

2022 Harris County Proposed Personnel Policies & Procedures Summary of Changes

- Effective March 12, 2022.
- Revised the acknowledgement form, to include acknowledgements regarding repayment of Paid Parental Leave funds, overpayments and returning County property upon separation of employment
- **Section 1: Definitions**
 - Updated definitions (Active Duty, Department Head)
 - Added Fiscal Year definition
 - Deleted Model Position definition as they were terminated upon the conversion to PeopleSoft
 - Moved Hours Actually Worked (Breaks, Meal Periods, Commuting, Travel During the Workday and Out of County Travel) to Section 8.
- **Section 2: Ethics** – Updated section title to “Code of Conduct & Ethics, Fraud, and Confidentiality.”
 - Combined this section to include Code of Conduct statements.
 - Added verbiage regarding fraudulent behavior, conflicts of interest, investigation compliance and speaking engagements.
 - Added section on Nepotism
- **Section 3: Equal Employment Opportunity** – Added Fair Chance Policy to this section.
- **Section 4: Non - Discrimination and Anti-Harassment**
 - Added Crown Act statement.
 - Included statement regarding immediate and appropriate corrective action on reports of discrimination, harassment or retaliation due to changes in state law Labor Code 21 made by 2021 SB 45 and HB 21
 - Included statement indicating individuals designated to receive complaints under this policy are required to report the complaints to the Director of HRRM, or the designee.
- **Section 7: County Property and Electronic Services Policy**
 - Included a section on the annual Cybersecurity Training requirement.

- Added statement regarding returning County assets upon separation of employment.
- Added verbiage regarding confidentiality, social media and public information requests.
- Section 8: Payroll Procedures and Compensation – Updated section title to “Payroll Procedures, Time Reporting and Compensation”
 - Added statement regarding updating employee information in STARS Employee Self-Service.
 - Included statement regarding Department Head discretion to allow employees to begin active duty at any time.
 - Updated proration of pay verbiage for elected or appointed officials who vacate their positions prior to the end of their term from monthly to bi-weekly pay periods.
 - Added statement regarding the employee’s obligation to submit their work hours by the payroll deadline.
- Section 9: Group Health and Benefits
 - Reduced the benefits eligibility waiting period from 75 days to 45 days.
 - Added verbiage regarding the mandatory enrollment in the County’s Benefits plan.
 - Added statement regarding newly hired employees eligible for Medicare or enrolled in TRICARE as a retiree or active reservist in the U.S. Military may waive their benefits upon initial enrollment.
 - Updated procedures for submitting changes for coverage outside of open enrollment periods.
 - Specified effective dates for coverage and termination of benefits.
 - Added “others” to listing of eligible dependents to cover foster children or other legal custody dependents.
- Section 10: Emergency Situations
 - Removed statement “Commissioners Court is not authorized to provide Paid leave retroactively”.

- Section 11: Telework – Added new section to reflect highlights of Teleworking Policy adopted by Commissioners Court

- Section 12: Time Off & Leaves of Absence
 - Added statement regarding Department Head discretion to adopt policies prohibiting employees from performing any outside work or engaging in extra-duty employment while out on sick and family medical leave.
 - Included statement prohibiting employees from accruing negative compensatory time.
 - Included statement regarding vacation and compensatory leave balances for employees who become a department head by election, appointment or ratification by Commissioners Court, or designation by the County Administrator.
 - Floating Holiday – Added statement regarding the Department Head’s ability to adopt internal policies relating to the use of the floating holidays.
 - Added information regarding the Sick Leave Pool Program
 - Military Leave – Included a statement indicating members of state military forces called to state active duty in response to a disaster will receive up to an additional seven (7) workdays in a federal fiscal year.
 - Added information regarding Paid Parental Leave and Infant Sick Leave; included 45 and 90 day employment proration’s
 - Included statement that employees must maintain employment with Harris County for at least 180 consecutive calendar days of continuous service immediately after the expiration of approved leave, or reimburse Harris County for the Paid Parental Leave funds received.
 - Included statement that employees will not receive more than the maximum allotted amount of Paid Parental Leave in a rolling 12-month period starting from the exhaustion of the previous approved Paid Parental Leave, or the last day the employee used PPL.
 - Leave of Absence – Added statement indicating employees on LOA do not get paid for the holidays.
 - FMLA –
 - Added statement Department Heads are deemed Key employees.
 - Updated Health Care Provider definition to clarify a Chiropractor’s role under FMLA.

- Included a statement prohibiting employees from working/performing their regular job duties for Harris County or any other employer while out on FMLA leave.
 - Added statement indicating employees are not permitted to receive or use Catastrophic Leave when they become eligible for workers' compensation indemnity benefits, long-term disability, or any other supplemental benefits
 - Updated statement to indicate medical certifications for chronic or lifelong conditions (continuous or intermittent) are required each calendar year.
- Section 14: Separation of Employment
 - Added a statement referring departments to utilize the Manager's Reference Guide or complete Auditor's Form #3412 upon separation.
 - Updated the Summary of Benefits chart to include Sick Leave Pool, Paid Parental Leave and Infant Sick Leave.
 - Added Paid Parental and Infant Sick Leave to the footnotes.