re-employment of County Employees Injured on the Job**

If the county is hiring, a regular full-time employee who has received benefits pursuant to the Workers Compensation Act and who was unable to return to work during the six (6) month period for which the county shall hold the employee's position open, may apply for his pre-injury job, a modified job similar to the pre-injury job, or any job that pays less than the pre-injury job provided that the employee is qualified for the job. The county shall rehire the regular full-time employee provided that the

employee's treating health care provider certifies that the employee is fit to carry out the job without significant risk of injury.

**10.13. CIVIC DUTY LEAVE.** An employee shall be given necessary time off with pay for the following:

**A. Jury Duty**

Pay for jury duty shall be authorized only for those days that the employee is scheduled to work. If excused by the court during a work day, the employee shall return to duty if at least four (4) hours of county duty can be served in that work day. If the employee does not return to work, the balance of the day will be charged to annual leave or leave without pay.

**B. Court Appearance Time**

When required by county duties or subpoenaed to appear before a court, Torrance County Grievance Board, public body or County Commission for the purpose of testifying in regard to county matters.

**C. Voting**

For purposes of a national, state, or local election, an employee who is registered to vote will be granted up to two (2) hours paid leave for voting, between the time of opening and the time of closing polls. The employee's supervisor may specify the hours for the leave. This leave will not be granted to any employee whose work day begins more than two (2) hours subsequent to the time of the opening of the polls, or ends more than three (3) hours before the closing of the polls.

**10.14. MILITARY LEAVE FOR RESERVE OR NATIONAL GUARD DUTIES**

**A. Paid Military Leave for Reserve or National Guard Activities**

Paid military leave is granted for authorized reserve or national guard activities for a maximum of fifteen (15) working days during a one-year period. Military leave must be requested twenty (20) days in advance. The employee must furnish proof of duty orders or other documentation prior to leave being granted unless the leave is for emergency purposes.

**B. Unpaid Military Leave**



Employees voluntary or involuntary serving in active duty for more than fifteen (15) working days shall be placed on leave without pay. The employee taking military leave will not first be required to exhaust annual and sick leave.

**C. Employees returning from Unpaid Military Leave**

Any employee who leaves a position he has held with the county, other than a temporary position, to enter the armed forces of the United States, national guard or organized reserve, and who serves on active duty and is honorably discharged or released from active duty to complete his remaining service in a reserve component, and who is still qualified to perform the duties of the county position previously held, shall be re-employed in such position or to a position of like seniority, status, and pay. To be re-employed in such position, the employee must make application for re-employment within ninety (90) days after he is relieved from training or duty, or from hospitalization continuing after discharge for a period of not more than one (1) year.

1. The returning employee will be deemed to have accrued seniority and length of service rights as though his employment with the county had been continuous since the date of initial employment.
2. The returning employee shall have all annuals and sick leave accrued at the time of his departure for military service restored.

**10.15. LACK OF WORK AND INCLEMENT WEATHER.** The county may at its discretion send an employee home when there is no work available as determined by the department head, and may close offices and send employees home due to inclement weather declared by the County Manager. Employees who are sent home by the county due to inclement weather, or other circumstances not covered in this policy manual, shall not be charged with leave for all normal work hours missed. Hours paid pursuant to this provision shall not be counted as hours worked for the computation of overtime.

**10.16. LEAVE WITHOUT PAY.** The County Manager may grant regular employees leave without pay (LWOP) for a period not to exceed six (6) months, when the department head deems that such leave without pay is in the best interest of the county. Reasons for such a leave may include, but are not limited to education, medical disability, pregnancy or childbirth or adoption of a child, and the need to care for a family member, including a newborn. Leave without pay is subject to the following conditions:

**A. Re employment Upon Return**

If an employee returns to work within twelve (12) weeks, the employee will be returned to the same position. If the employee is on leave without pay for more than twelve (12) weeks, the county will attempt to return an employee to the same or similar position for which the employee is qualified. The position of an employee on leave without pay, for more than twelve (12) weeks, shall not be guaranteed.

**B. Use of All Leave**

Prior to going on leave without pay, an employee requesting leave without pay shall use all available annual leave, except for those going on military leave without pay. If the employee is seeking leave without pay for medical or pregnancy related reasons, the employee shall first use all available annual and sick leave.

**C. Physician's Certificate**

Leave without pay requested because of medical reasons or pregnancy related reasons must be accompanied by a physician's written statement indicating the estimated time of disability or recommended time for post-natal recovery. An employee returning to work from leave without pay due to medical or pregnancy related reasons must be released by the employee's physician to return to work. Proof of release must be presented to the employee's department head.

**D. Benefits at Employee's Expense**

An employee on leave without pay does not accrue leave, nor does the employee receive county benefits. An employee wishing to continue receiving insurance benefits may do so at the employee's expense by submitting the employee's and the county's share of the premium to the Payroll Officer on the regular pay day.

**10.17. FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE.**

- A.** In addition to other types of leaves, eligible employees are entitled to leave in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993. Employees who have been in the classified service for at least 12 months (which need not be consecutive) and who have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12 month period immediately preceding the start of FMLA leave are eligible

employees. In addition, employment in the exempt service or employment in programs transferred into the classified service by legislation or executive order shall count as classified employment. Eligible employees are entitled to a total of 12 weeks of FMLA leave in a 12-month period at the time of a birth or placement of a child or at the time of a serious health condition affecting a family member.

- B. Employees must request FMLA leave 30 days in advance or as soon as practicable, and this request must specify the combination of accrued annual leave, accrued sick leave and/or unpaid leave requested for this purpose. Any unpaid leave designated as FMLA leave shall be accounted for separately and not considered to be leave without pay under Rule 10.16. FMLA leave need not be full time. Only the time actually taken shall be charged against the employee's entitlement to leave.
- C. Husbands and wives employed by the same agency are both eligible for Family and Medical Leave, however, the aggregate number of work weeks of FMLA leave to which both are entitled shall be limited by the agency to 12 weeks in a 12-month period.
- D. Family and Medical Leave is appropriate to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent if that family member has a serious health condition or if the employee has a serious health condition. A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves in-patient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health provider. FMLA leave is not intended to cover short-term conditions. A department head may require a certification to support a leave request.
- E. Departments may transfer an employee on FMLA leave to another position which better accommodates the leave requirements provided the employee qualifies for the position and it has the same salary range and status.
- F. No part of FMLA leave shall be considered a break in employment.
- G. FMLA leave shall not be considered as time worked for overtime purposes.
- H. Unpaid FMLA leave shall not change the employee's anniversary date established.

- I. Employees shall accrue annual and sick leave at their appropriate rates while on unpaid FMLA leave.

**10.18. MEDICAL HARDSHIP.** A regular full-time employee may be allowed to work an abbreviated work week due to a serious medical condition of the employee, the employee's spouse, or the employee's child. A medical hardship must be approved by the County Commission. The employee will be required to furnish the appropriate medical documentation.

**10.19. PERSONAL DAY LEAVE.** All regular full-time employees are entitled to one personal day per calendar year after successful completion of probation.

- A. Personal days cannot be carried over to the next calendar year.
- B. Personal day leave must be requested and approved in advance.
- C. Personal day leave must be noted on the employee's timesheet and requires an application for leave.

**SECTION 11. SAFETY**

**11.1 DEFENSIVE DRIVING.** All employees (regular, exempt, appointed, and elected) must successfully complete the County's Defensive Driving Course within six (6) months from the date of hire. The course must be repeated every two years thereafter. Any employee who does not comply with this requirement will not be able to receive mileage and per diem from the County and will not be able to operate any county vehicle.

**11.2 VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT USE.** All operators of County owned, leased or rented motorized vehicles and equipment must comply with the following regulations.

- A. A valid New Mexico driver's license must be carried by all persons operating motor vehicles. Trucks and motorized road equipment operators must carry a license appropriate to the operation of those vehicles.
- B. All operators of county vehicles or personal for county business must carry a valid certification of having completed defensive driving.
- C. Drivers of county vehicles and equipment will assume full responsibility for the safe operation as well as the safety and welfare of any passengers. Only qualified county employees or other authorized personnel may operate county vehicles, and no one will transported as passengers, except when required by county business. Each Department Head is responsible for notifying the County Manager's Office of those persons authorized to drive county vehicles.
- D. Drivers and passengers are required to use seat belts at all times.
- E. Drivers will inspect their vehicles prior to use. They will assure that all safety equipment is operational and that the windshields, turn signals, headlights, and reflectors are clean. Any unsafe condition will be reported to their immediate supervisor and a copy of the report forwarded to the safety department. Department Heads are responsible to insure that all vehicles in their department are equipped with fire extinguishers and first aid kits.
- F. Any driver who operates a county vehicle while intoxicated and/or on illegal drugs is subject to disciplinary action and

termination. No alcohol or illegal drugs will be transported in county vehicles unless in the course of official county business.

- G. No employee should utilize a personal vehicle during regular work hours for county business without his/her supervisors approval.

**11.3. EMPLOYEE ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES.** It is the responsibility of each employee to report all accidents and injuries regardless of the degree of accident or injury. It is mandatory for all employees to report any accident or injury to their supervisor immediately. The supervisor will complete the notice of accident form and submit it to the Assistant County Manager within twenty-four (24) hours of the accident or injury. Any employee or supervisor who fails to comply with regulations may be subject to disciplinary action.

**A. Forms for Reporting Accidents and Injuries**

1. Notice of Accident Form is to be used only for information and must be submitted to the Assistant County Manager within twenty-four (24) hours of the accident.
2. Employer's First Report of Accident Form is to be used where injuries are involved. This form should be completed and returned to the Assistant County Manager after the employee has been seen by the County's designated Worker's Compensation Doctor. If the injuries are life threatening, then the employee should be taken to the nearest medical facility for evaluation.

**B. Accidents Involving County Vehicles or Equipment**

1. Any driver of a county vehicle or county equipment involved in an accident must summon the police department immediately to the scene of the accident. The driver/supervisor will prepare a vehicle accident report jointly and forward it to the Assistant County Manager within one working day of the accident. If the accident report is not completed and turned in within this time frame, the damages incurred will be the responsibility of the employee.
2. Standard vehicle accident reports can be obtained from the County Manager's Office.

3. Minor damages to county vehicles shall be reported to the immediate supervisor who then must report it to the Assistant County Manager within one working day.
4. Failure to report an injury, accident or minor damage to county property may be sufficient cause for disciplinary action and for non-compensation of any claims made as a result of the accident.

**11.4. OFFICE SAFETY.** The following precautions should be used when working in an office area.

- A. Caution should be used when an employee comes up to a door that can be opened in their direction.
- B. All file, desk, and table drawers should be kept closed when not in use. Never open more than one file drawer at a time.
- C. Keep an eye open for loose or threadbare floor coverings.
- D. Haste when walking between desks can result in bruises and falls. Keep electrical cords out of walkways.
- E. Overloading the top drawer of unsecured file cabinets has caused many injuries. If unfamiliar with file cabinets, test the drawers and be careful not to put them out to full extension. There may be no locking device.
- F. Tilting chairs can be hazardous when improperly used and care should be taken to assure that they are in good working condition.
- G. Each employee shall be responsible to see that their own desk and work area is clean and orderly. Good housekeeping is the key to a safe office environment.
- H. Office tables, desks and chairs must be maintained in good condition.
- I. Never use chairs, desks or other office furniture as a makeshift ladder. Always use a stepladder. Don't overreach and lose your balance.
- J. Toxic material shall only be used in properly ventilated areas.

- I. Tools and parts should not be left on floor of work area
- J. Any hydraulic lift, such as a dump truck body, should be properly blocked before getting under it to work.
- K. Maintain fire extinguishers in all heavy duty equipment and service trucks.
- L. Safety cans ONLY should be used to transport gas and flammable liquids.
- M. Electric power must be shut down each night.

**11.6. HEAVY EQUIPMENT SAFETY.** Only qualified and trained employees shall operate heavy equipment. The operator is responsible for safe operation on heavy equipment. Making safety a habit can prevent accidents from occurring and also needless loss of production and money to the County. The following are the responsibilities of each operator to insure his/her own safety as well as the safety of others.

- A. Equipment will be inspected prior to start each day to insure that engine is ready, all appropriate fluid levels are checked and all safety devices functional. Particular attention will be given to cable conditions, hinge pins and control linkages.
- B. Walk completely around the machine before moving it to make sure everything is in the clear. Operator will always make sure the front, sides and rear are clear prior to moving any machines. Additional checks for overhead clearance will be made on cranes, lifts, platforms, and trenchers before movement.
- C. First, learn the limitations of operating your machine. Speeds are to be governed by road conditions, reduce speeds, and use caution on road shoulders, steep grades, rough surfaces, congested areas, and wet or ice covered surfaces.
- D. Report all malfunctions to your foreman, and service your machine frequently.
- E. All required lights, reflectors and accessories shall be maintained in working order on all equipment.



- K. Employees should not attempt to adjust or repair any machine until the power has been disconnected.
- L. Safes and vaults should be closed by grasping the attachments made for that purpose.
- M. Employees should walk cautiously and use handrails when on stairways; especially in icy or bad weather conditions.
- N. Any liquid spills shall be mopped immediately.
- O. Paper cutters or other types of office equipment with a cutting blade should have the blade in a secured and safe position.
- P. Do not keep thumb tacks, razor blades, or other sharp items loose in desk drawers.
- Q. Use proper lifting methods, do not try to lift bending from the waist, always lift from a squatting position.

**11.5. ROAD SHOP SAFETY.** The following precautions should be used when working in the road shop area.

- A. Non-skid abrasive pads should be installed on floors of garage and equipment for wet and icy weather to prevent slips and falls.
- B. Do not lift heavy items by yourself. Get help or use lifting device.
- C. Use proper lifting methods. Always lift from a squatting position, back straight, and using knees.
- D. Never get under machinery or vehicles unless they are properly blocked.
- E. Safety goggles or glasses should be used when operating machinery such as grinder, drills, etc.
- F. Air hoses should be replaced on hangers.
- G. Electric drop cords should be hanging from ceiling instead of plugged into wall (retractable lights).
- H. Do not smoke or leave vehicles unattended while fueling at the pumps. Always shut off engine before fueling.

- F. When pulling any stuck machine, always stand clear of the cable or chain.
- G. No piece of equipment shall be operated unless all systems related to safe operation are functioning properly.
- H. Backup alarms shall be installed and be in operable condition.
- I. Do not give signals to machine operators unless you are and authorized signalman. Only one person at a time should give signals to operators.
- J. Never get on or off an operating machine without letting the operator know before hand.
- K. Equipment will be equipped with first aid kits and fire extinguishers.
- L. Loaded equipment will have a right-of-way on haul roads and all equipment will stop to clear prior to entry on public roads unless appropriate traffic controls are established.
- M. Before leaving any equipment, the operator will lower the blades, bowl, boom or bucket to a ground level, flat surface, and out of the traffic flow. If level surface is not available, blocks or chocks should be inserted to prevent vibration movement.
- N. Coupling and towing require special clearing procedures for other personnel in the area. If a co-worker is present, equipment should be backed by his signal only. Before coupling, the shift lever is to be placed in neutral and the brakes set. Towed units should have a safety chain to the pulling unit. Towed equipment should be latched, bolted or otherwise secured for maximum clearance and to prevent drops and ground strikes.
- O. No horseplay will be tolerated in or around heavy equipment.

**11.7. FIELD SAFETY.** Whenever operations are taking place in roads, parkways, or other places where citizens as well as employees may be endangered, the supervisor or crew leader on the work-site is responsible for the safety of the public in this type of operation as for getting the job done. The supervisor must spend ample time before, during and after the work to protect employees and the public from the hazards created by this work. The following procedures are to be followed for field safety.

- A. If road construction or repair work is to be done, preparations will be made to assure vehicle and pedestrian safety before such work is allowed to begin.
- B. If traffic is affected by the operation, proper signing must be used to warn in advance of the work area and traffic control signs in and around the affected area are to be correctly placed and maintained through the period when work is being performed and traffic obstructions exist.
- C. Where barricades and signs are used overnight, supervisors will examine the work area for proper placement at the end of the workday.
- D. Lighted barricades will be used whenever possible for overnight protection.
- E. Where traffic must be periodically stopped or obstructed by workers or equipment in the traveled portion of a roadway, flagmen wearing a protective vest will be stationed strategically.
- F. All workers in or near the roadway will wear OSHA approved reflective vests or cross straps on their clothing while at the work-site.
- G. Flagmen will be used to slow or direct traffic where the approach to the work area does not provide adequate visibility to drivers.

**11.8. PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT.** Protective equipment should be worn at all times during working hours to provide the maximum degree of safety for the employee.

**A. Eye Protection**

Safety glasses, goggles or face shields shall be worn when work being performed may result in injury to the eyes from flying particles, splattering liquids, and harmful light rays. Eye protection must be worn in the following situations.

1. When handling any liquids considered toxic or irritating to eyes (i.e. solvents, oils, etc.).
2. When assembling, fabricating, welding, etc.

3. When operating or working near backhoes, cranes, loaders and compressors.
4. When working near or visiting work areas where eye protection is required.
5. When chipping or breaking stone brick, concrete, frozen ground or scrap.
6. When using air or electrically driven power tools including grinding, drilling, sandblasting, jack and frost hammers, compressed air lines, etc.
7. When performing maintenance and repair work on equipment, vehicles, parts, appliances, etc.
8. Eye protection will be replaced when it becomes warped, scratched or pitted.

**B. Head Protection**

Approved head protection (hard hat) is to be worn at all times whenever at a job site, in the road shop, or visiting areas where there is the probability of striking ones head against objects or obstructions. Head protection is to be worn under the following conditions.

1. In the normal performance of work on streets or highways and in culverts, tunnels and trenches.
2. When operating or working near graders, loader, backhoes, winch trucks, and any other heavy equipment.
3. When working in construction or demolition areas.
4. When operating lift trucks from which the overhead guards have been removed.
5. When working in or visiting job locations where employees on the job are required to wear head protection.
6. Any time there is a danger of falling or flying objects.

7. Any time there is a danger of electrical shock or electrical burns.

**C. Clothing**

The following requirements will be used for clothing protection.

1. Shoes suitable to the type of work done shall be worn.
2. Clothing suitable for the climate and work being performed must be worn. Non-static producing clothing should be worn by construction and maintenance employees, protective clothing must be worn when specified for the job being performed.
  - a. Gloves must be worn when handling material or any rough surface items. Gloves must be worn when crating or uncrating materials.
  - b. The proper style and type of gloves should be selected as required for the job to be done. Leather for rough items, rubberized or latex for cultic or acids and other solvents.
3. Loose clothing such as ties, partly rolled sleeves, shirt tails, etc. should never be worn by those who work around or must pass moving machinery or equipment.
4. Clothing saturated with flammable, toxic or irritating substances must be removed and replaced with suitable clothing immediately.
5. Jewelry or other types of ornaments must never be worn around moving machinery or equipment, as they are extremely hazardous. Large rings must be removed if there is any danger to the employee.
6. Reflective vests should be worn at all times while working in or around traffic lanes, streets, and highway right-of-ways.
7. Respirators should be used when misting or spraying chemicals or when excessive dust levels are present, and in

any atmosphere where hazardous chemical fumes or dusts present a health hazard.

**11.9. WELDING OPERATION SAFETY.** The following precautions will be used in all welding operations.

- A. Wear clothing which will protect all of the body from the rays of the arc and metal sparks.
- B. Wear shoes that extend above the ankle or pants and trousers extending below top of shoes. Trousers should not have cuffs.
- C. Protective clothing such as leather sleeves, vests or aprons must be worn.
- D. Assure that sufficient ventilation is provided.
- E. Be sure hood is in place before striking arc, and at all times when welding, wear hardened filter lens goggles under hood.
- F. Keep a fire extinguisher on hand and directly adjacent to the welding job.
- G. Use noncombustible materials to support your work.
- H. Avoid having to untangle welding cables.
- I. Momentarily "crack" cylinder valve before attaching regulator.
- J. Never use a cylinder of oxygen or acetylene without reducing the pressure through a regulator.
- K. Make sure the regulator pressure adjusting screw is released before opening the cylinder valve.
- L. Stand to one side and away from front of pressure regulator gauge faces when opening the cylinder valve.
- M. Open valves on both oxygen and acetylene systems before attempting to ignite torch.
- N. Do not use matches for lighting torches, use friction lighters. Never light a torch from hot metal.

- O. When welding job is completed, the valves on the cylinder are to be closed, then valves to the torch opened to release the regulator pressure.
- P. Cylinders must be stored and transported in a vertical position and secure so they will not topple over or strike against each other.
- Q. Never attempt to lift or move a cylinder by its protective cap.

**11.10. POWER MACHINERY SAFETY.** The following precautions will be used when around or operating power machinery.

- A. Operators must be thoroughly familiar with the safe operation and performance of each machine or piece of equipment that is being used or operated.
- B. Make sure all guards are in place before beginning operation. Eye protection must be worn when operating or working near machinery.
- C. The floor around the machine must be kept clear of all materials that would create a slipping or falling hazard.
- D. A stiff brush should be used to remove metal chips or filings from the work area. Never use compressed air or hands.
- E. A brush should be used to remove particles from skin, hair or clothing. Never use compressed air.
- F. Machines will not be left running while unattended.
- G. No employee will operate a grinder without having received safe operating instructions from their immediate supervisor.

**11.11. HANDLING HEAVY OBJECTS.** The following precautions must be used when handling or lifting heavy objects.

- A. When lifting or handling heavy objects the employee should take a breath and exhale as much air as possible. Taking a deep breath and holding it puts additional pressure on the lower diaphragm which when combined with lifting can increase the chances of injury.

- B. The best protection against strain is proper body position which consists of keeping the back as straight as possible, bending the knees and lifting with the legs.
- C. Never keep both feet squared, place one foot slightly in front of the other to give yourself better stability.
- D. Employees will never attempt to handle HEAVY objects by themselves. At all times, have someone assist you with heavy objects.

**11.12. HAND TOOLS SAFETY.** The following precautions must be followed when using hand tools.

- A. Hand tools are to be used for the purpose for which they are designed and should be regularly inspected to make sure they are in a safe condition.
- B. Tools having burrs, cracks, mushroomed heads, broken, loose or splintered handles should not be used. These tools are to be turned in for replacement or repairs.
- C. Never carry an edged or pointed tool in pockets or belts, unless the point or edge is fully protected.
- D. Wrenches should never be used as hammers.
- E. Forks, hoes, rakes and shovels should have strong and smooth handles. Never leave them lying where they can create a tripping hazard to employees or the public.
- F. Crowbars should be laid down, never left standing upright against a flat surface.
- G. Screwdrivers must be kept in good condition to avoid slipping. Always use a screwdriver that properly fits the screw. Never use a screwdriver for a punch chisel, etc.
- H. Never use a sledgehammer with a rounded face, loose head or split handle.

**11.13. COMPRESSED AIR SAFETY.** The following precautions must be followed when using compressed air.



- A. Compressed air streams will not be brought into close or direct contact with any part of an employee's body or the clothing he/she is wearing due to danger of air entering the blood stream.
- B. Never engage in horseplay using compressed air.
- C. Air hose and fittings will be maintained in operating conditions.
- D. The pressure will be released on air hose before uncoupling or disconnecting them.
- E. Air tanks should be blown down at intervals required to prevent the accumulation of water, oil and rust.
- F. Pressure should be released on air tanks when not in use.
- G. Compressors will not be altered to elevate pressure above normal settings.

**11.14. PROHIBITED ACTIONS.** As a general policy, the use of personal headset radios or tape-players by employees is not permitted on the job for the following reasons.

- A. Headset units provide mental distraction from the concentration required to perform most jobs.
- B. The ability to hear ambient sounds, including abnormal rattling and equipment noise is affected. Verbal communication from other employees is impaired as well.
- C. Hanging wires leading from the unit's receiver to the headset can prove dangerous when near machinery.
- D. Headset units are dangerous for bicycle riders because they can easily muffle traffic noises. Accordingly, county employees operating motor vehicles and machinery should exercise extreme caution when driving behind bicycle riders wearing headsets.

**11.15. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES.** Sheriff's department personnel should follow the County's S.O.P. for Law Enforcement as well as these regulations.

**11.16. DISPATCH CENTER PROCEDURES.** Dispatch personnel should follow the County's S.O.P. for Dispatch as well as these regulations.

**11.17. KITCHEN SAFETY.** The following precautions should be followed when working in a kitchen area.

- A. Every cook or assistant cook shall be responsible to see that his/her kitchen and dining area is clean and orderly. Good housekeeping is the key to a safe kitchen and dining environment.
- B. Keep an eye open for cracked or wet tile/floor.
- C. Be extra cautious when you are carrying hot foods from the stove or oven to the steam table.
- D. Haste when walking within the kitchen or dining room area can result in slips and falls.
- E. All oven, dishwasher and refrigerator doors shall be kept closed when not in use. As soon as you are through removing items from within, close them. Never open more than one door at a time.
- F. Always use mittens/pot holders to handle hot cooking utensils and pans.
- G. Sharp utensils can cause painful injuries; they must be stored in cabinet drawers when not in use. Report injuries at once and take precautions to avoid infection or contamination to prepared food in kitchen area.
- H. Be sure all electrical equipment is grounded and the cord is in good condition. If a machine gives you a shock or starts smoking, unplug it and report the defective equipment immediately to your supervisor.
- I. Report all dangerous or unsafe conditions that exist in the kitchen/dining room area, all injuries and accidents regardless of severity to your supervisor.
- J. Do not operate equipment for which training has not been received.

- K. Take care not to abuse kitchen equipment, so that these items will be in usable condition for as long as possible, as well as to ensure that they are in the best possible condition while being used.
- L. Rubber gloves must be worn when using abrasive or skin irritating cleansers.
- M. Dining room tables and chairs must be maintained in good condition and free from sharp corners, projecting edges and wobbly legs. Care should be taken to assure that they are in good condition.

**SECTION 12. MISCELLANEOUS**

**12.1 DESIGNATED WORK AREAS.** All employees are to be at their designated work areas on time and ready to work. They shall work until the scheduled quitting time, unless permission of the supervisor has been obtained for different work hours. Employees shall not litter work areas and will keep them neat and clean.

**12.2. PERSONAL BUSINESS.** Personal business shall not be conducted during work hours while on county premises.

**12.3. COUNTY PROPERTY.** Employees shall not misuse county property, records, or other material in their care, control or custody. County property, records, or other material shall not be removed from the premises of the county offices unless permission has been given by the department head. Employees shall not use county property, records or equipment for personal use.

**12.4. TERMINATION; RETURN OF COUNTY PROPERTY.** At the time that an employee is voluntarily or involuntarily terminated, the employee shall return all county property to the appropriate department head, including but not limited to: any keys, vehicles, supplies, equipment, and uniforms that may be in the employee's possession. The department head shall notify the Personnel Officer in writing that all county property was returned.

**12.5. COUNTY VEHICLES.** No county vehicles will be taken out of Torrance County without permission of the department head and employees shall notify the department head of their destinations and itineraries. County vehicles may be used only for county business and commuting to and from work, if required for a work-related purpose. County vehicles shall not be used for personal business, except as is incidental in commuting as determined by the employee's department head.

**12.6. DRESS AND APPEARANCE.** Employees are constantly in the public eye; consequently it is important that the employee present the best possible image to the public. Employees should always be clean and neatly dressed in clothing suitable for their work assignments.

**12.7. EMPLOYEE PAYROLL AND PERSONNEL FILES.** Subsequent to hiring, a separate record file shall be prepared and maintained for each employee. These records shall be kept in the Personnel office. It is the responsibility of each department head to insure that the records of the employees are completed and up-to-date.

12.8. MAINTENANCE OF PERSONNEL FILES. Such records shall be considered confidential and not available for public inspection. Physical access to an employee's records shall be in the control of the Personnel Officer. An employee's records may be reviewed by the employee, the employee's department head, and the department head of the department to which an employee may be transferred, the County Manager, the County Commission, the County Attorney, and the Personnel Grievance Board. If an employee wishes someone other than those authorized to have access to the employee's file, he must request so in writing.

12.9. ADDITIONAL RULES. Employees shall obey all additional rules, directives and requests stated verbally or in writing by their supervisors. Employees are generally required to follow all standards, rules, procedures and policies that are similar or normally expected in the work place.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS 24<sup>th</sup> DAY OF MAY 2000.

COMMISSIONERS

BOARD OF COUNTY

TORRANCE COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

*Bill R. Williams*  
Bill R. Williams, Chairman

ATTEST

*Rodger Rayner*  
Rodger Rayner, Member

*Chester Riley, Jr.*  
Chester Riley, Jr., Member

*[Signature]*  
County Clerk

