

# Employee Personnel Manual

2006 - 2008



# A MANUAL OF GENERAL INFORMATION

for  
EMPLOYEES  
OF  
PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA



Prepared by the  
Personnel Department  
of the

PINELLAS COUNTY  
UNIFIED PERSONNEL SYSTEM

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## **THE PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL**

is to provide employees with a summary of the Personnel Rules enacted by the Personnel Board for the Pinellas County Unified Personnel System. The policies, benefits, and expectations described in this manual are subject to change according to normal administrative procedures. While the Employee Personnel Manual is updated periodically, employees are expected to consult the Personnel Rules found in their Department, in Personnel, or on the Personnel Department website for current information, if there are any questions or concerns.

Check this out... This Employee Personnel Manual contains “check boxes” intended to highlight instructional information. These boxes give special emphasis to important topics and/or tell you the steps to make something happen.



When you see one of these “Check Boxes” read the information carefully.

### **Personnel Department Website**

Internet: <http://www.co.pinellas.fl.us/persnl/default.html>

Intranet or Intraweb: <http://ups.co.pinellas.fl.us/>

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## A SPECIAL WELCOME TO NEW HIRES

Along with members of the Personnel Board, I join the Appointing Authorities in welcoming you. We hope that you have found the kind of challenging work and organizational philosophy that will enable you to enjoy your career with Pinellas County. We are pleased with your selection because you have demonstrated that you are the one best suited to fill the position for which you were hired.

This booklet provides answers to some of the most frequently asked employee questions. It is a quick reference to some of the policies and procedures with which you should be familiar. You can get most of your questions answered by your supervisor, or you can phone or come into your Personnel Department. The telephone number is (727) 464-3367. Also, the Personnel Rules referenced in this booklet are located in your work section, in the Personnel Department, or on our web site.

The Personnel Department exists to provide service to your hiring department and to you. For your benefit, among the services we offer are: development of employee benefits programs, including safety, insurance, health, and counseling; employee newsletter; training needs identification and the development and conduct of in-house training programs. In short, your work direction, job counseling, performance evaluation, and pay changes come from within your own department, and we provide support and assistance to your department and to you.

Once again we are happy you are working with us serving the people of Pinellas County. Good luck in your new career.



Dave Libby  
Director of Personnel

The Personnel Board for the Pinellas County Unified Personnel System:

Mary Ellen Sladden, Chairman  
Daniel M. Andriso, Vice-Chairman  
Lounell C. Britt  
Michael J. Guju, Esq.  
J. Steven Ledbetter  
Joseph A. Smith  
Clifford Williams, III

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE APPOINTING AUTHORITIES**

We are pleased to offer this Personnel Manual to both long term and recently hired employees of the Pinellas County Unified Personnel System. It gives us the opportunity to acquaint or re-acquaint you with the County's goal of providing all our citizens with a wide range of vital services in an efficient and courteous manner. In this team effort, County employees are guided by the following principles:

- The public merits our respect and the courtesy of our prompt, competent and willing service.
- As employees and citizens of the community, we share the responsibility to contribute toward Pinellas County's vitality.
- We are responsible for improving the overall quality of life through sound management and preservation of the environmental resources entrusted to us.
- Every employee's work is valuable and necessary to accomplish our goal of better public service.

We are proud of Pinellas County Government's tradition of excellence in public service and look forward to your joining us as we continue to meet the needs and concerns of our citizens of today and tomorrow. We hope your career with us is a long and rewarding one.



**Paul Alexander, III**  
Director, Information Technology



**Ken Burke**  
Clerk of the Circuit Court



**Susan Churuti**  
County Attorney

**Deborah Clark**

Supervisor of Elections



**Rodney S. Fischer**

Executive Director  
Construction Licensing Board



**David Healey**

Executive Director  
Pinellas Planning Council



**Dave Libby**

Director of Personnel



**Diane Nelson**

Tax Collector



**Leon W. Russell**

Human Rights/EEO Officer



**Jim Smith**

Property Appraiser



**Stephen M. Spratt**

County Administrator



## **CLASSIFICATION**

Two major employment categories exist within the Unified Personnel System (UPS): Exempt and Classified Service. Types of appointments in the Classified Service are probationary, regular, provisional and temporary.

### **Exempt Service**

Some positions in the County are exempt, or appointive. Generally, Department Heads, Assistant Department Heads and special, confidential secretarial assistants are some examples of exempt classifications. Personnel actions affecting exempt employees are made at the discretion of their Appointing Authority; they are otherwise governed by the Personnel Rules of the UPS, like employees in the Classified Service.

### **Classified Service**

Most of the positions within the County are Classified and are subject to the provisions of the Unified Personnel System. This system assures employees that they are employed, promoted and awarded pay increases based solely on merit for a particular job and acceptable performance in this job. Classified positions are grouped with other similar positions according to the type of work performed and the amount of responsibility and/or difficulty involved. The different positions are assigned to a specific pay grade which determines pay rate.

### **Probationary Appointments**

Regular status positions within the UPS are subject to an initial probationary period of up to twelve (12) months. This period is regarded as an integral part of the examination process and is utilized in two ways. The probationary period allows the supervisor to evaluate an employee's performance on the job and to dismiss the employee who does not meet the required standards of job performance. These discharges are not grievable. Promoted employees are subject to a six month probationary period, but they may return to their former job classification if unsuccessful during this trial period following promotion.

## Regular Appointments

Employees who satisfactorily complete their probationary periods receive appointments as regular status employees and are entitled to full benefits under the Unified Personnel System.

## Provisional and Temporary Appointments

Provisional appointments are those made in the absence of an eligible register. This employment is not to exceed six (6) months from the date of such employment nor more than forty-five (45) days following the establishment of an eligible register, whichever is less in length of time.

Temporary appointments are for work which is temporary in nature e.g., summer lifeguards in the Park Department, federally-funded emergency jobs, etc.

# **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN**

## **Statement of Policy**

Please read the Affirmative Action Booklet. Copies are available in the Office of Human Rights.

Pinellas County, Florida declares and reaffirms a policy of equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination in the provision of all services to the public.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

Pinellas County will make all decisions regarding recruitment, hiring, promotions and other terms and conditions of employment without regard to consideration of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental handicap, marital status, or other factors which cannot be lawfully used as the basis for an employment decision.

## **Affirmative Action in Employment**

Pinellas County has undertaken a program of affirmative action to which good faith efforts will be directed in order to:

- Determine the extent to which minorities and women are underutilized in major job categories.
- Identify and eliminate the specific causes of such underutilization.
- Identify and eliminate all employment practices which have an adverse impact on minorities, women and others protected by applicable laws and the relationship to which job performance has not been clearly established.
- Rely exclusively upon practices which are based upon merit and other valid job-related criteria.
- Develop substantial applicant pools of qualified minorities and women through special recruitment efforts and other measures to

ensure that sufficient numbers of these groups are included to help reduce their underutilization.

- Develop, through special recruitment efforts and other measures, applicant pools in which handicapped persons are represented equitably. Employees who are disabled by life threatening diseases such as cancer, heart disease and such conditions as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome are subject to the same working environment and performance requirements as other employees, as long as medical evidence indicates that their condition is not a threat to themselves or others. Departments must make reasonable accommodations to assist qualified disabled individuals to perform the essential functions of their jobs.
- Monitor compliance with Florida Administrative Code 55-A governing the application of veterans' preference in employment.
- Project goals and timetables to include estimates of the representation of minorities and women likely to result from the operation of this Affirmative Action Plan.
- Establish organizational structures and monitoring systems which will assure the attainment of the County's goals of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination and provide a means for modification of the plans as needed.

## **EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Personnel File**

Your personnel file is maintained in the Personnel Department. This is considered a public document and is available to you during normal business hours. It is up to you to keep the file up-to-date with such items as changes of address or phone emergency notification, additional education or training skills, etc. Copies of each performance appraisal will also be kept in your file, as well as reprimands, commendations, etc.



Inform your supervisor of any changes that should be recorded in your file so that action can be taken immediately.

### **Responsibilities**

To ensure proper functioning of all departments serving the people of Pinellas County, employees have certain responsibilities. The following are basic responsibilities of all County employees:

- Review and comply with the Personnel Rules and departmental rules and policies.
- The County attempts to provide a fair pay and benefit package to all employees. In return employees are expected to give their employer a full day's work.
- Pinellas County citizens depend on County employees to serve their needs daily, particularly during emergencies. Each County employee must be quick to respond to emergency standby or call-out requests. The lines of communication must be kept open with supervisors if an employee is away from work and feels his/her services may be needed in an emergency situation.
- Before, during and/or after an emergency or catastrophe all County employees will have a role in addressing the situation.



You must discuss this role with your supervisor. Failure to take the action required of you could result in disciplinary action including termination.

Citizens and your employer depend on you performing your part during this time.

- You will need to familiarize yourself with the Pinellas County Statement of Ethics and abide by its principles. A copy of this is printed on the inside back cover of this manual.
- All employees must be courteous at all times to the public we serve.
- To ensure a smooth-running organization, supervisors need to have advance notice, when possible, for job absences for such things as vacation, military leave, etc. Again, please familiarize yourself with your department's rule in this regard.
- Except as waived by the Director of Personnel, all employees are expected to have a photo identification card issued by the Director of Personnel in their possession while at work.
- Photos for your ID Card should be replaced every five years. This routine update is done at no charge to you.



To replace a lost or stolen I.D. Card, contact Employee Records Administration Section of the Personnel Department at 464-3082. The charge to replace is \$10.00.

- Some employees are required to wear uniforms, badges, or picture ID cards at work. This is practical and it identifies you as a public employee. The uniform should be clean and neat at the beginning of your work shift. Where uniforms are not issued, employees should dress in accordance with good taste and proper image for the job.

- You will want to act at all times and in all places in a manner that will bring credit to you and to your employer. Remember, your off-duty behavior, especially if you are in uniform and if you are known as a County employee, impacts our credibility as a public service agency.
- If you are arrested at any time during your employment with the County, you must report it to your supervisor as soon as possible.
- Please use safety equipment when required by your department to do so. Treat this equipment properly, and report repair requirements or safety problems to your supervisor.

### Drug Free Workplace Policy (DFWP)

It is your responsibility to become familiar with and abide by the County's DFWP. This program encourages an employee to seek help through the Employee Assistance Program for a drug or alcohol problem before it affects job performance. If your job duties require a valid Commercial Driver's License, you are also subject to the requirements of the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administrative Regulations. These requirements have been incorporated into the County's Controlled Substance and Alcohol Use Testing Policy for County Commercial Vehicle Drivers. Copies of this policy are available from your supervisor.

Within the guidelines of the DFWP, an Appointing Authority or supervisor, who is of the opinion that reasonable suspicion exists that an employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on duty or representing the County in an official capacity, will request the employee undergo a test of his or her blood or urine. Employees who submit to a test shall not normally be subject to discharge the first time they are found in violation provided they enroll in the Employee Assistance Program. The Pinellas County DFWP prohibits employees from:

- Use, possession, manufacture, distribution, dispensation, or sale of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia on County property or in County supplied vehicles.

- Use, possession, manufacture, distribution, dispensation, or sale of illegal drugs off County property during working and non-working hours.
- Testing positive for alcohol or drugs under the provisions of the substance abuse testing procedures in conjunction with a reasonable suspicion, as defined in Section III of the DFWP publication.
- Use of alcohol during breaks or lunch periods.
- Use of alcohol off duty while wearing a County uniform with County insignia.
- Refusing to consent to alcohol or drug testing when requested by management.
- Interfering in any manner with specimen collection procedures.
- Refusing to sign a statement agreeing to abide by the County's DFWP.
- Any violation of the Federal Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988.

### Harassment Policy

It is the policy of Pinellas County to provide a work environment which is free from verbal or physical conduct that unreasonably harasses, disturbs, or interferes with an employee's work performance or that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile work environment.

All County employees are expected to avoid any activity which harasses or disrupts the work of their co-workers, subordinates, or the general public. Any verbal or physical conduct which harasses another worker, subordinate, or members of the general public with whom employees may have contact, because of that person's race, national origin, religion, sex, disability, pregnancy, age or military status, is prohibited.

In particular, sexual harassment is strictly forbidden, including harassment of members of the same sex. Sexual harassment in the workplace is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Any

sexually harassing or offensive conduct, whether by managers, supervisors, employees, or non-employees who enter the County's workplace, is prohibited. Such prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

1. Unwanted physical contact or offensive conduct of a sexual nature, including flirtations, advances, or propositions;
2. Harassment concerning an individual's sex, sexual interest or orientation, sexual innuendos and offensive jokes or descriptions of personal sexual conduct;
3. Demeaning, degrading or insulting comments about a person's physical appearance;
4. Displaying in the workplace photos or other materials which are demeaning, insulting, intimidating or sexually suggestive;
5. Demeaning, insulting, sexually suggestive, or otherwise offensive written, recorded, telephonic, or electronically transmitted messages.

Any of the above-listed activities or offensive behavior based upon an individual's race, national origin, religion, disability, pregnancy, age or military status is also prohibited.

### **IF YOU EXPERIENCE HARASSMENT:**

1. Document the incident by writing such details as date and time of incident, where it occurred, who was present, what was said and done, and witnesses to the incident.
2. Report the incident orally and/or in writing to your Supervisor, Department Head, Appointing Authority, Personnel Department or Pinellas County Office of Human Rights.

Violations of the County's Harassment Policy may result in discipline up to and including termination.

### **Internet/Intranet Policy**

The Internet worldwide computer network provides a unique service for acquiring and sharing governmental, technical, and legal information.

Pinellas County employees using the Internet for professional governmental purposes need to ensure that they do so in a proper, ethical and professional manner. Employees are to use the Internet to conduct official and authorized County business only. Definition of purpose for such use is to be obtained from the employee's direct supervisor. Use of the Internet within the workplace and visitation to various websites is intended only for business purposes and becomes a public record, open to public scrutiny.

The Pinellas County Government Intranet is designed to provide County, job and benefit information to employees while they are in the workplace. Employees are free to access it as needed, and when time permits, to gain information of value and assistance to them. Pinellas County Government's Internet web site may be accessed at [www.co.pinellas.fl.us](http://www.co.pinellas.fl.us) or [www.pinellascounty.org](http://www.pinellascounty.org). The County's Intranet may be accessed by typing "Intraweb" in the URL locator line.

### Resignation



If you wish to resign, file a letter of resignation with your Department Head at least two weeks before you wish to leave.

This letter should include the effective date of your resignation and the reason, along with any other pertinent information you wish to add.

This will, provided your conduct and performance history is satisfactory, ensure that you will be listed as leaving the County Service in good standing. You must resign in good standing to be eligible for rehire. If you are absent from work without your supervisor's authorization for three consecutive working days, it may be automatically considered a resignation not in good standing and may prevent your re-employment by the County.

If your termination transaction is received by Payroll in sufficient time upon your termination, your total eligible annual leave hours earned are paid in the final check. Upon termination you may be eligible for continuation of some employer-provided benefits. You will be given further information at that time. However, you should check with Employee Benefits upon leaving County employment. *See Rule VIII-I.*

## **COMPENSATION**

Newly hired employees are usually hired at the entry level of the pay grade established for the classification. Pay ranges for positions are published in the Pay and Classification Plan, which is available for review in the Personnel Department or on the Personnel Department's web site. Employees in the Exempt Service are paid in accordance with salaries established and approved by their Appointing Authorities.

The County Compensation Program contains several provisions to ensure the program remains competitive, which include a Market Survey, a Classification & Cyclic Maintenance Review Program and a Merit Pay Increase Program.

### **Annual Market Survey**

The Market Survey of common benchmark classifications is conducted to obtain prevailing pay rates being paid by other employers with whom Pinellas County competes in the labor market. It is not possible to compare the pay of every classification within Pinellas County with the pay of corresponding classifications in other organizations. Consequently, the Market Survey must concentrate on the collection of pay data for key benchmark classes of jobs. Key benchmark classes are commonly utilized classifications within other governments and can be described for survey purposes in a concise manner that accurately identifies the nature of work, the level of difficulty, degree of responsibility, and minimum qualifications. Benchmark classification surveys will identify pay levels in the community that are of prime significance to the County for recruitment purposes. Compensation rates for other classifications not surveyed are usually adjusted based upon the internal class level relationships with benchmark classifications.

### **The Classification & Cyclic Maintenance Review Program**

Historically, the Classification and Cyclic Maintenance Review Program analyzed the positions from similar job families on an ongoing basis, completing each cyclic every three to four years. A job family could consist of all clerical positions throughout the county and across departmental lines. However, we have found from past experience that the duties and responsibilities in certain job families rarely change

significantly enough to warrant reclassifications. More often, the market has been the primary driver for changes in these classifications.

In our effort to remain competitive, we watch the market closely to ensure that our ranges are comparable to those of our peers.

For these reasons, the audits of cyclic review which are classification based will generally be done as an in-depth market study of the classes under review. Individual desk audits will be the rare exception rather than the rule. The market will continue to be the primary indicator for any recommended movement of these classes. The exceptions will be special studies of positions requested by Appointing Authorities and requests by employees for individual positions for which an incumbent feels there are compelling reasons to be closely audited.

The purpose of such studies is to determine whether the positions within each department are assigned the proper classification. A Personnel Analyst may conduct interviews with incumbents, their supervisors and managers, while reviewing the completed Position Audit Questionnaire (PAQ) in addition to looking at the current market. The analyst then determines whether changes in the job duties and responsibilities affect the classification of the individual position and makes appropriate recommendations. These recommendations are signed off by the Personnel Director, the Appointing Authority and goes on for final approval to the Personnel Board. Reclassification may be a title change and/or a pay grade change from the previous classification.

### Pay for Performance Merit Increase Program

Pinellas County has a Pay for Performance Merit Increase Program, which provides for variable percentage merit pay increases dependent upon employees' job performance rather than their length of service on the job. An employee must have a "good" or better performance review to receive a pay raise.

The minimum and maximum of the variable percentage merit increase range will be determined each year based upon labor market changes, economic conditions and the County's financial status. The recommended merit increase to be received for varying levels of job performance is also subject to change. Employees will be eligible for a merit increase after receiving their formal annual evaluation of job performance. Employees may also be eligible for a merit increase upon successful completion of 6 months' probation in a new position.

## Multiple Maximum Pay Rates Based Upon Performance

Employees are eligible for a variable percentage merit increase annually until the maximum pay rate for their performance level is achieved. Each pay grade has three “maximum” pay rates based upon three levels of job performance: Good, Very Good, or Excellent. In keeping with the philosophy of increasing emphasis on pay for performance, the three “maximum” pay rates provide slightly greater financial remuneration for employees who achieve high-level performance. Multiple maximum pay rates for each classification are published in the Pay Plan and provide continuing incentive for employees to improve and/or maintain a high level of job performance. Employees at the excellent maximum of their pay range as of October, may receive an additional 8 hours of administrative leave.

## Probationary Period Reviews

Employees fulfilling their initial probationary period or a promotional probationary period shall have their job performance reviewed after three (3) months (informal), six (6) months and twelve (12) months in classification. See Employee Performance Review, page 25 and Personnel Rule V for more information.

## Pay Period

The County pay period covers two complete work weeks, beginning on a Sunday and ending on a Saturday. The County distributes paychecks to employees every two weeks on the Friday immediately following the end of each two-week pay period. For example: If you receive a paycheck on Friday 10-27-06, the paycheck covers the preceding payroll period, 10-08-06 thru 10-21-06. Employees receive their paychecks either thru direct deposit or from their supervisor at the work site unless other arrangements are made.

An “Earnings Record” is attached to each paycheck to provide you with information regarding accrued annual leave and any deductions or additional pay. Your supervisor or payroll clerk can answer any questions regarding this record.

## Hours of Work

The normal workweek for most County employees is a five-day, forty-hour week. Some departments differ. You should have been advised of your particular working schedule at the time of your interview or your appointment.

## Overtime Compensation

In conformance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Personnel Rules, eligible Classified Service employees receive, at the discretion of their Appointing Authority, either time and one-half pay or time off at time and one-half for hours worked in excess of 40 in one workweek.

Department Heads and other Exempt Service personnel are expected to perform such additional services and hours of work as are required, and receive no compensation in time or additional pay because of the nature of the particular job they are doing.

## Shift Differential

A shift differential pay of five percent (5%) is paid to employees who regularly work a shift wherein a majority of the hours fall after 5:00 p.m., and ten percent (10%) when they regularly work a shift wherein the majority of the hours fall after midnight and before 6:00 a.m. Shift differential pay applies only when an employee is assigned to work such hours for a period of four consecutive calendar weeks or more.

## Standby Service

Some employees are required to remain on call for “standby” service after their regular work hours. When this happens, an employee receives one hour additional pay for “standing by” for an eight-hour period. If called into service, the employee will receive a minimum of two hours’ pay for the first callout and will be compensated on a portal-to-portal basis.

## Emergency Call Out

Employees are subject to emergency call out during times of disasters such as hurricanes or other critical situations. Failure to respond may result in termination or other serious disciplinary actions.

An employee not on standby who is called out to assist in an emergency, receives a minimum of two hours' pay, and will be compensated for time worked on a portal-to-portal basis with such pay subject to overtime compensation provisions.

## Classified Service Employees Working in the Citizen Information Center (CIC)

Classified Service Employees working in the Citizen Information Center (CIC) during emergencies shall receive their regular pay in situations where their CIC shift falls during their normally scheduled work time and work days and the county operations are continuing as usual. If the assigned CIC hours fall outside of the normally scheduled work time or work days, the CIC employee will be compensated at the overtime rate of pay, regardless of the actual number of hours worked in the week. The hours actually worked in the CIC shall also be included in the calculation of the time an employee worked during that pay week. Comp-time shall not be granted in lieu of payment.

## **EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE REVIEWS**

The Performance Appraisal System is one of the major ways Pinellas County assesses employee productivity. For supervisors and managers, performance appraisal is also a valuable tool that helps communicate the responsibilities of each position, as well as performance expectations.

As a management tool our system seeks to:

- Assist employees in understanding and developing the goals and objectives of their work unit and their department.
- Let employees know what they are expected to do in relation to these goals, measure how well they are actually doing and what changes in their work behavior are desirable.
- Assist the supervisor and the employee in developing each employee's full potential.
- Recognize and reward exceptional employee performance.
- Generate information for making administrative decisions (e.g. merit increases, promotions) in human resource management.
- Promote employee involvement in making departments effective and efficient.

The County's Performance Appraisal System is designed to reward the people who are meeting or exceeding performance expectations. The better or more excellent the performance, the greater the financial reward. If an employee's performance needs attention or is unsatisfactory, there is no merit increase until the performance improves.

During the review, the employee has an opportunity to talk with the supervisor and discuss areas of concern. The intention is to open communication between supervisor and employee, reinforce positive work habits and performance, and correct poor performance. Employees appreciate the sense of fairness generated when financial increases go to people based on their contributions. Refer to page 21

of this manual for further information on the Pay for Performance Merit Increase Program.

The factors rated on the Performance Review are:

- Quantity of work
- Quality of work
- Job Knowledge
- Dependability
- Communication and Interaction Skills
- Judgement
- Initiative
- Attendance
- Safety
- Appearance
- Supervisory Task Skills\*
- Supervisory Leadership Skills\*

*\*For supervisors only*

Additionally, some organizations also rate employees on job-specific or organization-specific *optional* factors. Most factors are assigned specific weights that reflect the relative importance of that factor in comparison to other factors.

At the end of the review, an overall evaluation is established. The first merit pay consideration normally comes after 6 months to one year of satisfactory service, though the first Performance Review takes place after 3 months' employment. This informal first review ensures that the employee and supervisor sit down and discuss performance and expectations so that there need be no surprises on the Formal Review at six and twelve months after employment. Employees are evaluated at least annually thereafter. (*See Personnel Rule XIX, for reference.*)

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

### Transfer

Employees in the Classified Service may be transferred from a position in a given class to a similar position in another department with the consent of the Appointing Authorities concerned and the Director of Personnel. Such a transfer may be requested by you or made by the County depending on the circumstances and needs that exist.



To request a transfer, an employee must complete a *Request for Transfer/Placement on an Eligible Register* form and a short, two-page application form.

You may request a transfer to a position within the job classification you are currently encumbering or for a job classification that you previously successfully encumbered.

These forms are available from the personnel/payroll associate in your department, the Personnel Department, or the Personnel Department intranet site under “Forms.” Complete and return the form to the Personnel Department. The request will be reviewed and if you are eligible (qualified) under personnel rules and procedures, your name will be placed on the eligible register of the job class for which you are requesting transfer. Your name will be available for consideration in filling future positions for a period not to exceed two years.

### Testing

To be considered for promotional and other positions within the Classified Service, your name must be on the eligible register for the job classification of the position. The eligible register contains the names of those individuals who have taken and passed the examination for the job class and are thereby eligible to fill vacant positions within that job class. County employees in regular status positions are encouraged to participate in employment exams for which they meet the minimum qualification requirements. These qualifications can be found on the posted job announcements and on the class specifications for the job. If you have an interest in a job class which is open for recruitment, you should sign up for the examination through your supervisor. Job

announcements are posted weekly at your work site and at the Personnel Department offices. In addition, all but “promotional only” examination opportunities are contained on the Job Line recording (464-3745) and at the Personnel Department Internet site. A Promotional Job Line recording of promotional recruitments (only open to County employees in permanent classified positions) is available at 464-3912. Promotional and non-promotional recruitments may also be found on the Personnel Department Intranet site at <http://ups>.

It is very important that you sign up for the job classifications when they are open for recruitment. Examinations are not given for every vacant position. Instead testing is done for a job class and the resulting eligible register is used to fill all vacant positions within that job class until the examination is given again. Many examinations are only given once a year, and failure to sign up and test when the class is open for recruitment will mean that you miss out on job opportunities for the job class until the examination is given again. Just remember, you cannot be considered for vacant positions in a job classification unless your name appears on the eligible register for that particular job classification. As a courtesy to you, the Personnel Department will automatically carry over all eligible test scores less than a year old for higher pay grades that you earned prior to joining the county.

Under most circumstances grades earned by employees on selection procedures are good for two (2) years. However, you should check the recruitment flyers each week, even if you are already on the eligible register for the job class(es) in which you have an interest. On occasion an eligible register may be canceled, which would require all interested candidates to reapply, take and pass the selection procedure to maintain their eligibility. When an eligible register is canceled, notice of the cancellation is placed on the recruitment flyer so that you will know you need to reapply and follow the required selection procedure. And on some occasions, specialty recruitments are done for a specific position (or group of positions) within a job class that may require all individuals to apply (or reapply). You should always check the recruitment flyers. Notices on the flyers will inform you if you must apply/reapply.

## Promotions

The County merit system encourages promotion from “within” whenever practical and consistent with the County’s affirmative action goals. Promotions within the service are made based on competitive examinations. Watch the bulletin boards for the Personnel Department announcements concerning employment opportunities. If you are interested in the selection process for a job class and feel that you meet the minimum qualification requirements, inform your supervisor that you wish to take the exam.

## Training

All employees are encouraged to take advantage of the County’s training programs, insofar as they do not conflict with principal job assignments. There are a variety of training courses available to County employees at a number of locations. A training catalog and schedule are published each September.



Participants may register for classes by getting supervisory approval and forwarding a registration form to the Personnel Department’s Employee & Organizational Support Division through their department training contract.

The training catalog and registration form are also available on the Intranet.

## Job Enhancement Program

The Job Enhancement Program is designed to encourage employees to pursue education courses on their own time by providing financial assistance for course work which will broaden, update or otherwise improve their job performance. Full-time employees who have completed one year of regular employment are eligible for this financial assistance provided they apply no later than 30 days after the course completion date, are approved by their management and the Director of Personnel, and receive a passing grade upon completion of the course.

### Career Development Program

The Career Development Program is established to assist in the career growth of County employees. This program differs from the Job Enhancement Program in that career counseling and planning is available in addition to financial assistance. Full-time employees who have completed one year of regular employment are eligible for financial assistance in the same manner as mentioned above. Interested employees should refer to the Personnel Department Intranet site at <http://ups.co.pinellas.fl.us/> or contact the Personnel Department for the up-to-date rules, guidance, and allowances in both programs.

### Employee Inservice Day

Effective January 2007, on Presidents Day, Pinellas County government will be closed to the public. However, employees are required to report to work for an inservice day, specific activities to be defined by each individual Appointing Authority.

## **LAYOFF**

Sometimes it is necessary to reduce the working staff in one or more departments. This reduction is accomplished through a layoff. In any layoff temporary employees are separated first, then provisional, probationary, and permanent employees in that order.

*Personnel Rule XXIII, Section A, Paragraph 2 reads: The order of layoff of all employees within a particular status of employment shall be determined by the Appointing Authority after giving due consideration to all relevant factors which shall include, but not be limited to, seniority, veterans preference and the relative efficiency of the employee. For purposes of this paragraph, seniority shall be defined as the length of continuous service in classification immediately prior to layoff.*

## **EMPLOYEES' ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The Classified Service has an Employees' Advisory Council (EAC) established by the Unified Personnel Act. This Council meets monthly and serves in an advisory capacity to the Personnel Board concerning personnel matters, policies, rules and regulations affecting Pinellas County employees. The Council is charged with developing and recommending ideas related to working conditions, morale, public image, efficiency, employee safety and employee benefits programs.

The Council's organization and membership is established in the EAC Bylaws, which are approved by the Personnel Board. Council members are elected to two-year terms by the classified employees in the group they represent. Members must be regular status Classified Service employees of Pinellas County for at least one year prior to their selection. When vacancies arise on the Council, interim members are appointed by the Council until the regular term expires, at which time an election is held within the affected group.

The Council also maintains a roster of delegates who attend on behalf of individual departments or delegate areas. They facilitate communication between employees and Council members. They meet bi-monthly with the EAC to discuss current personnel issues as well as suggestions offered by employees. They also solicit informal responses from their groups regarding management and EAC proposals. Delegates must be regular status, Classified Service full-time employees with at least one year of service. For more information visit the intranet at: <http://ups/eac/eac.htm>

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: DISCHARGES, DEMOTIONS, SUSPENSIONS, APPEALS AND HEARINGS**

Various rules governing disciplinary actions protect both employees and the County. They protect employees from unfair treatment yet provide the County (taxpayer) the assurance that job responsibilities are being accomplished in a professional, dependable manner. (*See Personnel Rule XXIV for full explanation.*)

### **Grounds For Disciplinary Action**

The following are some of the grounds/reasons for disciplinary action. They are in addition to any of your own Departmental Rules/Regulations which can be explained to you by your Department Head or supervisor:

- Absenteeism or tardiness
- Incompetency
- Violation of the Substance Abuse Prevention Program
- Inefficiency
- Failure to report during an emergency
- Harassment
- Immoral conduct
- Dishonesty
- Insubordination
- Any conduct unbecoming a County employee on or off duty
- Violation of the County's Ethics Policy (*see page 56*)

Any affected employee who has completed the initial probationary period may grieve an adverse action within ten working days from the time the employee becomes aware of such action in accordance with the grievance procedure (*specified in Personnel Rule XX*).

### **Suspensions Pending Judicial Review**

When any employee has been indicted or has had a complaint/information filed against him or her for a felony, a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, or any crime in which a conviction would affect the efficiency or morale of the Pinellas County Classified Service, the employee may, at the discretion of the Appointing

Authority, be suspended until any such charge has been prosecuted to its conclusion. *(See Personnel Rule XXIV for more information.)*

### Employee Grievances

Disagreements can occur. If this happens, speak to your supervisor in a calm and straightforward manner so that a mutually acceptable solution can be found.

If discussion does not resolve the difficulty, there are more formal grievance procedures. All employees of the Classified Service have the right, within 10 working days of becoming aware of the problem, to seek consideration for any grievance without having such action in any way adversely affect their employment with the County. The one exception is that a probationary employee cannot grieve termination or demotion.

You have the right first to personally bring the grievance, orally, to the attention of your immediate supervisor. The grievance must be orally answered within 10 working days. If you or the supervisor cannot reach agreement, or if there is no response within 10 working days, you may ask your Department Head to consider the grievance. This step of the grievance procedure must be made in writing and a form is available in the Personnel Department for this purpose. If you are still not satisfied you may take up your grievance with the Director of Personnel within 10 days from when you received the response from your Department Head. The Director of Personnel will arrange for your grievance to be heard by an informal grievance committee. Also, the staff of the Personnel Department is available to counsel you on your grievance and guide you in the proper procedure to follow. *(Steps of the Grievance Procedure are elaborated on more completely in Personnel Rule XX.)*

### Hearings

Within 10 working days of discharge, a regular status employee may appeal the discharge to the Personnel Board by submitting a written request to the Director of Personnel. The Personnel Board is the final authority in all matters relating to personnel policy and personnel actions. The findings of the Board are binding on all affected parties. *(See Personnel Rule XXIV.)*

## Employee Advocate

A member of the Personnel Department staff may assist the aggrieved employee in the formulation of the grievance statement and advise the affected employee of all rights and responsibilities in the grievance procedure. The staff member does not act as a representative or advocate for the aggrieved employee. An aggrieved employee may, if desired, be represented by professional counsel or any other person during any formal or informal hearing conducted under the provisions of Personnel Rule XX. The Personnel Department maintains a list of employees, called Employee Advocates, who have volunteered to assist co-workers and are willing to provide support to an employee at all stages of the grievance.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST, POLITICAL ACTIVITIES, NEPOTISM**

Public employees are employed for public benefit. With this in mind, all County employees should practice good public relations. Ultimately, you will want to familiarize yourself with all of the regulations found in the Personnel Rules. If you have any job or County policy questions, ask your supervisor or talk to a counselor in the Personnel Department.

In this light, it is important that you avoid conflicts of interest. Some specific examples of conflict of interest are:

- Holding a non-public position which may interfere with the proper discharge of public duty.
- Using confidential information gained as the result of public employment for personal gain or benefit.
- Accepting or soliciting gifts and favors.
- Using official position for personal gain.
- Holding investments which may interfere with the proper discharge of public duty.
- Receiving or participating in commissions of any kind or accepting finders' fees resulting from County purchases or from employment of contractors or consultants.
- Receiving compensation for County services from any source other than the County, except as provided by law.
- Transacting any official County business with any business entity of which the employee is an officer, director, agent or member, or owns a controlling interest.
- Holding personal investments in any enterprise which might create a conflict with the public interest.

- Rendering County goods or services to any person, firm, association or corporation in which the County employee serves as an officer or employee.
- Engaging in employment in non-duty hours in an activity or enterprise which is inconsistent or incompatible with County employment.

It is not the intent of either the rules of conduct or the Personnel Rules to prevent any officer or employee of the County from accepting other employment or following any pursuit which does not interfere with the full and faithful discharge of County duties.



Employees must ensure that no conflict exists by seeking prior approval from their Appointing Authorities.

Familiarize yourself with Personnel Rule XXV on Political Activities. Of course, nothing in this rule prohibits any Classified Service employee from expressing opinions on any candidate or issue, or from participating in any political campaign during off-duty hours, as long as such activities are not in conflict with the provisions of Section 104.31, Florida Statutes. Any person violating the provisions of this Rule shall be subject to dismissal from the Classified Service.

Also, Pinellas County will conform with the requirements of Florida Statute, Restriction on Employment of Relatives. In shortened form, the statute states: A public official, while serving in an agency, may not appoint, employ, promote or advance (*or advocate*) any related individual in or to a position in that agency. Public concern and scrutiny demands prudence in the hiring of employee relatives who could conceivably, at one time or another, come under the jurisdiction or influence of one or the other.

Caution must be exercised to demonstrate fairness and objectivity in public personnel matters. Therefore, any form of nepotism is strongly discouraged and enforced under the statute.

## **SAFETY AND LOSS CONTROL PROGRAMS/PROCEDURES**

The Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners, the Constitutional Officers (elected officials) and the Unified Personnel Board are committed to providing a safe and healthful work environment. This can only be accomplished through the full cooperation of all County employees in complying with safety rules and maintaining a positive safety attitude.

### **Employee Responsibilities**

Employees are required, as a condition of employment, to exercise due care in the course of their work to prevent injuries to themselves or other workers and loss of material resources. Each employee shall:

- Report all unsafe conditions to one's supervisor.
- Keep work areas clean and orderly at all times.
- Report all accidents immediately to one's supervisor.
- Avoid engaging in any horseplay and avoid distracting others.
- Obey all safety rules and follow work instructions. If any doubt exists about the safety of a job, work shall be stopped until further instructions are received from a supervisor.
- Operate only machines and equipment for which they have been trained and authorized to use. Employees shall not be authorized to operate any heavy equipment without being trained by a Fleet Certified Trainer.
- Use only the prescribed equipment for the job.
- Wear required protective equipment when working in hazardous areas.

## Employee Protective Equipment and Types

The designation and use of protective equipment for all jobs which have an inherent injury potential will be reviewed and approved by the appropriate Department Directors and Risk Management. The use of specialized protective equipment is mandatory in high risk operations, and employees are accountable for equipment condition. Refer to the Loss Control Manual for specific guidelines.

## Toxic Material Handling

Pinellas County's "Right to Know" policy complies with current OSHA guidelines and is applicable to all employees. Employees are introduced to the policy during New Hire Orientation. Those with intranet access may refer to the county's Safety Manual and Guide to Loss Control posted on Risk Management's page for further clarification. Questions should be directed to your immediate supervisor or to Risk Management.

## Vehicle Investigation Procedures

Employees driving a County vehicle shall:

- Possess a valid County driver's license. *NOTE:* If the Florida driver's license is revoked or suspended, the County driver's license must be returned and the supervisor advised of the action. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
- Inspect the vehicle before operating. Report evidence of accident damage to the supervisor.
- Report to the supervisor and to Fleet Management if the vehicle has a safety deficiency.
- Not drive a vehicle with a serious safety deficiency, such as steering or braking defects, until repaired.
- Wear seat belts while driving or riding in County vehicles.
- Call police to investigate all accidents involving a County vehicle and any third party, and report details to immediate supervisor. Risk Management must also be notified by either you or your supervisor.

## Safety Resources

There are a number of safety and health resources available to supervisors and employees within the County.

- 1) Personnel Department - The staff of the Employee Benefits Division is available to discuss any concerns for possible safety or health problems.
- 2) Risk Management - The Director of Risk Management is responsible for the overall administration and coordination of the County Safety Program. Risk Management conducts the day-to-day safety program, provides assistance and training for departmental programs, conducts investigations and inspections and coordinates safety educational activities.

## Workplace Violence Policy

Workplace violence is an issue of great concern throughout the Country. The Unified Personnel System has developed a policy and guidelines for responding to violent acts or threats of violence against persons or property. The procedures are divided into two sections. They are “Reducing the Risk of Potential Workplace Violence” and “Dealing with Potential Violence.” The first section covers application for employment, conviction records, drug testing, Employee Assistance Program (EAP), grievance procedure, firearms and weapons policy, and supervisory/management training.

The second section covers dealing with potential violence on the job, the public, off the job, management actions, departmental responsibilities and a checklist for response.

The above summary is intended as an overview. The entire policy is available in all departments, the Personnel Department, and on the Intranet.



Should any violent or potentially violent situation arise, please discuss it with a supervisor immediately. Should you have any questions regarding the Workplace Violence Policy, please contact your Appointing Authority immediately.

## Policy Regarding Firearms and Weapons

It is the policy of Pinellas County Government that non-sworn employees are prohibited from possessing firearms and/or other weapons on County premises or during working hours while on duty.

Sworn employees will follow their respective Departmental policies regarding firearms and weapons. Personnel Rule XXIV, which includes a list of offenses that may result in disciplinary action, states in Section J24, regarding firearms:

“That the employee possesses a deadly weapon, while on County owned or leased property, or in a County owned vehicle or in a personal vehicle while being used for County business. Prohibited possession under this Rule shall also apply to a deadly weapon located in an employee’s privately-owned vehicle if such vehicle is parked on County owned or leased property. For the purposes of this Rule, a “deadly weapon” shall be defined as any instrument which will cause death or great bodily injury when used in the ordinary and usual manner contemplated by its design and construction and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Firearms; clubs; knives, other than a common pocket knife with a folding blade or an eating utensil; stun guns; brass knuckles; and numchucks, throwing stars, and other martial arts weapons.

Exceptions to the above prohibitions may be granted by Appointing Authorities to employees whose duties require them to carry a such an item or who have a need to carry a firearm or deadly weapon for their own personal protection.”

Should you have any questions on the policy regarding Firearms and Weapons, please contact your Appointing Authority immediately.

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

All benefits and programs described herein are subject to regular review for cost effectiveness and employee satisfaction. The Board of County Commissioners provides a certain level of funding annually. Benefits programs may be adjusted from time to time to meet this approved funding level and employee expectations.

Pinellas County provides a qualified Cafeteria Plan (Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code) which includes the Group Health plan offerings, plus a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) consisting of a Health Care Reimbursement and a Dependent Care Assistance account. Health plan premium and FSA contributions are paid for with pre-tax dollars via payroll deductions from the participant's paycheck. Employees must make an annual election to participate.

Information specifically related to benefits programs is communicated to employees through the Unified Personnel System's Benefits newsletter, *BeneBreeze*, which is distributed quarterly and is also available online. Details about the Benefits program, summary plan descriptions, and many forms may be found online by visiting the Employee Benefits web page. The Benefits web page may be accessed via Internet and/or intranet. Further information on any benefit or program may be obtained by contacting the Personnel Department Benefits Division at 464-4570.

### Eligibility for Group Insurance

If you are a full-time (30) hours per week or more regular status employee, you are eligible for group life, health and short-term disability income insurance coverage on the first of the month, one month after hire date, at little or no expense to you. Part-time permanent employees who work 20 hours but less than 30 hours per week must pay 50% of the combined employer/employee single premium if they choose group coverage. Dependents are eligible to participate in the group health and dental plans for a premium charge. No evidence of insurability is required if you or your dependents are enrolled within 31 days of employment or with acceptable certification of prior coverage for dependents.

## Group Health Plan(s)

### **Medical Plan**

Pinellas County employees may choose from several health plan designs. Each has a different level of cost sharing (deductibles, co-payments, coinsurance) and corresponding premiums. All plans provide comprehensive coverage for medical, pharmacy and vision expenses.

You may elect not to enroll in the group health plan if you have health plan coverage outside of the County, such as your spouse's employer's plan, or your own retirement plan from a previous employer. If you choose this option, you will receive a taxable *opt-out* allowance to purchase other benefits. Evidence of alternate coverage must be provided to receive this payment.

### **Dental Plan**

A choice of dental plans is provided for all regular status full-time and part-time employees working at least 20 hours per week. Both plans offer coverage for a full range of services including dentures and orthodontia. However, each has different reimbursement levels and premium structure.

## Employee Assistance Program (EAP) & Mental Health Benefits

EAP and Mental Health Benefits are available for employees and dependents enrolled in the medical plan. The EAP provides up to six (6) assessment sessions for short term problem resolution counseling for family, emotional, marital and other personal problems at no cost. Additionally the EAP counselors provide professional referrals when therapy is needed for mental health and substance abuse treatment benefits. Use of the EAP on a voluntary basis is entirely confidential. For further information, refer to your EAP booklet or call Employee Benefits.

## Group Life Insurance

All regular status employees working at least 20 hours per week are provided a term life insurance policy equal to their annual salary. Life insurance is not available for dependents. Additional coverage may be purchased. If purchased at time of initial enrollment, no medical underwriting is required, provided the optional coverage does not

exceed three (3) times the base salary. Coverage in excess of this amount or a late application is subject to proof of insurability.

The County also makes available a group universal life insurance coverage known as WrapPlan. This plan is voluntary and the employee pays the entire cost through payroll deduction. This plan is available to employees and dependents. It is also portable, allowing employees to continue all or a portion of group universal life insurance coverage upon leaving County employment. New employees will be contacted individually by a WrapPlan representative.

### Disability Benefits

The County makes available both Short and Long Term Disability Income Eligibility, disability determination and benefits payable are subject to the provisions of the respective policies. In all cases, proof of disability is required and the employee must submit a claim form which is available through Employee Benefits or from their website. An employee's absence will run concurrent with any Family and Medical Leave Act entitlement under the County's Family and Medical Leave Policy.

Short Term Disability is provided to all permanent, probationary and exempt (excluding Management Interns) status employees eligible for the group health plan. Employees must have exhausted all accrued Extended Illness leave and, in the case of classified employees, must be disabled seven consecutive calendar days. The maximum benefit period is based on years of service (six weeks for new employees up to a maximum of twenty-six weeks after five years of service).

Long Term Disability is provided to all permanent classified employees working at least 20 hours/week with five or more years of service and to all exempt employees. Classified employees who have completed one year of regular employment but with less than five years of service may purchase this coverage. Employees must be disabled for six months to qualify for benefits.

### Retirement

To provide for retirement, County employees are entitled to benefits from the Florida Retirement System (FRS). County employees are also

covered by Social Security with a contribution equal to the individual's contribution up to the maximum defined by Social Security. These benefits are briefly described below and, when incorporated into a plan including Social Security and Deferred Compensation, provide a measure of security during retirement.

### Florida Retirement System (FRS)

The provisions of the FRS cover all regular status employees. The State of Florida's Department of Management Services, Division of Retirement is responsible for administration. The FRS offers two programs from which to choose: the Pension Plan and the Investment Plan. Employees must make an election during their CHOICE period as to which plan they want to participate in. Both plans have similar provisions for disability retirement and survivor benefits.

The County pays the total required contribution percentage of each employee's salary regardless of which retirement plan you choose. However, only the Investment Plan allows the employee to choose the investment funds into which the contributions should go. An additional contribution is made by the County to the Health Insurance Subsidy (HIS) fund which pays a retiree a monthly benefit for each year of service to maximum of 30 years. For 2005 this monthly amount is \$5.00/year of service. The subsidy is to help offset some of the costs of purchasing health insurance once you have retired.

An employee will become vested in the FRS Pension Plan upon completing 6 years of creditable service. The pension benefit provides a fixed benefit based on a formula that factors in your highest years of compensation, your years of creditable service and an annual cost of living increase

Details on the Pension Plan are available in the booklet FRS TODAY. The Investment Plan details are available in the employee's CHOICE kit as well as at the website [www.myfrs.com](http://www.myfrs.com). The FRS Bulletin is a newsletter that is issued periodically to all members of the FRS.

## Pension Plan

Requirements for Normal Retirement - To be eligible for normal retirement under the Pension Plan an employee must meet one of the following age and service requirements:

- Age 62 with 6 years of creditable service
- Any age with 30 years of creditable service
- Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) may be elected by those employees who qualify for normal retirement but wish to continue working for up to 5 more years.

Requirement for Early Retirement under the FRS – You can retire any time after you are vested. The normal retirement benefit is reduced 5% for each year that the employee is under the normal retirement age of 62 and does not have 30 or more years of service.

## The Investment Plan

An employee in this FRS plan is vested upon completion of 1 year of creditable service. The retirement benefit is the value in the employee's account. Unlike the Pension Plan, there is no fixed benefit level. Your future retirement benefit can be greater or less than the Pension Plan benefit depending on the performance of your individual investment options. However a guaranteed lifetime payment option can be purchased and is available with annual 3% benefit increases, the same as the Pension Plan. The Investment Plan permits rollovers from other qualified plans such as IRA's, 403(b), 401(a), and 401(k). If you leave FRS covered employment, you may choose to leave your account invested in the Plan or roll it over to an IRA or another employer's qualified retirement plan.

## Deferred Compensation

Employees may choose to participate in the Deferred Compensation Plan provided for in Internal Revenue Code Section 457. This is similar to a 401(k) in private sector employment plan. The County does not contribute to your Deferred Compensation plan. You may select a wide variety of investment options to fund your account. The 2006 administrators are AIG/Valic, ICMA-RC, The Hartford, and Nationwide Retirement Solutions. Employees may enroll at any time throughout the year.

Individualized retirement planning and investment strategies are available from the respective account representatives. You may participate in one or more plan up to the dollar limit allowed by law. Once yearly, usually in late September, employees have an opportunity to attend informational meetings presented by representatives from the different plans. At any time throughout the year you are encouraged to call Employee Benefits for general information, enrollment forms or plan description booklets.

### Workers' Compensation

In accordance with the laws of Florida, the County provides Workers' Compensation Benefits for employees injured on the job. These benefits include the coverage of medical costs and wage loss incurred as the result of an industrial accident. For additional information concerning Workers' Compensation, contact Risk Management.

### Wellness Center

The County promotes a healthy lifestyle and provides employees with education and access to relevant activities through its Wellness Program.

The Wellness program includes seminars and screening programs, such as cholesterol, skin cancer, and vision screenings. Comprehensive education programs are offered on stress reduction and weight management. A wellness newsletter *To Your Health* is distributed monthly to all employees, containing program schedules and articles on food and nutrition, exercise, family health and disease prevention/management. In addition, a 'Wellness Center Monthly Health Theme' is provided.

Corporate Fitness Works provides all administrative and management functions for this program, including health screenings, literature and educational and exercise classes, chronic disease prevention/management programs, and management for the County's on-site Wellness Center.

The Wellness Center is an exercise on your own facility and is a free benefit to all permanent County employees. The center is located in the basement of the old Courthouse at 324 S. Ft. Harrison Avenue, in downtown Clearwater.

## Annual Leave and Paid Holidays

Annual leave is provided for the purpose of vacation, personal business, short-term illness, medical and dental appointments and personal emergencies. Accumulated leave can be a valuable benefit to you should a medical emergency arise. Abuse of the leave privilege is reason for disciplinary action.

Requests for leave are made through your supervisor. Any employee who fails to report to work, and whose supervisor has not been notified, may be considered absent without leave, receive no pay for the time absent and be subject to disciplinary action or termination.

Members of the Classified Service, except temporary employees with less than one month of continuous service, earn and accrue annual leave with pay as indicated below. No annual leave is earned while an employee is in a non-pay status.

Annual leave is earned and may be accumulated as follows:

<u>Continuous Service Years</u>	<u>Leave Hours Earned Annually (Hired BEFORE 12/25/94)</u>	<u>Maximum Hours for Termination Payment</u>
1 - 3	136	408
4 - 9	176	528
10 - 14	200	600
15 - 19	208	624
20 or More	232	696

<u>Continuous Service Years</u>	<u>Leave Hours Earned Annually (Hired AFTER 12/25/94)</u>	<u>Maximum Hours for Termination Payment</u>
1 - 2	120	240
3 - 4	136	408
5 - 9	160	480
10 - 14	184	552
15 - 19	208	624
20 or More	232	696

Annual leave may be accumulated in excess of maximum annual leave limitations; however, the maximum pay-out at termination will be three times the employee's annual accrual rate.

To assist you in monitoring and scheduling your absences, current annual and extended illness leave balances are printed on your paycheck stub each payday.

Part-time employees earn annual leave proportionally to their work week.

Upon termination, will receive a lump sum payment for all unused authorized annual leave at the regular rate of pay. This calculation does not include premium pay, such as shift differential.

All members of the County Service, except temporary employees with less than one month of continuous service, are entitled to the following paid holidays and any others which are specially designated, unless the employee is in a non-pay status for the entire pay period during which the holiday falls:

New Year's Day	--January 1
Martin L. King Day	--3rd Monday January
Memorial Day	--Last Monday in May
Independence Day	--July 4
Labor Day	--1st Monday in September
Veterans Day	--November 11
Thanksgiving Day	--4th Thursday in November
Friday after Thanksgiving	
Christmas	--December 25
Floating Holidays (3)	--at employee request
Personal Day	--at employee request

If Christmas or New Year's Day shall fall on Tuesday or Thursday, the preceding Monday or following Friday is also recognized as a holiday.

When a holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday is observed as the official holiday, and the following Monday is recognized if the holiday falls on a Sunday. Part-time employees are paid for the holiday proportionately to their normal workweek.

Three Floating Holidays are earned each year by full-time permanent employees, except newly hired classified employees during the first payroll year. They may be taken in 2-hour increments and must be scheduled and approved in accordance with County rules and departmental policy. They may be taken in conjunction with annual leave or other holidays but cannot be carried over from one year to the next. Temporary employees are not eligible for floating holidays.

### Use of Extended Illness Leave

Employees hired prior to 12-25-94 may still have extended illness days remaining. Extended illness leave shall be granted for absences due to personal illness and for family illness such as illness of the employee's household member, immediate family or guardian, or (with Appointing Authority's approval) illness of any person related to the employee or the employee's spouse, upon presentation of a physician's statement.

Upon separation, employees may be entitled to receive a portion of their remaining extended illness leave. For specifics refer to Personnel Rule XIV.

### Exchange of Annual Leave and/or Extended Illness Leave for Cash or Deferred Compensation

Subject to budgetary constraints, members of the Classified and Exempt Service may exchange any accumulation of annual leave and/or any accumulation of extended illness leave above 80 hours. Annual leave may be exchanged on an hour for hour basis. Extended illness leave may be exchanged for the hourly wage rate equivalency amounts at the designated exchange rate depending on length of service. This sum may be placed in one of the County approved deferred compensation programs or exchanged for cash. (See Personnel Rule XV).

The exchange shall be paid in conjunction with the first pay day in November of each fiscal year, and on an additional pay day prior to the fiscal year end (October 1 through September 30) as determined by the Appointing Authority.

## Family Leave

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 provides that eligible employees are entitled to leave of up to 12 weeks in a 12-month period for the birth or adoption of a child, the serious illness of a family member, or the employee's own serious health condition, with guarantees of job security and employee benefits continuation during the leave. This leave is unpaid, however, annual or extended illness leave may be used. This is not a separate leave program, but is integrated with other County leave policies. Details of your rights and responsibilities under FMLA are posted at your worksite and are published in the booklet entitled *Family and Medical Leave Handbook*. For further information and procedural requirements, ask your supervisor, or review the *Family and Medical Leave Handbook*.

## Personal Day

Employees earn one personal day per year after completion of one year of regular employment. Your Personal Day may be an unscheduled day off that may be used to meet an unexpected need. It is paid as administrative leave (not annual leave) and does not count against unscheduled time off for the performance report. It may not be taken in conjunction with recognized holidays or carried over from one year to the next. Temporary and provisional employees are not eligible for a personal day.

## Military Pay

It is the policy of Pinellas County that all employees entering the uniformed services of the United States or the National Guard of a particular state be granted a military leave of absence in accordance with the provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), applicable state laws and Unified Personnel System Rules regarding such service. Documentation which supports such leave requests may be required under these laws for the grant of leave and reemployment after such leave.

## Other Leave with Pay

In special instances, leave with pay may be granted for the following situations:

**Jury Duty**  
**Special Meetings and Merit Examinations**  
**Appropriate Training and Education**  
**Armed Forces Reserve and National Guard Training**  
**Funeral Leave**

Personnel Rule XVI provides more details regarding leaves of absence. See the Personnel web page for details.

## Leave of Absence Without Pay

Leave of absence without pay may be granted by your Appointing Authority for medical or other reasons deemed to be in the best interest of the County Service.

## Employee Newsletters

*The Pen*, a monthly Pinellas Employee Newsletter with special features by, about and of interest to County employees is published monthly and available in hard copy, electronically and is posted on the Personnel Website.

Articles include information on personnel matters such as rule changes, new or revised personnel programs and policies, benefits, career development, news about coworkers, upcoming events and activities of departments/agencies other than one's own. It also includes a regular monthly question and answer column, "Ask Peggy", for when you have a question but you're not sure just who to ask. Personnel Assistant Director Peggy Rowe will provide the answer. Questions can be sent via email to [askpeggy@pinellascounty.org](mailto:askpeggy@pinellascounty.org), or sent through interoffice mail to Ask Peggy c/o The Personnel Department.

*The Pen* is distributed to current County employees and to those retirees who request it. Past issues of *The Pen* are available and archived on the Personnel Intranet website.

*The Pen Extra* is published and distributed electronically between regular issues of *The Pen* with copies printed and posted by departments for employees who may not have computer access. *The Pen Extra* will include special awards and recognition received by employees, welcome to new employees, weddings and births, classified ads and other timely information.

## Employee Service Award Program

This program is designed to recognize in a tangible way the dedicated service of permanent County employees who work 20 or more hours per week. It does this through the award to them of a certificate, pin, and a gift of their choice each time they complete five years of successful and uninterrupted service. The choice of gifts is broadened at each plateau of service to include a more extensive selection. In addition to the certificate, pin, and gift, the name of each awardee is reported in *The Pen* with those celebrating 20 or more years of service also being pictured.

## Employee Suggestion Awards Program

The County's Employee Suggestion Awards Program rewards employees for ideas that result in improved productivity, quality and cost-effectiveness of County Services. All Classified Service employees (including temporary and part-time) are eligible to submit ideas.

Awards range from a special gift or cash awards up to \$2,500. Those awards approved for adoption receive up to \$2,500 for cost-saving suggestion, up to \$500 for safety suggestions and up to \$250 for suggestions dealing with operations/procedural improvements.

An Employee Suggestion Awards Committee, chaired by the Director of Personnel and comprised of representatives from several of the County's Appointing Authorities and the Employees' Advisory Council, determines which suggestions are approved. Their decisions are based upon such factors as degree and effectiveness of improvement expected, ingenuity of the idea, estimated cost savings, cost of adoption and amount of thought and effort expended in coming up with the suggestion.



For more information, or to access a suggestion submittal form refer to the Suggestion Awards Program brochure on the Intranet. Or, contact Employee Communications at 464-4836 or at [employee.communications@pinellascounty.org](mailto:employee.communications@pinellascounty.org)

## Retiree Association (REPCO)

There is an association of retired County employees called REPCO which all retirees are eligible to join. The Association helps promote sociability and a sense of belonging among County retirees through the pursuit of common interests and community and civic endeavors. Information about how to join REPCO is given to employees during their processing for retirement.

## Credit Union

Employees of Pinellas County have access to the Pinellas County Federal Credit Union. It is sound, well managed, and chartered by the Federal Government. The minimum share deposit is \$25.00. The minimum share deposit must be left on account as long as you are a member. Savings and loan payments may be handled through payroll deduction if desired.

Among its many services, the credit union has established a Savings Club, Savings Certificates, home equity loans, automobile purchase loans, and home improvement loans.

For further information call the Credit Union main office at 586-4422 or visit it at 10273 Ulmerton Rd., Largo. The two branch offices are located at 4770 - 140 Ave. N. (4 blocks East of 49th Street), and 1601 Gulf-to-Bay Blvd. (at Lake Dr.) in Clearwater.



## **PINELLAS COUNTY STATEMENT OF ETHICS**

*We, the employees of Pinellas County, as providers of public service and, in order to inspire confidence and trust, are committed to the highest standards of personal integrity, honesty and competence.*

### **To This End We Will**

Provide open and accessible government, giving courteous, responsive service to all citizens equally.

Accept only authorized compensation for the performance of our duties and respectfully decline any offers of gifts or gratuities from those with whom we do business.

Disclose or report any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

Comply with all laws and regulations applicable to the County and impartially apply them to everyone.

Neither apply nor accept improper influences, favoritism and personal bias.

Use County funds and resources efficiently, including materials, equipment and our time.

Respect and protect the privileged information to which we have access in the course of our duties, never using it to stir controversy, to harm others or for private gain.

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*Recognizing that government must serve the best interests of all citizens, we stand as representatives of responsible government, acting at all times to merit public confidence in ourselves and Pinellas County.*



**Pinellas County  
Unified Personnel System**

400 S. Fort Harrison Avenue  
Clearwater, FL 33756  
(727) 464-3367  
[www.pinellascounty.org](http://www.pinellascounty.org)