

# Collin County Employee Handbook

## Table of Contents

<b>WELCOME</b> .....	<b>1.1</b>
Introduction.....	1.2
Structure.....	1.2
County Offices.....	1.3
Commissioners' Court.....	1.3
Constable.....	1.3
County Clerk.....	1.3
District Attorney.....	1.3
District Clerk.....	1.3
Sheriff.....	1.3
Tax Assessor and Collector.....	1.3
Courts.....	1.3
Justice of the Peace.....	1.3
County Court at Law.....	1.4
Statutory Probate Court.....	1.4
District Court.....	1.4
Collin County Organizational Chart.....	1.5
<b>YOUR JOB</b> .....	<b>2.1</b>
Orientation.....	2.1
Personnel Records.....	2.1
Employee Classifications.....	2.1
Temporary Employees.....	2.2
Civil Service Commission.....	2.2
Hours.....	2.2
Attendance.....	2.3
Non-Exempt Time Reporting.....	2.3
Exempt Time Reporting.....	2.3
Pay.....	2.4
No Pay Status.....	2.5
Breaks.....	2.5
Overtime and Compensatory Time.....	2.5
Overtime.....	2.5
Exempt Compensatory Time.....	2.6
Non-Exempt Compensatory Time.....	2.6
Performance Planning and Review.....	2.7
Performance Pay Changes.....	2.7
Job Postings.....	2.7
Applying for Other County Positions.....	2.8
Promotion.....	2.8
Demotion.....	2.8
Transfer.....	2.8
Status Change.....	2.9
Reclassification.....	2.9
Emergencies/Inclement Weather.....	2.9
Call-In Pay.....	2.10
Mileage.....	2.10

Personal Property .....	2.10
Rights of Privacy .....	2.10
Lockers .....	2.11
Work Standards.....	2.11
Suspension .....	2.12
Leaving County Employment.....	2.12
Involuntary Terminations.....	2.13
Reduction in Force .....	2.13
Retirement.....	2.13
Rehire .....	2.13

**GENERAL POLICIES ..... 3.1**

Open Door Policy .....	3.1
Equal Employment Opportunity .....	3.1
Discrimination/Harassment.....	3.1
Sexual Harassment.....	3.2
Americans with Disabilities Act.....	3.2
The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) .....	3.2
Lactation Accommodation .....	3.3
Workplace Violence.....	3.3
Drug/Alcohol Free Workplace.....	3.3
Use of Prescription Drugs .....	3.4
Recording and Taping.....	3.4
Weapons in the Workplace .....	3.4
Emergency Procedures.....	3.5
Safety .....	3.5
Tobacco Free Workplace .....	3.5
Employment of Relatives.....	3.6
Personal Appearance and Demeanor .....	3.6
Business Principles .....	3.6
Collin County Social Media.....	3.7
Employee Social Media.....	3.7
Use of County Equipment .....	3.7
Computer Usage .....	3.8
Electronic Mail (E-mail).....	3.9
Internet Access.....	3.9
Telephone Usage.....	3.9
Collin County Cell Phones .....	3.10
Personal Mail .....	3.10
Gifts, Entertainment, Gratuities, and Bribes.....	3.10
Falsification of Documents.....	3.11
Moonlighting.....	3.11
Political Involvement.....	3.11
Solicitation and Distribution .....	3.12
Driving on County Business.....	3.12
Information Requests.....	3.13
Confidentiality.....	3.13

**BENEFITS ..... 4.1**

Medical Insurance .....	4.1
Clinic.....	4.1
Vision.....	4.1
Benefit Changes.....	4.1

Retiree Insurance .....	4.2
Dental Insurance.....	4.2
Life Insurance.....	4.2
Employee Assistance Program.....	4.2
Short Term Disability.....	4.3
Long Term Disability.....	4.3
Long Term Care .....	4.3
Flexible Spending Accounts.....	4.3
Flexible Medical.....	4.3
Flexible Dependent Care.....	4.4
Retirement Plan.....	4.4
Holidays .....	4.4
Paid Time Off.....	4.5
Family and Medical Leave of Absence.....	4.6
Additional Military Family Leave Entitlements .....	4.7
Requesting Family Medical Leave.....	4.8
Periodic Updates .....	4.8
Key Employees .....	4.8
Return to Work .....	4.8
Leaves of Absence.....	4.9
Military Leave.....	4.10
Paid Military Leave.....	4.10
Unpaid Military Leave.....	4.10
Jury Duty.....	4.10
Educational Assistance.....	4.11
Tuition Reimbursement Advances .....	4.11
Workers' Compensation .....	4.12
Reporting an Injury or Illness.....	4.12
<b>EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....</b>	<b>5.1</b>

# WELCOME

Welcome to Collin County. We are pleased you have joined our team.

We believe our employees and officials are the county's most important asset. They are responsible for providing the quality services that make the county a success. Each of us has a part in meeting the county's objectives by taking the initiative in solving problems, effectively performing the requirements of our positions, and recommending or implementing improvements to better meet the needs of our citizens. Your suggestions on how to improve operations and services are valued. We each play a role in shaping the future success of county government.

Joining a new organization often requires some adjustment. You meet new people, work in different surroundings, and are confronted with new policies, procedures, rules and benefits. This Employee Handbook has been prepared to assist you in this process. It will answer many of your questions and provide a continuing source of reference during your employment with Collin County. We hope you enjoy being a member of our team.



## Introduction

This handbook has been prepared to introduce you to Collin County. It will acquaint you with many of the policies and rules relating to your employment and will summarize benefits for which you are eligible. This publication replaces all previous employee handbooks. This handbook may be updated by future court orders, policy changes, or legislation. If a policy is changed by a court order, the court order will replace the applicable handbook section until changes are made to the handbook. Some departments may have additional rules and policies that may apply to you or your job. State and Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD) employees also have different rules and benefits. One of your first responsibilities is to familiarize yourself with the county rules and policies contained in this handbook as well as those provided by your specific department. If you feel there is a conflict between any of these expectations, you are to ask your supervisor or Human Resources for clarification.

The following information is presented as a matter of information only. It is not intended to create any contractual rights or obligations. Although we will try to give you as much notice as possible of any changes in policies or benefits, the county reserves the right to alter, delete, or add to any policy or benefit at its sole and absolute discretion without prior notice. Employees will be notified through the normal channels of communication of changes to the policies. It is your responsibility to ensure that you update your handbook when these revisions are received.

In order to help you better understand your benefits, many of them have been summarized in this handbook. If there are any discrepancies

between this handbook and benefit plan documents, plan documents will prevail.

Please read this handbook carefully and keep it handy for future reference. This is only a summary of the policies; it should not be considered the only source of information available to you. If you have questions about the information contained in this handbook, feel free to ask your supervisor or Human Resources.

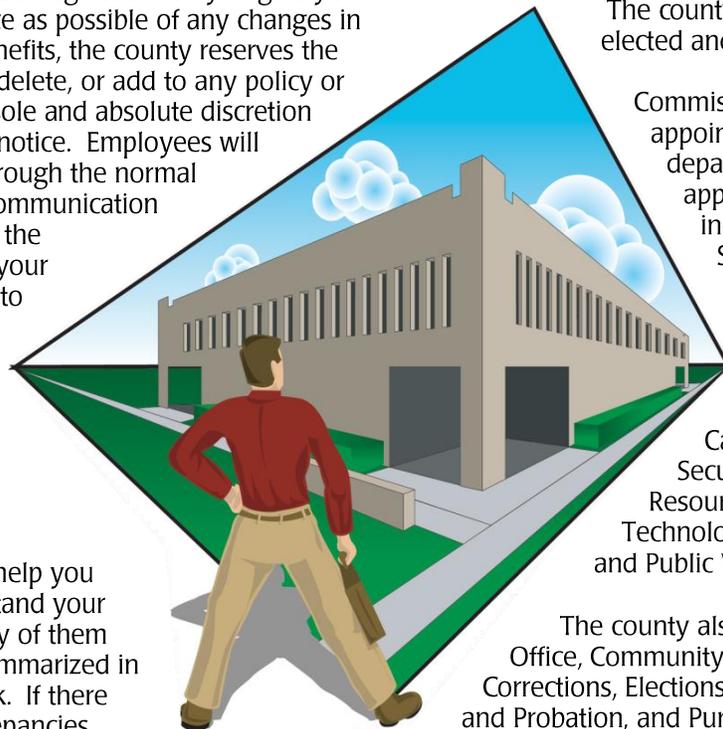
## Structure

Collin County is responsible for providing administrative, judicial, and political functions at a county level for an 885 square mile region including Allen, Anna, Blue Ridge, Celina, Fairview, Farmersville, Frisco, Josephine, Lavon, Lowry Crossing, Lucas, McKinney, Melissa, Murphy, Nevada, New Hope, Parker, Plano, Princeton, Prosper, Saint Paul, Weston, Wylie, and parts of Carrollton, Dallas, Garland, Richardson, Royse City, and Sachse. The county is divided into four different geographic units called precincts. Each precinct is generally 25% of the county's population based on census information.

The county is managed by both elected and appointed officials.

Commissioners' Court appoints non-elected department heads. These appointed departments include: Administrative Services, Budget, Building Projects, Development Services, Engineering, Facility Management, Health Care, Homeland Security, Human Resources, Information Technology, Medical Examiner, and Public Works.

The county also has an Auditor's Office, Community Supervision and Corrections, Elections, Juvenile Detention and Probation, and Purchasing departments.



## **County Offices**

### **Commissioners' Court**

A Commissioner is elected to represent the citizens of each precinct for a four-year term of office. These terms are staggered to preserve continuity and ensure experienced leadership. A County Judge, the presiding officer of the Commissioners' Court, is also elected every four years.

The Commissioners and the County Judge comprise the Commissioners' Court which is responsible for specific functions such as:

- approving the annual budget and county expenditures,
- setting the county property tax rates,
- approving the tax rolls,
- determining public works policies,
- approving elections, and
- representing the county in state and regional matters.

### **Constable**

A Constable is elected for each of the four constable precincts. The Constable is the chief process server of the precinct and also serves as the Court Officer in the Justice of the Peace Courts. This office executes and returns to courts all warrants, other criminal process citations, subpoenas, evictions, and writs.

### **County Clerk**

This office ensures the accurate recording of the proceedings of the County Courts and facilitates public access to these records. The office is responsible for the receipt and disbursement of county funds. The County Clerk is the local Registrar for filing and recording birth certificates, marriage licenses, death certificates, trust fund records, bond records, military discharge records, and mental health records. The office is also responsible for legal documents which include real and personal property, land transactions, bonds, plats, marks and brands, assumed names, deputation records, issuance of bail bond checks, and going out of business sales, as well as the safekeeping of wills and probate records.

### **District Attorney**

The District Attorney serves as the county's chief legal advisor and prosecuting attorney. This office represents the state in criminal and civil cases in both the county and district courts.

### **District Clerk**

The District Clerk performs the duties assigned by the Texas Constitution as registrar, recorder, and custodian of all court pleadings, instruments, and papers that are part of any legal cause of action in the District Courts of Collin County. Additionally, the District Clerk's office serves as a passport acceptance agent and provides jury services for all statutory District, County and Justice of the Peace courts in Collin County.

### **Sheriff**

The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer for the county. This office is responsible for the operation of the jail, dispatch and patrol functions, 911 emergency operations, criminal investigations, as well as community and educational programs designed to reduce crime.

### **Tax Assessor and Collector**

It is the duty of the Tax Assessor and Collector to calculate and collect taxes owed on property within Collin County. This office also acts as the agent for the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation for motor vehicle registration.

### **Courts**

It is the responsibility of the courts to impartially and fairly manage and resolve controversies and disputes that fall within their jurisdiction. The jurisdiction of each court is determined by the constitution and statutes and may be changed by the Legislature. The following are general descriptions of the types of issues handled by each court in Collin County.

### **Justice of the Peace**

It is the primary function of these offices to hold civil and criminal court, as quickly and judiciously as possible. The Justices of the Peace have civil jurisdiction up to \$10,000 and exclusive jurisdiction in eviction matters.

Justice of the Peace Courts have criminal jurisdiction in cases such as bad checks, traffic offenses, and other criminal offenses punishable by fines only. The courts also handle some truancy cases.

### **County Court at Law**

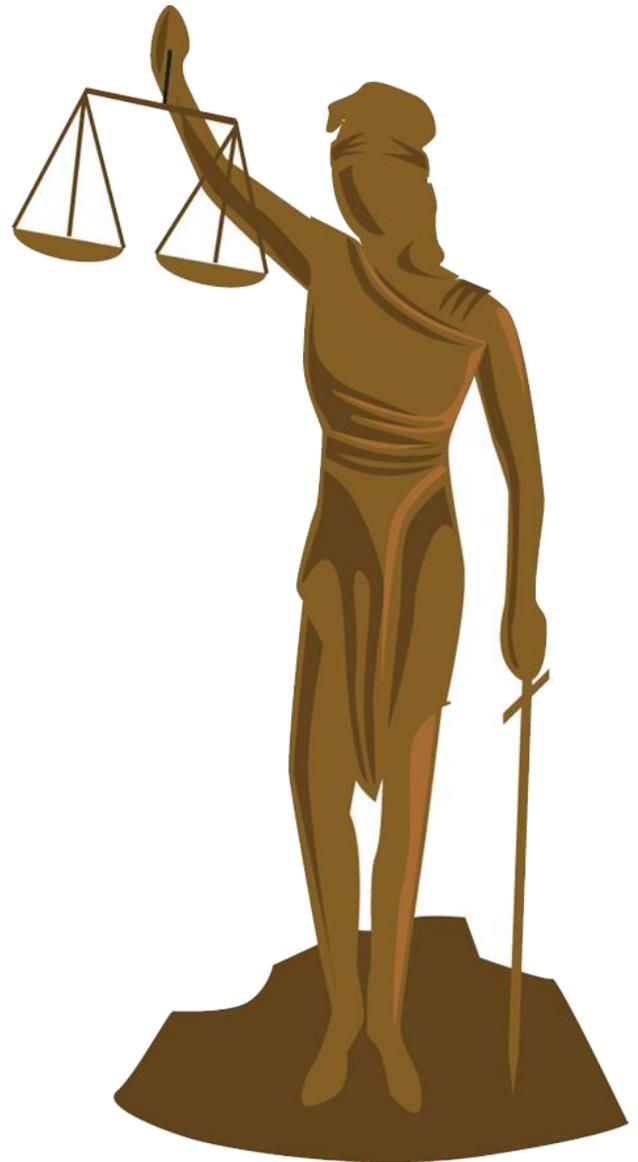
Collin County Courts at Law are general jurisdiction courts. They have original jurisdiction over Class A and B misdemeanor criminal cases and Class C misdemeanor appeals from Justice of the Peace Courts and Municipal Courts. They also rule on civil cases where the amount in controversy does not exceed \$200,000. This jurisdiction is concurrent with the District Court. In addition, the Judges of the County Courts at Law are members of the Community Justice Council and the County Juvenile Board. Individual Judges operate DWI/drug courts and veterans court programs and serve on the Bail Bond Board. County Court at Law Judges who hear criminal cases oversee the Community Supervision and Corrections Department.

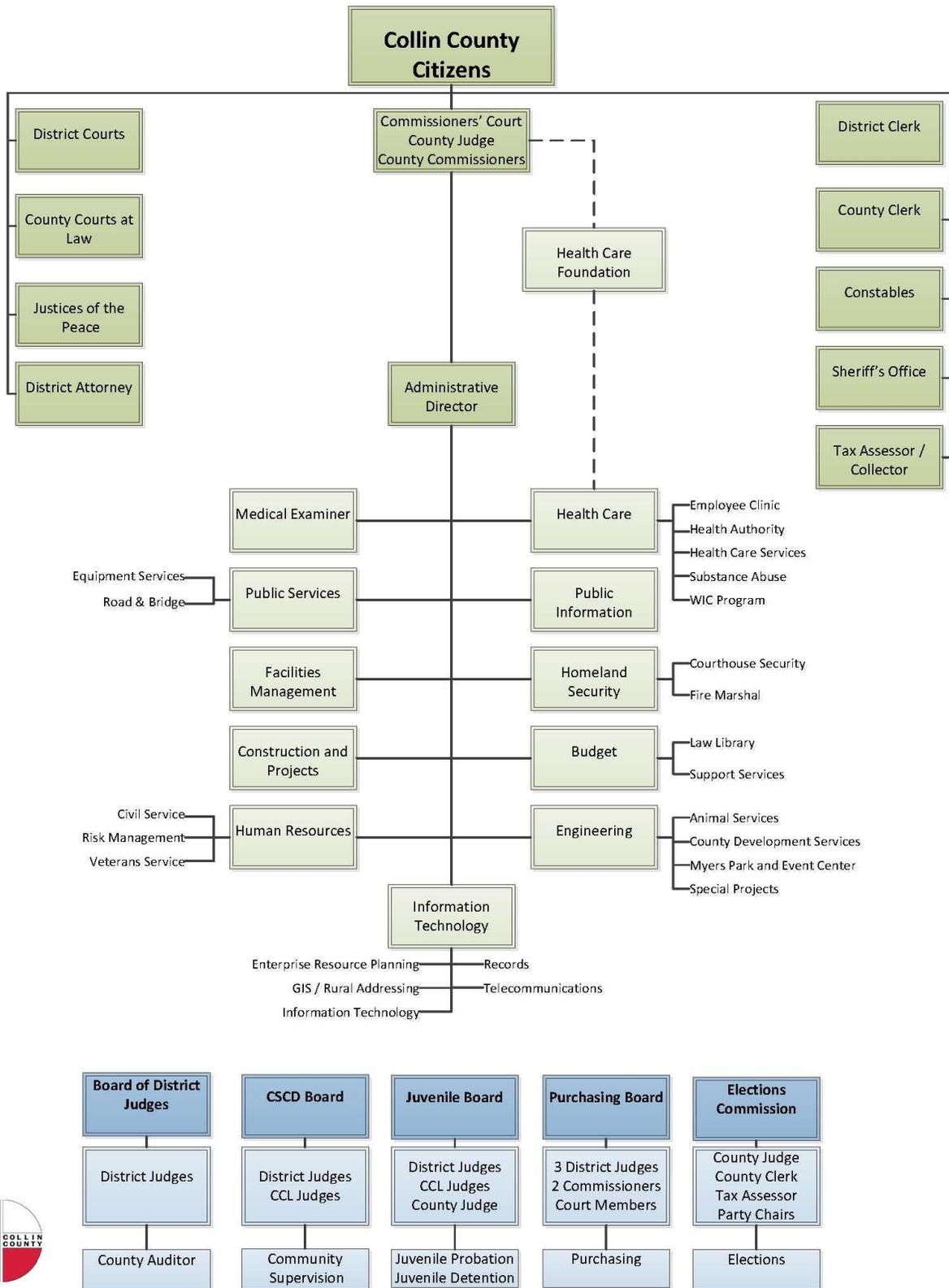
### **Statutory Probate Court**

This court has jurisdiction over probate matters, guardianship cases, and mental health commitments.

### **District Court**

District Courts are the state trial courts. District Courts have original jurisdiction in all felony criminal cases, family law cases, cases involving title to land, election contest cases, civil matters in which the amount in controversy (the amount of money or damages involved) is \$500 or more, and any matters in which jurisdiction is not placed in another trial court. The Board of District Judges oversees the Auditor's Office. District Judges who hear criminal cases oversee the Community Supervision and Corrections Department. District Judges also serve as members of the Community Justice Council, the Juvenile Board, and individual Judges serve on the Purchasing Board.





Collin County  
Organizational Chart  
FY2016

# YOUR JOB

## Orientation

The goal of our orientation program is to acquaint new employees with the county as well as to communicate requirements and expectations. Your supervisor and Human Resources share this responsibility. Information generally provided during orientation includes:

- county structure
- position responsibilities
- performance appraisal schedule
- pay periods
- required hours
- required method of reporting hours worked
- overview of county policies
- physical layout of the building including fire exits, building security, and access
- benefits
- health and safety requirements
- employee handbook

## Personnel Records

Human Resources maintains information on all active employees. This information is used in the administration of many functions including payroll, benefits, personnel actions, and communications. Many of these records are maintained electronically in the human resource information system. While you are an active employee, you may usually review your personnel records by making an appointment with Human Resources. However, you can also easily view much of the information using the self service function in the computerized system.

It is your responsibility to update your records whenever a change occurs in order to be sure the county has your current address, telephone

number, and other personal information. Most of these changes can be made using the self service function in the computerized system.

Some of the most common information that needs to be periodically updated includes:

- address
- name change
- education
- dependents
- e-mail address
- telephone number
- marital status
- emergency contact
- beneficiaries

If you need assistance, please contact your supervisor or Human Resources regarding how you should change necessary information.

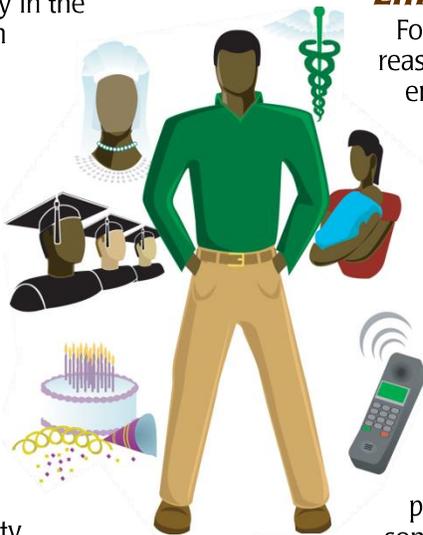
The county is subject to open records laws; therefore, your personnel records may be released to outside sources. Collin County does not release social security numbers. It is required by state law to release certain other information. You may request that your address, telephone number, emergency contact information, and family information remain confidential through the computerized system.

Requests for employment verification should be sent to the Human Resources Department.

## Employee Classifications

For various legal and operating reasons, the county defines your employment classification.

Your position is classified as either exempt or non-exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act. Generally, exempt positions perform certain executive, administrative, professional, or specified computer-related functions and are paid on a salary basis regardless of the number of hours worked in the pay period. However, there are some situations where an exempt employee's pay may be reduced. Examples



include: penalties imposed for infractions of safety rules of major significance; disciplinary suspensions (of one or more full days) imposed for workplace conduct rule infractions; time taken as unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act; absences of one or more days for personal reasons (other than sickness or disability); amounts necessary to offset money received as witness/jury duty fees or for military pay; and hours not worked during the initial or final week of employment.

Non-exempt positions are those that do not qualify as exempt and are paid on an hourly basis for the number of hours worked.

In addition, you will be classified based on the expected duration of your position and the number of hours you are scheduled to work. You will be placed in one of the following classifications:

- **Temporary, Part-Time:** You are hired to work less than 30 hours per week on a specific job for an identified period of time which will generally not exceed six months in a one year period.
- **Regular, Part-Time:** You are hired to work less than 30 hours per week on a job that is expected to continue for an indefinite period.
- **Temporary, Full-Time:** You are hired to work 30 hours per week or more on a specific job that is to last for an identified period of time which will generally not exceed six months in a one year period.
- **Regular, Full-Time:** You are hired to work 30 hours per week or more on a job that is expected to continue for an indefinite period.
- **Elected Official:** You are selected by the citizens (or temporarily appointed by authorized officials) to fulfill the functions of a statutorily or constitutionally established position. Hours worked are not tracked. There are two categories of elected officials: those who are state employees and those who are county employees. State employees will be subject to state policies, in addition to county policies, and receive state benefits.

## **Temporary Employees**

Temporary employees are those hired to perform a specific function on a short-term basis, for a period that does not usually exceed six months in a one year period. Paid interns are considered temporary employees. Temporary employees generally are not eligible for employee benefits. Temporary employees may have limited access to some work areas.

## **Civil Service Commission**

In accordance with Chapter 158 of the Local Government Code, Collin County has established a Sheriff's Office Civil Service Commission. The Civil Service Commission may make and interpret rules relating to employment, separation, promotions, and grievances of individuals employed by the Sheriff's Office who are covered by civil service. Copies of the civil service rules are available in the Sheriff's Office, Human Resources, and online at the Human Resources employee intranet site. Civil service policies only apply to covered Sheriff's Office personnel.

## **Hours**

The standard number of hours worked for regular full-time Collin County employees is 40 hours per week. If 40 hours of approved time is not accumulated by non-exempt employees, the employee shall be compensated on a prorated basis. Some departments such as Juvenile Detention and the Sheriff's Office may have different scheduled hours, as allowed by the Fair Labor Standards Act.

As a government entity, Collin County can utilize a separate work week standard for employees engaged in law enforcement activities, including employees who work security in correctional institutions or detention functions. This enables Collin County to better manage the scheduling challenges faced in law enforcement and detention. If you work in one of these areas, your work schedule may be based on a two-week (14 day) period rather than a 40 hour per week period. Your department will advise you of your work schedule. If you are a non-exempt employee, the law provides that you will earn compensatory time or

overtime for eligible hours worked in excess of 86 in the 14-day pay period. The maximum hours you can work in the 14-day period without being paid overtime is 86. However, your office or department may schedule you for fewer hours. For example, Juvenile Detention schedules Detention Officers using 84 hours in a 14-day period. Juvenile Detention Officers who work more than 84 hours in a 14-day period will be issued compensatory time for eligible hours worked over 84.

Most employees are scheduled to work from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, although some positions or departments may be scheduled to work different hours. You may be required to work overtime, weekends, or various shifts. Your supervisor will let you know what hours you are expected to work

The county's seven-day work period is from 12:00 a.m. Monday through 11:59 p.m. Sunday.

We rely on you to be at your workstation, working, during scheduled work hours. You are also expected to be punctual in leaving and returning from breaks and meal periods.

### **Attendance**

If you must be absent or late, it is your responsibility to tell your supervisor as far in advance as possible. Unexpected absences must be reported to your supervisor or other management personnel within the guidelines established by the department. Your supervisor will advise you of the procedure to be followed. If you are absent from work for three consecutive days and do not call in, it may be assumed you have abandoned your job and your employment may be terminated. The county is an at-will employer and retains the right to terminate your employment prior to such a three-day absence.

### **Non-Exempt Time Reporting**

Non-exempt employees must accurately report their hours.

Hours are typically reported by scanning your badge at an appropriate time collection device. Scanning another individual's badge

or allowing another individual to scan your badge is not permitted and may be considered falsification of hours worked.



Your time report is an important record. If you forget to scan your badge, report the hours worked to your supervisor or time keeper as soon as you remember. If you falsify time worked, your employment may be terminated. Meal periods are not hours worked and

you will not be compensated for that time.

If you are scheduled to be off work when your time report is to be turned in, report your hours in the payroll system before you leave, stating the reason for your absence. You may also enter your hours remotely by logging in to the payroll system using the link provided on the Human Resources page on the Collin County website. All time worked, as well as any leave time such as paid time off, must be reported by you. Time reporting processes and approvals may vary slightly by department. Please see your supervisor for the specific requirements you must follow.

Requests to adjust paid time off or catastrophic time off hours must be entered into the payroll system no later than two pay periods after the absence in order to be considered. Late entry of paid time off may affect accruals. The payroll system will not recalculate and credit your time for late entries.

### **Exempt Time Reporting**

If you are exempt, the payroll system will automatically calculate your pay using your daily scheduled hours. For any day in which you don't work the hours scheduled in the payroll system (including full or partial days off), you must manually enter the actual hours taken off. If additional hours are worked during the week that off-set time taken off, those hours must also be entered so that the payroll system can correctly calculate and process your time off.

For example: you are scheduled to work eight hours a day Monday through Friday.

You take personal time off all day on Monday and three hours on Tuesday. On Wednesday, an important project came up and you had to work 10 hours to finish it. You would enter eight hours of paid time off on Monday, three hours of paid time off on Tuesday, and 10 hours worked on Wednesday. When the payroll system processes your time, it will automatically reduce your requested time off by the extra hours worked on Wednesday. You will be paid for 31 hours of regular pay for the hours you actually worked. You will also be paid for the nine hours of paid time off. Your total pay will be 40 hours for the week.

## **Pay**

We are paid bi-weekly, one week in arrears. Generally paychecks will be distributed every other Friday; although if a payday falls on a banking holiday, you may be paid on the last work day before the banking holiday.

It is recommended that you have your pay deposited directly into a checking or savings account using the payroll system. The direct deposit usually becomes effective the second pay period after you have entered and submitted your banking information. Direct deposit funds are generally available in your bank account by 8:00 a.m. on payday. Advice statements are not printed and distributed, but information about your paycheck including earnings and deductions is available online through the payroll system.

If you are not at work when paychecks are distributed, and you receive a check rather than a direct deposit, your supervisor will generally hold your paycheck until you return. If you would like your paycheck released to another person, you will need to make arrangements with the Treasurer's Office.

Collin County provides pay for several types of absences such as paid time off, workers' compensation, holidays,

compensatory time off, office closures, military duty, jury duty, and elected official time off for motivation or safety. Although you may receive pay for these absences, you were not at work and the compensation received would not be included as time worked in the calculation of overtime or compensatory time. These forms of compensation may not be used to extend hours paid to you beyond the number of hours you are normally scheduled to work. For example: You are scheduled to work 40 hours and you take eight hours of paid time off on Monday. You work 36 hours during the remainder of the work week. Your paid time off taken will only be charged for four hours. You will be paid your regular hourly rate for the 36 hours worked and the four hours of paid time off taken.

*You should review your check or online statement for accuracy each pay period.*

It is Collin County's policy to comply with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). No improper deductions are made from the salaries of exempt or non-exempt employees. You should review your check or online statement for accuracy each pay period. It is your responsibility to check for errors.

If you believe an error has been made on your paycheck, you should immediately contact your supervisor or Payroll.

Collin County is legally required to recover overpayments immediately upon discovery. If the entire balance is not paid immediately upon discovery, Collin County may apply your entire paycheck toward the amount owed and must legally continue to pursue payment until the entire amount is repaid.

The county is required by law to withhold certain deductions from your



paycheck. These mandatory deductions include federal income tax and FICA withholding as well as any garnishments and levies.

You may authorize other deductions to be withheld from your paycheck, such as deductions for health insurance, supplemental coverages, and uniforms.

Regular employees, including those working part-time, are required to contribute 7% of wages to their Texas County and District Retirement System (TCDRS) retirement savings account. This contribution will automatically be withheld from your paycheck each payday. The amount of the county match is determined each year by Commissioners' Court. The county match becomes vested after eight years of service.

Regular full-time employees who transition to an elected position will not be paid for previously accrued time, such as paid time off.

## No Pay Status

In some instances, you may take an unpaid leave of absence. Except when regulated by state, federal, or local laws, or for time off of less than eight hours, you must use eligible earned time off before you may be placed on unpaid leave of absence.

A suspension is not considered a leave of absence. If you are put on an unpaid suspension, you may not be eligible to use accrued time off benefits.

## Breaks

Employees scheduled to work at least an eight-hour day generally receive two 15-minute breaks when feasible. However, there may be times when departmental workload or deadlines may necessitate working through a normal rest break. There are no State of Texas or federal laws requiring a break, and all breaks are at the discretion of your management.

Breaks are designed to provide you a chance to relax and unwind so that you can return to work refreshed. They are not intended to allow you to come to work later

or leave earlier. To maximize the benefit, break times generally occur midway between your start time and meal break and again between your meal break and your departure. In order to ensure the department functions smoothly, some departments may have assigned break periods.

Since breaks are considered paid time, you may not leave the premises without your supervisor's approval.

## Overtime and Compensatory Time

Collin County administers overtime and compensatory time in accordance with the requirements of state and federal laws. As a government employer, Collin County is exempt from some of the requirements that are traditionally seen in private employment.

Collin County will generally award compensatory time off rather than overtime compensation. However, in some situations, overtime compensation may be paid to non-exempt employees when approved, in writing, by the County Judge.

Approval must be obtained from your manager before working overtime or compensatory time or taking compensatory time off.

*Approval must be obtained from your manager before working overtime or compensatory time or taking compensatory time off.*

## Overtime

Exempt employees are generally not eligible for overtime pay. Exceptions must be approved in advance, in writing, by the County Judge.

Approved non-exempt overtime is paid at 1.5 times your hourly pay rate if you have actual hours worked of more than 40 hours in the week (or 84 hours per pay period if you are a Juvenile Detention Officer).

Paid time off, workers' compensation, holiday pay, compensatory time off, paid office closures, military duty, jury duty, and elected official time off for motivation and safety are considered forms of compensation but are not considered hours worked and will not be used in the calculation of overtime.

If you are a non-exempt regular full-time employee required to work on a holiday, you will be paid your regular pay rate for hours worked on the holiday, and you will be paid for the holiday (not to exceed eight hours).

Holiday pay is not time worked and will not be included in overtime or compensatory time calculations. You will not be eligible to receive compensatory time or to be paid at an overtime rate until you have worked over 40 hours (or 84 hours per pay period if you are a Juvenile Detention Officer) during your work week.

Temporary employees are not permitted to work more than 40 hours per week without the approval, in writing, of the County Judge.

### **Exempt Compensatory Time**

Department heads and elected officials may allow compensatory time off for exempt employees who work more than 40 hours in a work week.

Compensatory time for exempt employees may be earned at a rate of one hour for each hour of eligible time worked that was approved by the department head or elected official. A balance of up to 80 hours can be maintained.

Exempt employees are not paid for unused compensatory time upon termination unless the time was earned under a non-exempt status.

### **Non-Exempt Compensatory Time**

If you are a non-exempt regular employee, and you have worked 40 hours in a work week that does not contain any paid leave, you may be eligible for compensatory time for hours worked in excess of 40 (or 84 hours per pay period if you are a Juvenile Detention officer). If

you have been paid straight pay or overtime, you are not eligible to also receive compensatory time for those same hours.

Collin County provides pay for several types of absences such as paid time off, workers' compensation, holidays, compensatory time off, office closures, military duty, jury duty, and elected official time off for motivation and safety. These are not considered hours worked and will not be used in the calculation of compensatory time.

Non-exempt compensatory time is earned at 1.5 hours for each eligible hour worked.

Compensatory time is reviewed at the beginning of each calendar year. If at the beginning of the calendar year, your compensatory time balance is greater than 100 hours, you must use all of your compensatory time over 100 hours or 30% of your total compensatory time balance, whichever is less, before you can use your paid time off.

For example: if you have 110 hours of compensatory time on January 1<sup>st</sup>, you must use 10 hours of compensatory time before you may use any paid time off for the year. Once you have used 10 hours of compensatory time, you may begin using your paid time off.

In another example: you have 150 hours of compensatory time as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, which is 50 hours over the 100 hour limit. In this example you must use 45 hours of compensatory time ( $150 \times 30\%$  equals 45) before you could begin using your paid time off for the year.

If you are at your maximum paid time off accrual or you reach your maximum paid time off accrual during the period when you must use your compensatory time, you will not earn any additional paid time off and your paid time off accruals will not be adjusted.

Unused compensatory time earned while a non-exempt employee will be paid upon termination.

## **Performance Planning and Review**

Performance reviews are an important tool in making sure you understand the expectations of your position and how well you are meeting your objectives.

Goals and objectives should be established and communicated at the beginning of the fiscal year. Your supervisor should meet with you periodically during the year to discuss your progress. The final evaluation process is completed on or around September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. These performance meetings provide you an opportunity to discuss progress and challenges occurring on the job, as well as provide an opportunity for you to talk with your supervisor about your own occupational goals and ambitions.



## **Performance Pay Changes**

Performance pay changes are normally effective on October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year if they have been approved by Commissioners' Court.

## **Job Postings**

If it is your desire, we hope that you find opportunities for advancement and growth in your work. To help with this, we post most open positions and often promote from within the county.

Each department head or elected official is responsible for notifying the Human Resources office when job vacancies occur. Human Resources will announce available positions by various means which may include postings on; websites, internally in the self service function in the computerized

system, in printed media, in public areas, and on college job boards.

Staffing decisions will be based on factors such as county requirements, job-related qualifications, prior performance, etc. The county reserves the right to fill a vacancy by selecting the best-qualified individual, regardless of whether the candidate is an external or internal applicant. The county also reserves the right to transfer an employee to any location or position determined to be in the county's best interest.

When considering an individual for a position, the county may conduct interviews, and perform reference checks, background checks, credit checks, performance tests, medical examinations and assessments, employment or educational verifications, and other appropriate verifications. When used, medical examinations and assessments will be job-related.

If a criminal history check discloses a record of criminal activity, the applicant or employee will be evaluated, taking into consideration the following factors:

- nature and seriousness of the offense;
- relevance of the offense to individual's job responsibilities;
- time elapsed since commission of the offense;
- age of the individual when offense was committed; and
- final disposition of the case.

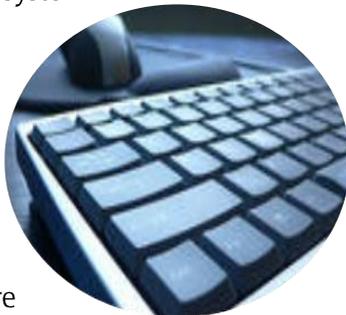
Hiring and promotion decisions are at the discretion of the department head or elected official. Sheriff's department hiring and promotion decisions will follow the civil service rules. Individuals may be disqualified from consideration for a position for any legal reason including but not limited to:

- not having necessary qualifications,
- providing false statements in applying for a position,
- committing or attempting to commit a fraudulent act, or
- not having the legal right to work in the United States.

## Applying for Other County Positions

You can apply for another position within Collin County using the self service function in the computerized system.

Many positions require skills-based testing, which may be administered by Human Resources or the hiring department. Some positions may require that you successfully complete a functional capacity test showing that you are physically able to perform the requirements of the position. These tests are conducted at the county health facility. Medical information associated with the test will not become part of your personnel file.



The hiring department will notify you if you have been selected to interview for the position.

It is your responsibility to notify your supervisor before interviewing for another position within the county.

Unless otherwise mandated by legislation, salary offers must be approved by Commissioners' Court. Some positions may require approval from other boards or offices in addition to notification to Commissioners' Court.

*You can apply for another position within Collin County using the self service function in the computerized system.*

Pay changes associated with a position change or a transfer will take place at the beginning of a pay period.

When you are placed into a new position, your supervisor will monitor your performance, knowledge, and skills to ascertain your ability to meet the criteria of the new position. If your supervisor finds that you are not able to satisfactorily perform

the job requirements, you may be placed in another position, if one is available, or you may be terminated. Civil service rules apply to employees of the Sheriff's Office.

## Promotion

A promotion is the assignment of an employee from a position in one job grade to a position in another job grade with a higher minimum salary. If you are promoted, you will typically receive a 5% increase or your pay will be adjusted to the minimum of the new pay range.

If you are accepted for a promotion in another department, you are expected to give your current supervisor two weeks' notice prior to transferring, unless the two affected department heads or elected officials agree to a greater or lesser amount of time.



## Demotion

A demotion is the assignment of an employee from a position in one job grade to a position in another job grade with a lower minimum salary. This type of action may occur due to a number of reasons including an employee's request, an individual's inability to perform the job, position elimination, or disciplinary action.

If you are demoted, your pay will generally be decreased by 5%. Your salary should fall within the new salary grade. If your salary rate after the 5% decrease still exceeds the maximum of the new pay range, your pay rate will be decreased to the range maximum.

## Transfer

A transfer is the assignment of an employee from one position to an equivalent position in the same job grade. It is usually not accompanied by a salary change.

When you are transferred, promoted, or demoted to a position other than to an elected position, you will retain all of your accrued time off, including compensatory time.

## Status Change

A status change is the assignment of an employee from one position to another position which has a different part-time/full-time or regular/temporary status. The new position may or may not be in the same pay grade.

If you are a non-exempt employee transferred from a full-time position to a part-time position, you will be paid for earned but unused paid time off as well as premium and straight compensatory time on the pay period following the transfer. If you are an exempt employee who is transferred from a full-time to a part-time position, you will be paid for accrued but unused paid time off at the time of transfer. Paid time off will only be paid if you have been employed with Collin County for one year or more.

## Reclassification

A reclassification is the movement of a position to a higher or lower pay grade occurring after a reassessment of the position by the county.

A reclassification generally does not result in an increase or decrease in pay.

## Emergencies/Inclement Weather

Occasionally, emergency or inclement weather situations may occur. Often these types of conditions may result in a greater need for some types of county services.

The county is committed to being fully prepared to meet the needs of its citizens during these occasions.

If it becomes necessary, the County Judge will close general government operations. If general government operations are closed, non-emergency personnel will not be required to work. The County Judge may authorize regular full-time employees time off with pay for those hours they would have

worked had the county offices not been closed. Temporary and part-time employees are not eligible for office closure pay.

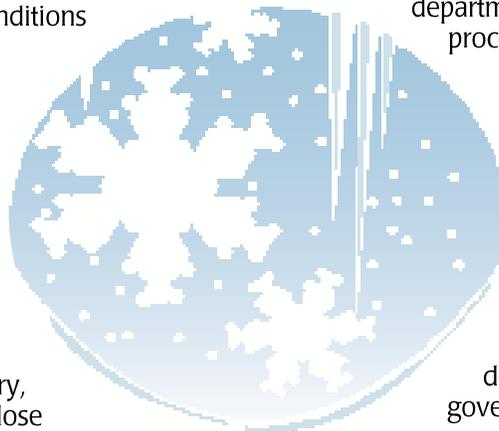
Employees in essential, emergency, or detention operations are required to work as scheduled to meet the needs of the operation and/or emergency conditions. If you are required to work in these situations, you will be paid your normal pay rate for actual hours worked. You will also receive compensation for office closure that would have been paid, based on your schedule in the payroll system, had the offices not been closed. Depending upon your total hours worked for the work week, compensation will be in the form of compensatory time or as additional pay calculated at your base rate of pay.

Authorized time off for office closure is not time worked and will not be considered in calculating overtime or compensatory time. Shift differentials are not included for hours paid due to office closure.

If offices are closed due to inclement weather, you may be notified in a number of ways such as communications from your supervisor, television, radio, messages on the main county switchboard, or an emergency high-speed call out process. You can use the self service function in the computerized system to sign up to be called for office closings. Ask your supervisor about departmental requirements and processes.

Elected officials have the independent authority to determine if their offices will be open during inclement weather. Employees should check with their own office holders or be aware of the policies of their own office in the event the County Judge does not close general government operations.

If supervisory approval is obtained, non-exempt employees who do not report to work as scheduled due to inclement weather even though offices are open, may use appropriate approved time off with pay (such



as paid time off or compensatory time). If they do not have appropriate time off available, they will receive time off without pay.

If offices are not closed, exempt employees who don't report to work and who lack appropriate time off to offset their time away from work of less than a full day due to inclement weather, will be placed on leave with pay for the hours missed. If they are absent and don't perform work for a full day, they will be placed on unpaid leave for the day.

Collin County must continue to offer many services even in bad weather. We need to be able to rely on employees reporting to work when necessary. Therefore, if you hold a position that requires you to work during inclement weather or an emergency and you do not report to work, or if the office is open and you choose not to work, you may be subject to disciplinary action.

If you are absent from work due to vacation, illness, compensatory time off, a workers' compensation injury, or some other scheduled reason you are not eligible to receive office closure pay. If a decision is made to close the county offices, you will still be charged paid time off, catastrophic time off, compensatory time off, or other time off for the time you are away.

### **Call-In Pay**

Most non-exempt employees are eligible for call-in pay. If you are called back to work after leaving your work location, or if you must come in to work on a scheduled day off, you are guaranteed a minimum of two hours pay. If you work two hours or less, you will be paid for two hours of call-in pay. If you work more than two hours, you will be paid for actual hours worked. You are not eligible for call-in pay when handling work-related telephone calls if you are not required to return to work. This policy only applies to unscheduled work that is necessitated because of an unforeseen emergency situation.

Shift differential does not apply to call-in pay. Call-in pay is counted as time worked.

### **Mileage**

If you do not receive a car allowance and do not have a take home county vehicle you are eligible for mileage reimbursement if you are required to drive your personal vehicle for business reasons. The mileage reimbursement rate is set annually as part of the budget process.

If you are called back to work, or you are called in to work when you were not scheduled to work, you can be reimbursed for mileage from your home or the Collin County line (whichever is less) to your work location. This policy only applies to unscheduled work that is necessitated because of an unforeseen emergency situation.

### **Personal Property**

Reasonable measures will be taken to safeguard your personal belongings; however, the county is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of anyone's personal property while on county premises or in county vehicles. Be sure to take proper precautions to protect your belongings.

### **Rights of Privacy**

Collin County reserves the right to inspect any and all county property at any time, and county employees should have no expectation of privacy when using county property. This includes any property owned by the county even if it is used solely by one employee. County property includes items such as desks, credenzas, file drawers, computer files, electronic mail, and lockers.

Your supervisor has authority to ask you to open for inspection any package, box, container, or any personal items (such as a purse, wallet, briefcase, backpack, and lunch sack) that is brought on or taken from county premises. Personal items are generally not subject to inspection by your supervisor unless the county has reason to believe that:

- property belonging to the county or another individual has been placed within your personal property, or
- your personal property is suspected of containing illegal, dangerous, or banned items.

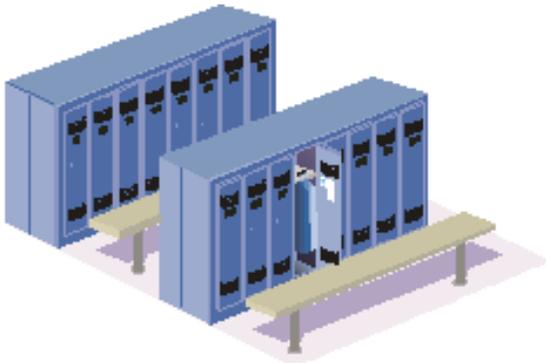
Refusal to cooperate with an inspection may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## **Lockers**

You may be provided the opportunity to use county lockers if you work in certain locations. Your supervisor may have access to your locker via a copy of the key and/or the combination to the lock. Lockers and their contents are subject to inspections or searches at any time without prior warning.

It is your responsibility to maintain a locker assigned to your use. It should be cleaned periodically.

County tools, materials, and equipment may not be stored in your locker. Nor may you keep weapons (except those which are part of your uniform, or are required or allowed by your position), chemicals, explosives, alcohol, illegal drugs, or narcotics in any work area or locker.



## **Work Standards**

Collin County relies on you to meet the expectations of your position. There may be occasions when you perform at an unsatisfactory level, violate a policy, or commit an act that is inappropriate. In many circumstances your supervisor may choose to work with you in an effort to resolve problems. However, employment may be terminated “at-will” by either you or the county at any time with or without cause, and without following any system of disciplinary warnings.

In many cases, progressive discipline may be utilized. This means that the county may, at its sole discretion, choose to use forms of

discipline prior to termination. Discipline less than termination may include verbal or written warnings, suspension without pay, denial of a pay increase, transfer, demotion, a poor performance appraisal, or the use of a plan to improve performance.

Which of these options is chosen or whether any of these options are used before termination depends on various factors including, but not limited to, the seriousness of the infraction, the impact on the department, and prior situations. The determination of the seriousness of the offense will be made solely by management.

Rules are necessary to protect the rights of the county, its employees, contractors, visitors, and citizens. Some offenses are so severe that they may result in discharge on the first occurrence. The following are some (but not all) examples of conduct that may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination:

- Using or reporting to work under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or narcotics. The sale, distribution of, or possession of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or narcotics on county premises or while on county business.
- Misuse of a legal drug or narcotic such as failing to follow proper dosages or directions, taking medication prescribed to another individual, or failing to notify management when a medication affects your ability to safely perform your job assignments.
- Falsifying, forging, altering, or misrepresenting information on county records, forms, or contracts. This includes, but is not limited to, application forms, time/absence reports, expense reports, and work documents.
- Refusing to cooperate in an official investigation or query including refusing to appear, refusing to answer any questions, giving false information or answers, and/or failing to participate with a voluntary polygraph administered in conjunction with an investigation.
- Engaging in sexual harassment or harassment of another individual because of race, color, religion, sex,

ancestry, disability, national origin, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetics, or physical, mental or perceived disability.

- Unauthorized possession of weapons, explosives, or firearms while on county business or on county premises (including lockers and purses).
- Insubordination or refusal to perform reasonable job assignments or management requests.
- Threatening or intimidating another individual. Fighting, assault, or battery of another individual (other than exercising appropriate physical force as required by the responsibilities of your position) while on county business or premises, or while in uniform.
- Conduct unbecoming of an employee and/or conduct which reflects negatively upon the office or department.
- Failure to follow safety or security rules and procedures. Failure to use required safety equipment. Deactivating safety or security equipment without proper authorization.
- Violation of county and/or department policies and procedures.
- Commission of or indictment by a Grand Jury for an unlawful act.
- Conviction of an unlawful act.
- Any felonious charges and crimes involving dishonesty, moral turpitude, or official oppression in any jurisdiction resulting in deferred adjudication or a plea of guilty or nolo contendere.
- Engaging in conduct which could subject the county or an employee to possible liability or litigation.
- Use of profanity or abusive language.
- Sleeping on the job.
- Theft, destruction, defacement, or misuse of the property of the county, another employee, contractor, or visitor.
- Negligence in the performance of duties or in the care or use of county property.
- Misuse of county telephones, computers, e-mail, or software.
- Unauthorized use of county property or supplies.
- Absenteeism, lateness in reporting to

work or returning from breaks or meal periods, or leaving early from work for the day.

- Substandard or inefficient performance of an assigned duty or responsibility.
- Unauthorized taking of county funds or unauthorized charges against a county account.
- Interfering with others in the performance of their job.
- Improper use or disclosure of county information including data and other information retained on the computer system.

### ***Suspension***

If you are under investigation for a crime or misconduct, or you are awaiting a hearing or trial in a criminal matter, and the county has decided not to terminate you based on its own investigation of your conduct, you may be suspended without pay for the duration of the investigation or proceedings when suspension would be in the best interest of the county or the public. If the investigation or proceedings clear you, you may be eligible to resume work and the suspension shall not be considered to have been disciplinary in nature. For Sheriff's Office employees who are covered under the civil service rules, there may be various situations that could result in suspension without pay.

The maximum length of time an employee may be on any leave of absence or combined leaves of absence (other than military leave) including suspension is 12 months within a rolling 18-month period. If the time you are on leave exceeds one year, your employment will be terminated.

### ***Leaving County Employment***

We are an "at-will" employer. Either you or the county can terminate employment at any time with or without cause. Employment relationships are entered into for mutual benefit. Unless there is a written agreement to the contrary, at any time you may resign to pursue other opportunities, or the county may determine that your services are no longer required.

If you find it necessary to resign, we would like to receive two weeks advance notice so that an orderly transition can be made. This notice should be submitted in writing to your supervisor, department head or elected official.



Generally, your date of termination will be the last date you work unless you are on disability or workers' compensation, family medical leave, or suspension with or without pay. Your termination date may not be extended past the last date worked through the use of holidays or earned or accrued time off (such as paid time off or compensatory time).

You will need to return any county property including keys and your badge to your supervisor. The Treasury department will also need a forwarding address and instructions for how to handle the release of your final paycheck. Your final paycheck will not be a direct deposit. Your final paycheck will be mailed to the address listed in the human resources information system unless other arrangements are made with the Treasury department.

Payment for eligible unused paid time off and compensatory time for non-exempt employees is normally made on your final paycheck. Paid time off is not paid if you have been employed less than one year.

You may be asked to have an exit interview with a representative from Human Resources. During an exit interview, you may be asked to comment on your job, benefits, working conditions, compensation, supervision, or other aspects of your employment.

## Involuntary Terminations

You may be dismissed from the county without prior notice. Termination shall not be made without the approval of the department head or elected official unless they have previously given the supervisor termination authority.

Prior to the termination, the supervisor should inform the department head or elected official of the intention to dismiss an employee and should discuss the situation with Human Resources.

## Reduction in Force

A reduction in force is a decrease in the number of authorized positions resulting from discontinuance of services, organization changes, or a change in funds authorization. It is not considered a disciplinary action.

If you are subject to a reduction in force, you may apply for other positions for which you may be qualified. Transfer to another department is contingent upon approval by the receiving department head or elected official.

The decision as to which employees may be subject to a reduction in force may be based on various factors such as business need, job performance, attendance, and length of service.

## Retirement

You may submit a completed application for retirement to Human Resources if you have met eligibility requirements. You should notify your supervisor of your retirement as soon as possible. Applications for retirement should be submitted far enough in advance to allow for processing.

Your retirement date may be different than your termination date. Although your last day worked may be anytime during the month, the effective date of your retirement with the retirement system will be on the last day of a calendar month.

## Rehire

Collin County does not have a policy prohibiting employees from being rehired.

If you voluntarily leave Collin County's employment and are later rehired, your new hire date will generally be used in determining benefits. Collin County's retirement savings plan is an exception to this rule. Collin County's retirement savings plan is administered by an outside agency: Texas County and District Retirement System (TCDRS). Unlike other county benefits, the calculation used in determining retirement eligibility may allow you to receive credit for previous years of service.

In some instances the county may rehire an employee who has retired from Collin County and is receiving retirement payments from the Texas County and District Retirement System (TCDRS). Generally, retirees who are currently receiving TCDRS retirement payments are not eligible for rehire unless the break in service has been greater than six months. Other requirements must also be considered before a retiree can be rehired. Contact Human Resources for additional information.

## GENERAL POLICIES

### **Open Door Policy**

We are committed to high standards of individual treatment and respect for all employees, including career development and job satisfaction.

We strongly support and encourage communication in the workplace. We feel it is beneficial for employees to exchange information, understand each other, and do a good job. We believe that a direct, person-to-person approach is the best way to communicate. You are encouraged to express creative ideas, issues, or concerns.

It is your responsibility to ask your supervisor about things you do not know or understand, as well as to make suggestions that could improve any part of the operation. The best way to do this is through open discussions with your supervisor. If your supervisor cannot help you, or if you feel uncomfortable discussing the situation with your supervisor, contact someone in the next level of management or the Human Resources department. While you might not always get the answer you want, every effort will be made to provide a response and to solve the problem or answer the question in a timely manner.



### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

We are an equal opportunity employer. Personnel matters generally are determined on the basis of merit, qualifications, and competence and without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, or physical

or mental disability (except where physical or mental fitness is a valid occupational qualification).



### **Discrimination/Harassment**

Discrimination is treating an individual differently from others. Harassment is the pestering, tormenting, or bullying of another individual or individuals and may include verbal, written, visual or physical conduct, repeated slurs or taunts in the guise of jokes, disparaging references to others, stereotypes, comments, gestures, threats, display or circulation of written materials, graffiti, or other negative comments or actions. Discrimination and harassment may be considered illegal when they occur on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, or physical or mental disability.

We believe that all employees should be able to work in an environment free from all forms of illegal discrimination and harassment. The county will not tolerate unlawful harassment of its employees, including sexual harassment, whether committed by a fellow employee, a member of management, a vendor, a contractor, or a member of the public.

If you believe that you have been subjected to any form of illegal discrimination or harassment or have observed another individual being subjected to such treatment, it is your responsibility to report it to your supervisor, manager, or

Human Resources. Your complaint will be kept confidential to the extent possible. Your concerns will be promptly investigated, and based on the findings of the investigation, the county will take prompt action to remedy any circumstances of unlawful harassment or discrimination.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment or the continuation of employment; or
- such conduct has the purpose of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment does not refer to casual conversation or compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to sexually-oriented behavior that is not welcomed and creates uneasiness on the job.

Such conduct, whether committed by supervisors, non-supervisory personnel, vendors, contractors, etc., is prohibited. Examples of sexual harassment include but are not limited to: unwelcome sexual flirtations, touching, advances or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic or degrading verbal comments about an individual or his/her appearance; the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, comments, jokes, innuendo; or any offensive or abusive physical contact.

No individual should imply to an employee that cooperation or lack of cooperation of a sexual nature will affect employment, assignment, compensation, advancement, career development, or any other condition

of employment. Any such behavior may bring prompt disciplinary actions, including the possibility of termination.

Collin County prohibits any form of retaliation against an employee for filing a complaint for discrimination or harassment of any kind or for assisting in a complaint investigation. If you feel you have been retaliated against for making a report or for participating in an investigation, you should report it to Human Resources immediately.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

To the extent reasonably possible, the county will accommodate individuals with disabilities in the application, hiring, and employment process.

Reasonable accommodation is available to all employees and applicants, so long as the accommodation does not create an undue hardship for the county, and can be

provided without posing a substantial or imminent safety risk. Disabled individuals requiring accommodations should notify Human Resources or their immediate supervisor. The county requests sufficient notice, when possible, so that an interactive process regarding the requested accommodation can occur.

If you have a disability as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, but are still able to perform the essential functions of your job with reasonable accommodations, we will consider your accommodation request. You are responsible for making this request in writing to your supervisor. If your request is denied and you require additional information, you may contact Human Resources.

### **The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA)**

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) prohibits making employment



decisions based on the genetic information of:

- an employee,
- an applicant, or
- a family member of an employee or applicant.

You will not be asked to provide any genetic information to Collin County for the purposes of hiring, investigations, or any terms of employment.

### **Lactation Accommodation**

Collin County supports a mother's right to express breast milk following the birth of her child. If you are a nursing mother, you are allowed reasonable break time, comfort, and privacy to express milk for the first year following your child's birth. If regularly scheduled breaks and meal times are not sufficient, you may take additional time to express milk. Based upon your department's rules, these additional breaks may not be considered compensable working time and may be deducted from your total time worked. You may choose to use accrued paid leave for this purpose. You should notify your immediate supervisor or Human Resources of your need for this accommodation so that arrangements can be made to provide a private, comfortable location to express milk.

### **Workplace Violence**

We are committed to providing a workplace that is free of intimidation, violence, and threats of violence. While no workplace can be free of minor disputes and disagreements, we will not tolerate unnecessary acts or threatened acts of violence by employees against another individual.

Examples of prohibited acts or conduct include, but are not limited to, physically striking or attacking another individual with intent to do bodily harm, displaying or using any kind of weapon

(except where that weapon is an authorized part of a uniform or is an authorized piece of equipment required in the performance of your assigned duties), verbally or physically threatening an individual, or intentionally damaging county property or the property of another employee.

It is not acceptable to make threatening statements to or about supervisors, co-workers, customers, family members, or others while on duty, on county premises, in uniform, or while representing Collin County. It is important that you be aware of how comments may be interpreted. Although it might not be your intention for someone to take your comment seriously, others may feel as if they are legitimately threatened, and you may be held accountable, even if the comments were made in jest.

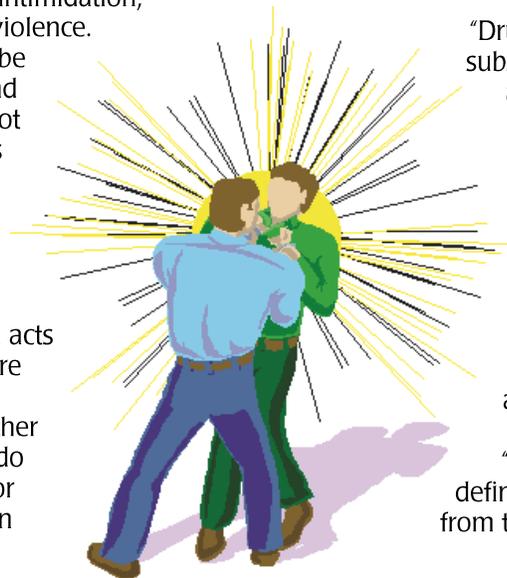
If you violate this policy, you are subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

### **Drug/Alcohol Free Workplace**

We are strongly committed to providing employees a safe and secure workplace conducive to maintaining high work standards. Possessing, using, or reporting to work under the influence of prescription drugs not prescribed to you by a physician, prescription drugs not taken as directed by your physician, illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

"Drug" is defined as any substance that impairs your ability to perform your job or poses a threat to the safety of others. This definition includes prescription drugs (unless such prescription drugs are taken as directed by your physician and do not impair your ability to perform your job duties), illegal inhalants, narcotics and illegal drugs.

"Under the influence" is defined as a condition resulting from the use of alcohol or drugs,



the effects of which may limit your ability to safely and efficiently perform your job duties or pose a threat to your safety or the safety of others. If there is any detectable level of alcohol or drugs in your system, you are regarded as being “under the influence.” If you are asked to take a drug test, you are required to notify the testing facility of all prescription drugs you are taking.

Dispensing, selling, or attempting to sell prescription drugs, illegal drugs, narcotics, and/or alcohol is also prohibited and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **Use of Prescription Drugs**

If you are taking prescription medication, carefully follow your physician’s instructions. You must take the prescription as it is prescribed. You must have a current valid prescription in your name from a health care provider for any prescribed medication that is being taken. If the medication affects your safety, the safety of others, or your ability to satisfactorily perform your job, you must notify your supervisor or Human Resources of the possible effects of the drug prior to reporting to work so that accommodations can be considered.



The county may use pre-employment, random, post-accident, reasonable suspicion, and return-to-work drug tests. Failure to submit to required testing may result in disciplinary action including termination.

### **Recording and Taping**

As an employee of Collin County, you are not allowed to film, photograph, record, or tape, in any format, a conversation or activity taking place on county property or where county business is being performed, unless you inform and obtain the consent of all

parties to the conversation or activity. Public meetings, public workshops, or other meetings covered by the Open Meetings Act are excluded from this policy. This prohibition applies even if you yourself are taking part in the conversation or activity. The county reserves the right to monitor, film, photograph, record, or tape business conversations or activities for its own business purposes including, but not limited to court activities (where allowed by law), training, law enforcement activities, or quality assurance.

### **Weapons in the Workplace**

In order to increase the safety of employees, officials, contractors, and visitors, it is against county policy for employees to bring, have, or use firearms or any other weapon on county premises or property unless that weapon is an authorized part of a uniform, a sanctioned piece of equipment required in the performance of your office or assigned duties, or is allowed by law for your position. If you are an employee who does not meet these criteria and you are licensed to carry a handgun, you may only bring the weapon and/or ammunition onto county property if it remains locked in your personal vehicle in a parking area provided to employees.

County premises include owned and leased property, buildings, trailers, county vehicles, or vehicles used for county business.

A weapon is defined as any device or object capable of causing serious bodily injury or death to another person such as:

- automatic, semi-automatic, or other firearms (such as handguns, shotguns, and rifles)
- stun guns
- switchblades
- hardened knuckles (such as brass, steel, plastic, or acrylic)
- daggers
- swords
- spears
- explosive weapons
- knives with blades more than five-and-one-half inches in length

Weapons do not include mace, pepper spray, or other similar devices intended to temporarily disable a person, knives with blades five-and-one-half inches in length or less, or serving knives used for food preparation or service in departmental events when approved by the department head or elected official.

## Emergency Procedures

Safety is of extreme importance to the county. Periodically, emergency drills will be conducted to make sure you know what to do in an emergency. Evacuation routes are posted in different parts of the building. You should be familiar with emergency exit procedures for any part of the building in which you work. In the event of an emergency, the appropriate procedures should be followed.

You should be familiar with the proper procedure for:

- reporting a fire or other emergency.
- evacuating the premises quickly and safely.
- accounting for all employees following an evacuation.

It is important that management is immediately informed of developing situations so that appropriate actions can be taken to ensure the safety of all employees.



In the event of an emergency, such as a medical situation or fire, immediately call 911. If it is possible to safely render first aid, have the most qualified person available do so after 911 has been called. If feasible, have someone locate a supervisor or manager.

There are many entrances to most of our buildings. The responding emergency team will not know which entrance should be used. If 911 is called, someone should be assigned to direct the emergency team to the correct entrance, floor, and department.

## Safety

The county is committed to providing you a safe working environment. Safety is everyone's responsibility. If you see any unsafe condition, immediately report it to your supervisor.

You are expected to be familiar with your department's safety procedures. In some work areas, or when performing certain tasks, you must wear specific clothing, eye protection, safety shoes, or other protective equipment in an appropriate and safe manner.



Should a vehicle accident or an incident involving damage to county property or injury to a person occur, call 911. It is also important to notify your supervisor and risk management, no matter how slight the accident or injury may seem.

## Tobacco Free Workplace

Consistent with our desire to create and maintain a safe and healthy work environment, the county has implemented a policy prohibiting tobacco products including smokeless tobacco products (such as chewing tobacco, snuff, and electronic cigarettes) in county vehicles or on county premises.

Individuals who desire to smoke must limit this activity to their personal vehicles. It remains your responsibility to ensure that all wastes are properly disposed of in appropriate trash receptacles. Cigarettes and other litter should not be thrown on the grounds, walkways, or parking areas.



It is your responsibility to limit time spent away from workstations to breaks and meal times.

## **Employment of Relatives**

Although Collin County does not prohibit all employees from having relatives who also work for the county, there are some limitations. You may not supervise or be supervised by a member of your immediate family. An immediate family member includes husband, wife, son, daughter, father, mother, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, or granddaughter.



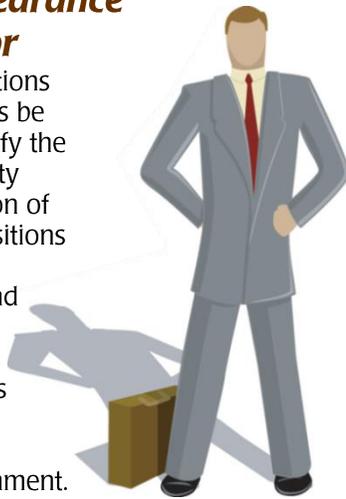
Members of the Human Resources and Health Care departments may not have family members work for the county in any capacity other than temporary or elections work.

When this type of situation occurs, one of the two employees may be transferred, promoted, demoted, re-assigned or, if no suitable position is available, terminated.

Texas Government Code provides provisions which prohibit the employment of some relatives by certain elected officials. Contact Human Resources for more information.

## **Personal Appearance and Demeanor**

Some county positions require that uniforms be worn to easily identify the individual as a county employee or a person of authority. Other positions allow the use of discretion in style and dress. While performing your duties, you will dress in attire appropriate to your position and the business environment. You must wear clothing that is clean, neat, in good condition and is safe for the type of work being performed. Clothing that is sexually provocative or is imprinted with illustrations or messages that are disruptive



to the workplace, offensive, insulting or demeaning to coworkers, visitors, or the public is not permitted.

Individuals with positions that involve the use of machinery should avoid loose clothing or jewelry that poses a safety hazard. Required safety equipment must be worn when appropriate.

All positions require individuals to exhibit behavior that is necessary for the productive and efficient operation of the workplace and that makes a good impression on the public. The key guideline is to dress and behave in a way that is safe and always reflects well on the county.

## **Business Principles**

Collin County strives to conduct business with the highest ethical standards. As an employee of Collin County, you are expected to comply with the laws, rules, and regulations governing your job responsibilities. Pursuing a personal objective, regardless of how well intentioned, will not excuse a wrongful or illegal activity, conflict of interest, or the violation of a county policy or standard.

As a Collin County employee, you are expected to comply with:

- federal, state, county, and municipal laws.
- county policies and procedures.
- departmental policies and procedures.
- laws of foreign countries while working in those countries (unless they are in conflict with US laws).

If you feel there is a conflict between any of these expectations, you are to ask your department head or elected official for clarification.

If you have knowledge that a criminal offense has occurred involving Collin County, inform a department head or elected official who will then be responsible for notifying the Sheriff's Office. If the criminal offense involves your department head or elected official, you should inform Human Resources or the County Judge.

## **Collin County Social Media**

Collin County government offices may elect to maintain a presence on social media sites or services. When the county elects to do so, these sites and services are considered an extension to the county's information and communications networks. County use of social media must be approved by the county Public Information Officer and/or the Chief Information Officer to be in compliance with county-approved policies.

## **Employee Social Media**

Social media sites or services refers to a broad range of Internet activities and include but are not limited to blogs, microblogs, Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Instagram. When using social media, the lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred. Just by identifying yourself as a Collin County employee, you are creating perceptions about the county. Any content you publish that is related to work should reflect Collin County's values and professional standards. To help establish a division between your personal and professional life, you may use a disclaimer to notate that content on your personal profile is not a representation of Collin County. An example of one such disclaimer is, "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent Collin County's positions, strategies, or opinions."

*Any content you publish that is related to work should reflect Collin County's values and professional standards.*

Except as otherwise provided by law, employees may not use social media in any manner that produces adverse consequences to other employees, their department, office, or the county. While Collin County encourages you to enjoy and make good use of your off-duty time, certain social media activities may become a concern and possibly result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, if you publish any information about yourself, another employee, the county, or an

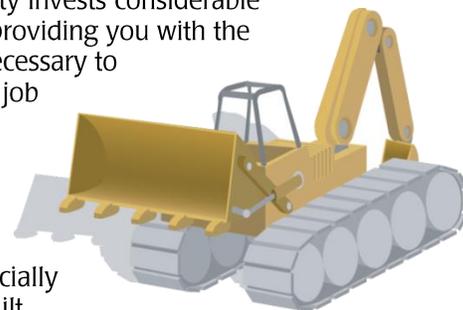
individual doing business with the county that:

- could involve you, your co-workers, or the county in any kind of dispute or conflict with other employees or third parties.
- interferes with the work of any county employee.
- creates a harassing, demeaning, or hostile work environment for any employee.
- disrupts the smooth and orderly flow of work within the workplace or delivery of services to the county's citizens or customers.
- harms the goodwill and/or reputation of the county.
- places in doubt the reliability, honesty, credibility, trustworthiness, or sound judgment of yourself, another employee, or the county.
- discloses confidential, privileged or protected information.

Your department may have additional policies and procedures regarding social media. If you are unsure if an activity is acceptable, ask your supervisor, department head or elected official.

## **Use of County Equipment**

Collin County invests considerable resources in providing you with the equipment necessary to perform your job efficiently. Much of this equipment is expensive. In some cases it is specially ordered or built specifically for our use and its repair or replacement can involve a great deal of time and money. It is the responsibility of each of us to exercise due care in the use of county property or equipment. You should not operate equipment until you have been properly trained to use the equipment.



Unauthorized removal, use, or conversion to personal use of county equipment is not

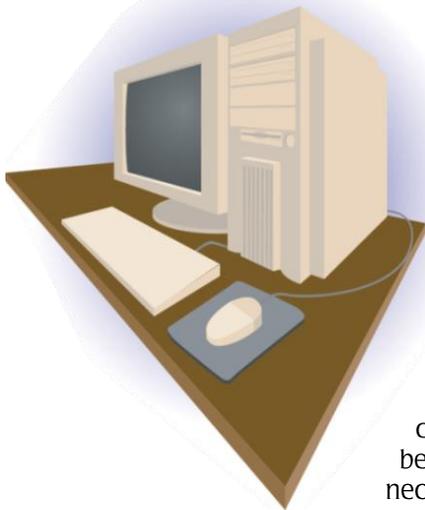
permitted. Damaged or lost equipment must be reported to your supervisor immediately.

Any county equipment or property issued to you must be returned upon request or termination. Sabotaging or destroying county data, records, equipment, software, programs, or computer systems is prohibited and may result in disciplinary actions and/or prosecution.

### **Computer Usage**

In order to improve productivity and internal communications, the county may provide you with a computer so you can better perform your job. County computers are provided for job-related functions and are not meant for personal use. County data, databases, programs, and other proprietary information may only be used for its intended purpose. Releasing county information or using these resources for anything other than their intended purpose is not permitted unless prior management approval has been obtained. Use of county assets for personal gain or benefit is prohibited. Computer equipment, with the

exception of laptop computers issued to authorized users, should not be removed from county premises without written permission from the Information Technology department.



If you are given use of a county-owned computer, you will also be provided with the necessary software. There are often licensing requirements that must be met. Since we are only authorized to use this software in accordance with the licensing agreements, software provided by the county may not be duplicated or transferred to another computer without the written approval of the Information Technology department.

Only authorized Information Technology personnel shall install computer equipment and software. Games and other types of “entertainment” software, vendor supplied or personal, are prohibited on Collin County computer equipment.

Unauthorized or unlicensed software may not be installed on county-owned computers. No county software license may be used for personal use on non-county-owned computer equipment. To ensure the proper usage of county-owned computer equipment and software, the Collin County Information Technology department will conduct random software license audits.

*All information created, sent, or received via the e-mail system, network, Internet, intranet, or extranet is the property of Collin County.*

All information created, sent, or received via the e-mail system, network, Internet, intranet, or extranet is the property of Collin County. Employees should not have any expectation of privacy regarding such information. Collin County reserves the right to, at any time and without notice, access, read and review, monitor and copy all messages and files on its computer system as it deems necessary. This includes e-mail messages, electronic files, and Internet files. Collin County may disclose texts or images to third parties without your consent, and may be required to provide information under open records or other laws.

You will be granted access to county information necessary to perform your job. This information is to be used only for authorized county business. It is unacceptable to access or attempt to access unauthorized information or to use county information and resources for any purposes other than official county business unless prior written approval is obtained from your department head or elected official.

## Electronic Mail (E-mail)

As with any other form of business communication, care should be taken to be sure e-mail messages are appropriate and are communicated in a professional manner. You are accountable for the content of your e-mail messages.

Transmitting defamatory, offensive, or harassing messages is not permitted. It takes considerable time to type out personal e-mail messages. This results in decreased productivity that should be avoided. Sending mass e-mail messages that are not work-related and which have



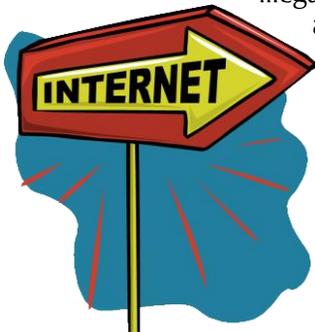
not been approved by your department head or elected official or forwarding non-work-related e-mails to multiple individuals is prohibited.

County e-mail addresses remain the property of the county and may be reassigned to other individuals at the county's discretion.

E-mail messages that pertain to county business may be subject to public access under open records laws and must be kept for a two-year period.

## Internet Access

Collin County provides Internet access to employees whose responsibilities require this resource. The Internet is considered a business tool and is to be used as such. It should only be used in conducting county business. It is not to be used to access sites featuring pornography, terrorism, espionage, gambling, theft, drugs, or other illegal or inappropriate



activities unless access to these types of sites is a required function of your position, in which case you will be granted permission to access these sites by your department head or elected official. No personal

Internet accounts will be used on county computers. The county reserves the right to determine which web sites will be considered business related. Any material received over the Internet is considered county property. Web usage history is subject to public access under open records laws.

## Telephone Usage

Telephones are vital tools in conducting business and are intended for that purpose. If your job requires you to make long-distance calls, you will be provided a long-distance personal identification number. This number is confidential and should not be shared with other employees. Under no circumstances are you permitted to access 900 numbers, unapproved long distance telephone numbers, or personal long distance numbers from your work telephone.

Personal telephone calls and text messaging, including those using a personal cell phone, should be kept to a minimum and should be limited to breaks and meal times when possible. Also be aware that texts, e-mails, and other communications sent on your personal device may be subject to open records requests if such communications involve county business. If you send or receive communications relating to county business on your personal devices, you must transmit it to the county system or otherwise preserve it according to record retention laws.



Some non-exempt employees may be issued a cell phone or other communication device to be used in performance of their jobs during normal working hours. There may be occasions where a non-exempt employee will be contacted during non-working hours. As a general guideline, these calls should be infrequent unless you are "on-call." When you are not on-call, work-related calls outside of working hours should be limited to critical matters and

should be of short duration so as not to infringe on your personal freedom.

If long or frequent calls are received during non-working hours, your supervisor may authorize you to receive compensatory time or may adjust your schedule for the remainder of the week so as not to incur compensatory time. Overtime and compensatory time must be approved by supervisors in advance.

### **Collin County Cell Phones**

You may be provided a county cell phone or personal digital assistant (PDA) for use on the job. If you are provided this equipment, a small amount of pay will be withheld from your paycheck to allow for personal usage.



Since personal use is permitted, you may utilize your PDA to access personal e-mail as well as county e-mail. Be sure to adhere to departmental policies when utilizing communication devices during working hours.

This equipment is county property and should not be used for inappropriate or illegal purposes. For example, it is not to be used to access sites featuring pornography, terrorism, espionage, gambling, theft, drugs, or other illegal or inappropriate activities unless access to these types of sites is a required function of your position, in which case you will be granted permission to access these sites by your department head or elected official.

Information received or transmitted on county devices, including county cell phones, may be subject to open records requests.

Please refer to the Collin County Cellular Telephone Policy for more information.

### **Personal Mail**

Because of the large volume of business mail that we receive and send on a daily basis, it is not possible to handle personal employee mail. Please do not use the county

business address as your own, or process personal mail or packages through the county mail system.



### **Gifts, Entertainment, Gratuities, and Bribes**

You are not allowed to engage in any activity or practice which conflicts with, or appears to conflict with, the interest of Collin County. If you perform regulatory functions or conduct inspections or investigations on behalf of the county, you may not solicit, accept, or agree to accept any benefit from a person you know to be subject to regulation, inspection, or investigation. If you exercise discretion in connection with contracts, purchases, payments, claims, or other monetary transactions of Collin County, you may not solicit, accept, or agree to accept any benefit from a person you know is interested in, or likely to become interested in, any contract, purchase, payment, claim, or transaction involving your discretion. This includes prizes received when attending a function or an event paid for by the county and payments made for participation in a job-related survey (even if the survey is conducted during non-working hours).

As an employee, you may accept the following:

- an item other than cash or a negotiable instrument with a value of less than \$50.00.
- reasonable food, lodging, transportation, or entertainment accepted as a guest in conjunction with a product demonstration or business meeting, where you are accompanied or in the presence of the vendor or person providing the food, lodging, transportation, or entertainment.
- benefits that are exempt due to reporting required by other statutes in accordance with state laws including the Texas Penal Code section 36.10.

If you are approached, or offered a benefit by a third party, the acceptance of which is prohibited by this policy or by state legislation, you must immediately report such incidents to your department head or elected official and/or the County Judge.

In the event you receive an unsolicited benefit, you may donate the benefit, after properly reporting it, to the county or other governmental entity that has the authority to accept the gift, or to a recognized tax-exempt charitable organization formed for educational, religious, or scientific purposes.

If you are aware of suspected misconduct, illegal activities, fraud, abuse of county assets, or violations of county policies, you have a duty to immediately report such activities to your department head or elected official, the County Auditor, the District Attorney or the County Judge. If you have any questions regarding an ethical or legal issue, or you want to know what procedure to pursue if there is a violation, contact your department head, elected official or the County Judge.

If the department head or elected official is the person who committed the infraction, you should inform the County Auditor, the District Attorney, Human Resources or the County Judge.

### ***Falsification of Documents***

Collin County records must be accurate and complete. You are expected to accurately record information on county records and documents. Falsification of any county document including applications, time records, expense reports, operational documents, reports, etc. is not permitted and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination as well as criminal prosecution.

### ***Moonlighting***

Occasionally personal needs or interests may require you to seek additional outside employment. Although we expect to be your primary employer, you are permitted to have other jobs which:

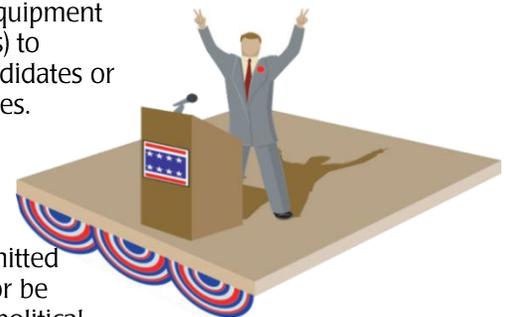
- do not interfere with the performance of your county position.

- do not reflect negatively on the county or its public image in any manner.
- do not pose a conflict of interest, or appear to pose a conflict of interest, to the individual or the county.
- are not reporting to a secondary employer who is involved in the exchange, purchase, or sale of goods or services to the county.
- do not involve the use of county resources or time unless the job includes law enforcement functions.

Prior written approval should be obtained from your department head or elected official before accepting a second position. If outside employment is later found to interfere with your position at Collin County, you may be expected to immediately resign from your outside position in order to continue employment with the county.

### ***Political Involvement***

We encourage you to be aware of civic responsibilities and recognize that you may wish to be involved in the election of candidates you feel will best represent the needs of the county and its citizens. You may not, however, use county resources (including equipment and supplies) to endorse candidates or political issues.



Collin County employees are not permitted to perform or be involved in political campaigning or related activities, whether paid or voluntary in the following circumstances:

- during working hours including additional work hours outside your normal shift, or on paid compensatory time or overtime. Work time includes both the soliciting and the solicited employee's work time.
- while in county uniform.
- while using county vehicles.

In accordance with the Collin County Building/Ground Use Policy, no signs, posters, handbills, or notices shall be posted without written approval from the Director of Facilities.

No county employee will be required to participate in political campaigns or related activities or make donations or contributions as a condition of obtaining or retaining employment, work assignments, compensation, advancement, career development, or any other condition of employment.

### ***Solicitation and Distribution***

We want to provide a work environment that allows you to complete your work with the fewest number of interruptions. For this reason, except for legitimate business purposes with prior authorization, individuals are not permitted to solicit, survey, petition, or distribute commercial literature during work time. Work time includes both the soliciting and the solicited employee's work time.

Telephones, electronic mail, and interoffice mail may not be used for solicitation except for legitimate county purposes.

Non-employees will not be permitted in employee work areas for the purpose of requesting commercial contributions, soliciting, distributing or posting literature, notices, messages, or other material.

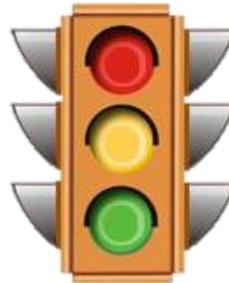
### ***Driving on County Business***

Your position may require that you drive a vehicle in the performance of your job duties.



If you need to drive a vehicle on county business, you are expected to do so in a safe, polite manner. Avoid distractions that may affect your ability to safely operate a vehicle. For example, under no circumstances should you send text messages while driving a county vehicle or while driving on county business.

When in a county vehicle either as the driver or passenger, you must wear a seat belt while the vehicle is in use. An exception may be made for law enforcement personnel transporting restrained individuals or in emergency situations where it is unsafe or not feasible to wear seat belts. Passengers should not travel in areas of the vehicle intended for cargo or where seat restraints are not available.



County vehicles should be parked in a secure location and locked when not in use. Valuables should be secured out of sight. Collin County will not be responsible for personal items that may be damaged or stolen from the vehicle.

County vehicles are to be used for business purposes only. Non-business passengers are not allowed in the vehicle.

In order to drive a county vehicle or use your personal vehicle on county business, you must have an appropriate driver's license and meet the minimum Collin County driving history requirements of:

- no more than three moving traffic violations and/or accidents recorded against your driver's license by any licensing agencies within the preceding 12-month period.
- no more than five moving traffic violations and/or accidents recorded against your driver's license by any licensing agencies within the preceding 24-month period.
- no Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) or Driving Under the Influence of Drugs (DUID) conviction during the preceding 36-month period.

These are the minimum guidelines. Some positions may have more extensive requirements.

Many Collin County vehicles have been equipped with geolocators for the safety and security of Collin County citizens, employees, and vehicles. Not only does this equipment enable drivers and vehicles to be easily located, it also promotes safer driving through the tracking and monitoring of driving behaviors. It is prohibited to remove, disable, alter, deactivate, damage, or otherwise invalidate these devices.

Your department may also have specific rules that regulate activities while at work, such as vehicle check out procedures, limitations on the usage of county vehicles and equipment, restrictions as to where vehicles may be driven, etc. Please ensure that you are aware of these rules before utilizing county equipment and vehicles.



If you are involved in an accident while on county business, you are expected to immediately notify your supervisor and risk management. If the accident involves a county vehicle, you are expected to follow the directions listed in the risk management brochure which may be found in the glove compartment of the county vehicle. You are required to take a post-accident drug test as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours after the accident.

Collin County will conduct periodic motor vehicle records checks. If your position requires you to drive on county business, your employment may be contingent, in part,

on successfully meeting the driving history requirements listed. If you do not meet these standards, you may be subject to actions such as dismissal or exclusion from a position.

## **Information Requests**

There may be occasions where you receive a request for information from the general public or the press. These requests should be referred to your department head or elected official or the Public Information Office.

## **Confidentiality**

During the course of your duties with the county, you may have access to confidential information. Collin County is committed to safeguarding confidential information obtained during the course of operations. Confidential information is to be used only for authorized county business pertaining to your job duties. It is unacceptable to access, share, discuss, or use confidential information for any purposes other than official county business unless prior written approval is obtained from your department head or elected official.

Although many of our official records are subject to public access under open records acts, there is also a great deal of confidential information that is protected under state and federal laws, such as social security numbers, banking information, some medical records, private information about an individual's family, and documents related to ongoing litigation.

Additional records, such as driver's license numbers and certain law enforcement records, may be protected should the county obtain an opinion from the Attorney General. If you are unsure of what constitutes confidential information, ask your supervisor. The laws outlining what information must be released are complex. Therefore, we generally require the public to go through formal open records procedures before releasing information.

## **BENEFITS**

We offer a comprehensive package of benefit programs for employees. Your eligibility for certain benefits depends upon the number of hours you are scheduled to regularly work, your employment status, and your length of employment. You will be provided with information on these benefits during orientation. The following descriptions are brief summaries for your general information. From time to time, additional benefits may be added or existing benefits may be terminated or modified at the county's sole discretion. Additional information about these benefits may be obtained from Human Resources.



Some benefits involve a deduction from your paycheck. Because we are paid bi-weekly, there will be some months where you will receive three paychecks. During those months, most benefit deductions will only be made from the first two paychecks.

State and Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD) employees and state elected officials (District Judges and the District Attorney) are eligible for coverage under state benefit plans. These state plans do not allow coverage under Collin County programs. Therefore, these employees are not eligible for many of Collin County's benefit plans such as life insurance, health insurance (medical, dental, and vision), flexible spending accounts, short term disability, and long term disability.

If you are a CSCD or state employee and need clarification regarding your benefits, you should ask your supervisor or Human Resources.

### **Medical Insurance**

If you are a regular full-time employee scheduled to work 30 or more hours per week or an eligible elected official, you may elect medical insurance coverage. Insurance becomes effective the first of the month after completing 59 days of eligible service. Coverage for eligible dependents may also be elected. The cost of dependent coverage is based upon the dependents covered. Premium information is available from Human Resources.

Regular part-time employees (scheduled less than 30 hours per week) may also elect coverage, but will be responsible for paying the full cost of the insurance.

### **Clinic**

Employees and dependents seven years and older who are covered by the Collin County health insurance plan and retirees are eligible to receive services from the County Health Care Center. No co-payments are required.

CSCD, CSCD retirees, and state employees may use the health clinic with a nominal co-payment.

### **Vision**

Collin County's medical plan includes vision care. Coverage provides for an annual exam, as well as glasses and frames or contacts. Deductibles or co-payments may apply.

### **Benefit Changes**

Generally, you will have the opportunity to make changes to your insurance coverage once a year during the county's annual enrollment period. However, there are certain instances, such as a change in marital, dependent, or employment status that may qualify you to change your elections during the course of the year. Should one of these qualified life changes occur, you must request a change in coverage and provide appropriate documentation to Human Resources within 30 days from the date of the life change.

Infants are only covered under the mother's insurance for the first 30 days and

are not automatically added to your insurance. If you wish to provide health coverage for your newborn, you must enroll the infant within 30 days after the birth, even if you already have coverage for children.

State and Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD) employees are able to make qualified life changes by using the Employee Retirement System (ERS) online website. Changes must be made within 31 days of the date of the life event. If you are a CSCD or state employee and have questions, visit the ERS website or you may contact ERS directly.

### **Retiree Insurance**

Collin County offers a retiree health program for eligible employees and eligible elected officials. The retiree insurance program is designed for eligible employees who wish to continue their health insurance benefits into retirement. With this plan, insurance coverage remains the same, except if the retiree is Medicare eligible. Once a retiree reaches the age of 65, the health plan becomes secondary to Medicare. The health plan reduces benefits paid by the amount on the Medicare payment schedule. Retirees will pay the full cost of the premium. Retirees in this plan may continue to insure eligible dependents who are covered on their insurance at the time of retirement. Retirees may drop dependent coverage at any time but they will not be allowed to add dependents to their plan. The election for coverage must be made at the time of retirement and it must be continual. Once coverage has been dropped it may not be reinstated.

### **Dental Insurance**

If you are a regular full-time employee or an eligible elected official, you may elect dental coverage for yourself and/or your eligible dependents. The election for dental coverage is separate from the election for medical insurance. Dental coverage becomes effective the first day of the month following 59 days of eligible



service. Employees participate in the cost of dental insurance. Premium information will be provided to you during orientation and annual enrollment.

Regular part-time employees (scheduled less than 30 hours per week) may also elect coverage, but will be responsible for paying the full cost of the insurance.

### **Life Insurance**

If you are a regular full-time employee or an eligible elected official, Collin County pays the full cost of providing you with \$50,000 of term life insurance. This coverage goes into effect the first of the month following completion of 90 days of eligible service. You may elect to purchase additional life insurance in the amount of one or two times your annual salary up to \$400,000. If you do not elect life insurance when you are initially hired, you may have to provide evidence of insurability if you decide you would like to enroll at a later date. Benefits continue at a reduced level after you reach age 65.

Each year the Collin County Commissioners' Court determines if it will include additional group term life insurance benefits in its retirement plan. If you die while employed, this benefit will provide your beneficiary with a payment equal to your final annual salary paid by Collin County. If you die after you retire, your beneficiary will be eligible for a \$5,000 payment.

### **Employee Assistance Program**

Collin County offers most regular full-time employees and eligible elected officials (CSCD and other state employees are not eligible) a confidential employee assistance program (EAP). This program is designed to provide you with resources and referrals to assist with life challenges that may be encountered such as: child care and elder care, alcohol and drug abuse, difficulties in relationships, stress and anxiety, depression, financial and legal concerns, as well as coping with grief or loss.

These services are provided free of charge to eligible employees and their covered dependents.

Additional information about the employee assistance program may be obtained from Human Resources.

### **Short Term Disability**

Collin County provides regular full-time eligible employees with short term disability benefits if they become disabled due to a non-occupational illness or injury. Short term disability becomes effective the first of the month following completion of 90 days of employment as a regular full-time employee. If you become disabled, you may be eligible for 67% of your salary for up to 26 weeks after you meet a 15 calendar day waiting period.

### **Long Term Disability**

Long term disability insurance is designed to provide you with partial income benefits if you are medically unable to work due to a non-occupational illness or injury. If you are an eligible regular full-time employee or an eligible elected official, you may have coverage for long term disability (LTD). Long term disability coverage becomes effective the first of the month following 90 days of employment as a regular full-time employee. Should you become disabled, this benefit may begin paying 67% of your gross salary after 180 qualifying days. Benefits continue for a reduced time period if you are disabled after age 60. For employees up to age 60, the maximum disability period is to age 65. Individuals disabled at age 60 or older may be eligible for 12 to 60 months of disability benefits, dependent upon their age at the time of disability.

### **Long Term Care**

Collin County provides basic long term care insurance coverage at no cost to eligible regular full-time employees and eligible elected officials with at least eight years of eligible service. This insurance provides nursing and custodial care benefits to employees who require assistance with daily life activities such as dressing and eating. You will automatically be enrolled in this

benefit. Coverage becomes effective the first of the month following your eighth year of employment.

Eligible new hires may elect to purchase long term care coverage during their initial benefit enrollment period. Should coverage not be elected at that time, and you want to add coverage during a subsequent annual benefit enrollment period, evidence of insurability will need to be provided before coverage will be issued.

You may also elect coverage for your spouse and other eligible family members during your initial benefit enrollment period or subsequent annual benefit enrollment periods. Evidence of insurability will be required. Premiums for your spouse may be made through payroll deductions. Premiums for other family members must be paid directly to the long term care provider.

### **Flexible Spending Accounts**

Collin County has established a flexible benefit plan that allows you to pay for eligible childcare, medical, dental, and/or vision expenses with before-tax dollars instead of after tax dollars. Each year, you may elect a before tax deduction amount that will be withheld from 24 of the 26 bi-weekly paychecks. This amount is applied to your flexible spending account. Federal income tax withholding is calculated on your lower taxable earnings. As you incur eligible expenses, you submit the bills for payment from your flexible spending account. There are two types of flexible spending accounts: medical and dependent care.

When using flexible spending accounts, calculate your deductions carefully. Due to IRS regulations, unused money in your flexible spending account cannot be moved between flexible spending accounts or returned.

### **Flexible Medical**

You can request funds to be deducted from your paycheck and applied to your flexible medical account to help cover eligible medical expenses. The amount you may elect to have withheld is updated periodically. You will be informed of the

maximum contribution you may elect. Examples of eligible expenses would be your co-insurance amounts, unreimbursed eyeglasses and contact lenses fees, and prescription co-payments.

Not all medical expenses are eligible for reimbursement under your flexible spending account. Cosmetic surgery/dentistry, custodial care, hair-growth treatment, and over-the-counter vitamins are some examples of ineligible charges. If you have a question about the eligibility of an expense, contact the plan administrator.

If you do not use all of your flexible withholdings for the year, our flexible medical plan has a grace period that allows you to submit claims incurred through March 15<sup>th</sup> of the following year. They will be applied to your previous year's withholdings if you submit them by March 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Flexible Dependent Care**

A dependent care flexible spending account allows you to use before-tax dollars to pay for dependent care so you and your spouse can work. It can be used to pay for care of a dependent child under the age of 13 or for disabled dependents such as children, parents, and grandparents. In order to be considered eligible for this benefit, expenses must be primarily for the care of your dependent. Expenses that are mainly for the education of your dependent such as kindergarten costs, first grade or higher expenses, and expenses for the educational portion of boarding school are generally not eligible for reimbursement under a dependent care flexible spending account.

You can request up to \$416.66 per month (\$5,000 per year) be withheld for eligible child or elder care expenses.

Expenses under dependent care flexible spending accounts must be incurred by December 31<sup>st</sup>. Payment request for reimbursement must be submitted by March 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Retirement Plan**

We believe it is important to plan for your future retirement needs. To help you meet

these needs, Collin County participates in a retirement pension plan offered through the Texas County and District Retirement System (TCDRS). This program allows you to save for retirement on a tax-deferred basis.

Regular employees and elected officials (other than County Extension agents) paid through Collin County must participate in this plan regardless of age. Seven percent of your gross pay will automatically be withheld from your paycheck each pay period. This amount is deducted before federal income tax is withheld thereby decreasing the amount of federal income tax you pay at the end of the year. The amount of the county match is determined each year by Commissioners' Court. You become vested in the county's contribution after eight years of service.



### **Holidays**

Active regular full-time employees are eligible for ten paid holidays each year. Part-time and temporary employees are not eligible to receive holiday pay.

Holidays are determined by the Commissioners' Court each year. Generally the following days are considered holidays:

New Year's Day  
Martin Luther King Day  
Good Friday  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day  
Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Day after Thanksgiving  
Christmas Eve  
Christmas Day



Regular full-time employees are awarded holiday pay in eight-hour increments regardless of daily scheduled hours. For example, if you are normally scheduled to work four ten-hour days, you will be paid eight hours of holiday pay for that holiday. You are paid for holiday pay even if it is not your scheduled day to work. Your supervisor may work with you regarding any changes to your schedule during a holiday period.

Holiday pay is not time worked and will not be included in overtime calculations.

If you are a non-exempt employee and are required to work on a holiday, you will be paid for hours worked on the holiday at your regular hourly pay rate. You will also be paid for the holiday.

Holidays that fall on Saturday will normally be observed on the Friday preceding the holiday. Holidays that fall on Sunday will normally be observed on the Monday following the holiday. A holiday schedule will be posted each year.

You will not receive pay for the holiday unless you have actually worked prior to that holiday.

An employee who has given notice of their leaving will not be paid for a holiday as their last day.

In order to be paid holiday pay, you must be in an active paid status (for at least four hours) on each of the scheduled work days immediately preceding and following the holiday based on your assigned schedule. If you are on catastrophic time off, workers' compensation, military leave, suspension, or leave without pay on the day before or after a holiday, you will not be eligible to receive pay for the holiday.

### ***Paid Time Off***

Regular, full-time, non-elected employees earn paid time off for active full-time service. If you are a regular full-time employee, you will begin accruing paid time off from your hire date. You will be eligible to take paid time off following six months of service. Paid time off may not be advanced.



Paid time off days may be used for vacation, illness for yourself or an immediate family member, medical/dental, appointments, funerals, personal business, or emergencies. Paid time off must be scheduled in advance and pre-approved by your supervisor except in cases of unforeseen illness or emergency. Hours worked plus paid time off used cannot exceed your regularly scheduled hours (40 for most employees) per week.

Your department may have specific requirements such as how much advance

notice is required and how many unplanned absences are allowed when using paid time off. If you experience an unplanned absence, you are expected to notify your supervisor on a daily basis at the start of your scheduled work day (or when you leave if you have already reported to work) unless other specific arrangements have been made with your supervisor. Except as otherwise provided by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), if you are absent from work for medical reasons, your supervisor may at any time ask you to provide a physician's statement indicating that you are medically unable to work.

Paid time off must be approved by your supervisor before it is taken. There may be times (although these occasions are infrequent), such as during slow work periods, that your supervisor may require you to take your paid time off at a designated timeframe.

Paid time off is calculated and awarded at the end of the pay period. Although you are encouraged to use your paid time off each year, you can continue to accrue paid time off until you reach the maximum amount allowed (see chart). Unused paid time off in excess of the maximum will be forfeited unless specifically approved by Commissioners' Court.

<b>Paid Time Off Table</b> (Regular Full-Time Employee)			
Completed Years of Service	Accrual Rate (per Pay Period)	Annualized Paid Time Off	Maximum Accrual
0-4	7.40	24 days	200 hrs.
5-9	8.32	27 days	240 hrs.
10-19	9.24	30 days	320 hrs.
20 +	10.16	33 days	400 hrs.

Elected officials cannot utilize paid time off. If you have accrued time off and are elected into office, you must use your accrued time off prior to assuming office.

Paid time off is not time worked and will not be included in overtime/compensatory time off calculations.

While you are on paid time off, you may accrue time off benefits.

Paid time off will not be accrued on your final paycheck.

Requests to adjust paid time off hours must be entered in to the payroll system no later than two pay periods after the absence in order to be considered. If you are at the maximum accrual amount and your time off was not entered during the pay period, the accrual will not be recalculated.

If you have worked for more than one year and are transferred from a full-time to a part-time position, you will be paid for earned but unused paid time off time at the time of transfer.

When you leave Collin County's employment, accrued but unused paid time off will be paid if you have completed at least one year of continuous service. Employees who terminate before completing one year of continuous service are not eligible for a paid time off payout. Your termination date may not be extended past the last date worked through the use of holidays or earned or accrued time off (such as paid time off or compensatory time).

## ***Family and Medical Leave of Absence***

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides job protection if you are unable to work for a qualifying reason. If you meet the qualifications, your job is protected under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

In accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act, you may be eligible for family medical leave if you have worked for a minimum of one year and have worked 1,250 hours or more during the 12 months prior to taking the leave. Elected officials are elected for a term of office. Benefits for the elected official may not extend past the term of office.

If you are eligible, your job may be protected for up to 12 weeks of leave within a rolling backward 12 month period for any of the following:

- for the birth, adoption, or placement of a child for foster care for children under 18 years old, or for the adoption of a child 18 years or older if the child is incapable of self-care because of physical or mental disability.
- to care for a child, spouse, or parent with a serious health condition.
- your own serious health condition.
- a qualified military need when military service requires you:
  - to arrange for childcare, to attend counseling, to attend meetings with school or childcare providers, to make financial or legal arrangements, or
  - to act as the covered military member's representative before a federal, state, or local agency for the purposes of obtaining, arranging, or appealing military service benefits, or
  - to attend eligible events sponsored by the military or military service organizations.

If your leave is due to the addition or care of a child in the family and you and your spouse both work for the county, the combined maximum length of Family and Medical Leave Act time that may be taken by both parents is 12 weeks. Both you and your spouse may take leave at the same time or the leave may be taken separately.

*The Family and Medical Leave Act provides job protection if you are unable to work for a qualifying reason.*

If you qualify for family medical leave, you are required to use it when requesting time off. While on family medical leave, you must use eligible, available accruals unless you are receiving disability pay. If you do not provide your manager with written documentation on what accruals you would like to use, your accruals will be used in the following order:

- accrued catastrophic time off (if appropriate)
- accrued paid time off
- earned compensatory time

These accruals must be used concurrently with family medical leave and do not extend the 12 week family medical leave period.

You may not exceed a total maximum leave period of 12 months.



### **Additional Military Family Leave Entitlements**

You may request up to 12 weeks of leave during a 12 month period because of a qualifying emergency arising out of the fact that your spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty in support of a contingency operation. The benefits provided will be subject to the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act at the time leave is taken.

You may also be eligible to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. A covered service member is:

- a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin who is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, for a serious injury or illness incurred or aggravated in the line of duty
- a veteran who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable within the five-year period prior to the first date the caretaker's

leave begins, and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

To request leave to care for an eligible family member, you will need to submit a certification for serious injury or illness of a covered service member for military family leave.

## Requesting Family Medical Leave

You must give the county at least 30 days advance notice of your intended dates of leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act, except in the case of an emergency. In the case of an emergency, you must notify the county as soon as possible. You can provide advance notice verbally, but should also submit your notice in writing to your supervisor within one week of providing verbal notice.

*If you qualify for family medical leave, you are required to use it when requesting time off.*

When Human Resources receives your request for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act, they will notify you if your leave meets Family and Medical Leave Act requirements and if medical certification will be required. They will also provide important information about how your insurance premiums will be handled.

It may be necessary for you to request an extension of leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act if you need more time than originally submitted. It is possible to be on family medical leave for up to 12 weeks. If you originally requested less than 12 weeks of leave, and circumstances develop that prevent you from returning to work as originally planned, you must apply for an extension in the same manner that you requested the original leave. The county reserves the right to require a second opinion from an approved health care provider (if appropriate).

You may request intermittent leave when medically necessary due to your own serious health condition or to care for a seriously ill immediate family member. When requesting intermittent leave, you must work with the department head or elected official to schedule the leave so as not to unduly disrupt the department's operation.

The county may temporarily transfer you to an alternative position with equivalent pay and benefits if the alternative position would better accommodate an intermittent or reduced schedule.

## Periodic Updates

While on leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act, you may be required to provide periodic updates at reasonable intervals. You may also be required to obtain a second opinion or recertification.

## Key Employees

Not all employees who take leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act must be restored to work upon returning from leave. Key employees may be granted time off under the Family and Medical Leave Act but are not guaranteed their position upon their return from leave.

A key employee is an employee who is among the highest paid 10 percent of employees, and who holds a position that if left vacant would pose substantial and economic injury to the operations of the organization.

## Return to Work

When returning from family medical leave for your own serious medical condition, you will need to submit a health care provider statement releasing you to return to work. The statement should include specific restrictions to which you must adhere, if any, and the expected duration of the restrictions so that your supervisor may determine the ability to accommodate those restrictions.

When you return to work within the 12 weeks allowed by the Family and Medical Leave Act, you will be reinstated to the same position you held prior to your leave, or one

of similar status and pay provided the county's circumstances have not changed to the extent that reinstatement is impossible or unreasonable.

If you are not granted an extension of leave and you do not return to work even though you are physically able to return, you may be considered to have abandoned your job and voluntarily terminated your employment with the county. The county may ask you to repay the portion of the insurance premiums that were paid on your behalf. For example: If you are able to return from family medical leave and you decide to leave your job with the county, you may be required to reimburse the county for insurance premiums paid on your behalf while you were out on leave.

### ***Leaves of Absence***

A leave of absence may be granted for many different reasons including medical leave, military service, or the birth or adoption of a child. The length of time you may be out on leave is dependent upon the circumstances and the type of leave requested. In some circumstances, you may be out on multiple types of leave concurrently. For example, you may be on family medical leave and workers' compensation leave, or short term disability and family medical leave simultaneously. The maximum length of time you may be on any combination of leave is 12 months, except where otherwise regulated by legislation, such as military leave laws. The county will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) when additional, limited time off is necessary to accommodate an employee's disability. Such leave is for a specified time period and maybe granted if, the leave can be taken without undue hardship to the county, and the employee is still qualified for the position.

A request for a leave of absence must include the specific reason for the leave (for example: medical, military, workers' compensation, birth/adoption of a child, etc.). If it is discovered that a leave is not being used for the specific reason granted, leave may be cancelled and you may be

required to return to work or subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Leaves may be paid or unpaid. Eligible accrued time off (such as paid time off, compensatory time and when appropriate, catastrophic time off) must be used before you may be placed on an unpaid status. While on unpaid leave, you will not earn benefit accruals.



If you are covered under Collin County's health insurance plan and are on a leave that also qualifies for protection under the Family and Medical Leave Act, you may be able to continue your health insurance coverage at the same premium rate as employees not on leave as long as you have available family medical leave time. You will continue to pay the same premium as an active employee. While on a paid status, premiums may be automatically withheld from your paycheck. When on an unpaid status, you must make arrangements with Human Resources for the payment of premiums. Failure to pay premiums in a timely manner may result in the termination of benefits.

If your unpaid leave is for a reason that is not protected by the Family and Medical Leave Act or all your family medical leave has been utilized, you may elect to continue your health insurance coverage for 18 to 36 months under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). If you elect to continue this benefit, you will be responsible for paying the full cost of coverage.

## **Military Leave**

Military leave will be granted in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.

### **Paid Military Leave**

If you are a regular full-time employee, you may be granted up to 15 work days of paid military leave per fiscal year. Paid military leave will only be given in lieu of regularly scheduled work hours.



### **Unpaid Military Leave**

Time required over and above the maximum allowed for paid military leave may be taken from accrued paid time off, compensatory time, or authorized leave without pay. You are not required to use paid time off or compensatory time prior to using paid or unpaid military leave.

Temporary employees are hired for a brief, non-recurrent period. Usually these jobs are not expected to continue for a significant length of time. Therefore, individuals called upon to serve who are in temporary positions are generally not able to return to the position.

You should furnish your supervisor and the Human Resources department written copies of your military orders. You must return from leave within the specified periods required under the Uniformed Services Employment and the Re-employment Rights Act (USERRA).

The following time may be eligible to be considered as part of your allotted military leave:

- travel/rest time necessary to attend or return from military duty or training
- time required for physical examination for selection or admission to the military service, to determine or maintain a selective service rating, or to maintain a reserve status

When you return from leave, you will need

to provide a copy of required government documents.

## **Jury Duty**

Collin County encourages you to fulfill your civic obligation to serve on a jury when summoned. To support you in this obligation, we pay for your time off when you are called to serve on a jury on one of your scheduled work days.

If your jury duty schedule will allow you to work part of your shift, you are expected to report to work. Consideration will be given to second and third shift employees to allow for sleep time after you have served.

While on jury duty, you must contact your supervisor daily to report your availability for work unless you make other arrangements with your supervisor. When you are not required in court, you must report to work as scheduled.

Some counties and cities may allow you to call in or check your status online prior to reporting for jury duty to see if your services are needed. If you receive a jury summons but you are not required to serve, you must report to work as scheduled.



After you have served jury duty, you must present the written jury summons from the court as soon as it is received.

If you are excused or released from jury service before the end of your work day, you are expected to report to work.

Time spent on a jury is not time worked and will not be included in the calculation of overtime or compensatory time.

## Educational Assistance

You are encouraged to continue your education and keep abreast of changes occurring in your chosen field of work. Collin County has established a reimbursement plan to enable regular full-time employees to pursue job-related training courses.

Our Educational Assistance program reimburses you for 100% of tuition, books, and lab fees for eligible courses (not to exceed that which would be paid at The University of Texas at Dallas) if a grade of at least "C" is received for undergraduate courses or "B" for graduate courses. Forms for this program are available on the intranet in the Document Center on the My Collin County page under Policies and Procedures.

In order to be considered eligible for reimbursement, a course must:

- be job-related
- be approved by your department head or elected official prior to enrollment
- consist of a semester's work of at least four weeks duration
- be listed on an approved degree plan (you are responsible for submitting a new degree plan if the original submission changes for any reason)
- be a course in which a grade is awarded

Non job-related courses are not eligible for reimbursement unless they are listed on an approved degree plan. Any courses not listed on an approved degree plan are ineligible for reimbursement.

In order to be reimbursed, you must submit a reimbursement request with a copy of receipts and grades to the Auditor's Office within 30 days after the end of the class.

Educational expenses that are paid or reimbursed by other educational support programs such as veteran programs, scholarships, or federal grant programs, are

not eligible for payment by Collin County.

You must be employed before and during the length of the class for which reimbursement is requested.

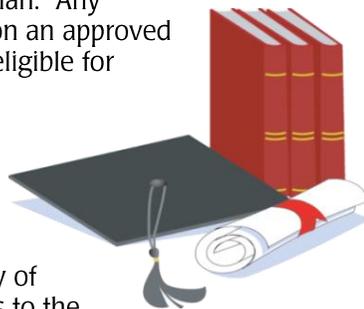
When Collin County provides you with tuition assistance, it makes a significant investment in your future. In return for tuition assistance, you agree to continue your employment for a period of time. The period of time you are expected to work for the county is based on the amount of tuition assistance received in a calendar year. The following schedule reflects the time after completing a class that you must remain as a full-time employee. If you voluntarily leave the county before this agreed upon period, you are expected to reimburse the county for the tuition paid on your behalf.

Tuition Reimbursement Schedule	
Amount Received (within a calendar year)	Years of Service Required
\$0–\$2,000	1
\$2,000–\$5,000	2
\$5,000–\$7,500	3
\$7,500 or more	4

For example, if you receive a total of \$9,000 in tuition assistance for the spring semester which ends on June 15<sup>th</sup>, you must continue employment in a full-time capacity for four years after you complete the course work. If you leave county employment voluntarily before working the specified period of time, the reimbursement is due immediately. In the example above, termination on or after June 15<sup>th</sup> four years in the future, fulfills the agreement, and your tuition liability for the class is reduced to zero. Voluntary termination before June 15<sup>th</sup> would result in reimbursement of \$9,000 to the county.

## Tuition Reimbursement Advances

Collin County recognizes that the initial cost to attend classes may be a deterrent. Therefore, the county may provide employees who have at least three years of



consecutive service with an educational assistance advancement for the amount of books, tuition, and eligible fees. If you leave the county before the completion date of a class for which reimbursement has been received, you will be required to immediately repay the county for the amount of the advancement in one lump sum payment.

Advances are not allowed for online courses.

See the Auditor's policy for detailed requirements and other information. Any questions should be directed to the County Auditor's Office.

### **Workers' Compensation**

Regular full-time and part-time employees who have not waived their rights to workers' compensation in writing within the first five days of employment are provided workers' compensation benefits. These benefits provide for medical, surgical and hospital treatment as well as compensation for lost wages in the event you are injured on the job.

*If you suffer any on the job injury, no matter how minor, you must report the injury to your supervisor and risk management as soon as possible.*

### **Reporting an Injury or Illness**

Although Collin County strives to offer a safe work environment, you may in the course of performing your job become injured. If you suffer any on-the-job injury, no matter how minor, you must report the injury to your supervisor and risk management as soon as possible. In some cases it will only be necessary to file a report; in other situations medical treatment and/or tests may be necessary. Your supervisor or risk management can advise you how to proceed and facilitate the process. Failure to report an injury or illness in a timely manner may result in denial of your claim and lost benefits.

When seeking treatment for a work-related

injury, be sure the provider accepts workers' compensation claims. You should not use your health insurance card or pay any money out of your pocket for a workers' compensation injury.

If a workers' compensation leave of absence is granted because you are medically unable to work due to a work-related injury or illness, you must keep in touch with your supervisor on a regular basis. When you have missed time from work due to an on-the-job injury, you are required to provide a written physician's statement releasing you to return to work prior to your return. This statement also needs to list any job-related restrictions to which you must adhere. You must return to work when your physician indicates you are able to return to full duty. Light duty may be accommodated depending on the restrictions, duration, and whether or not your department/office determines it can accommodate your light duty request.

Family and Medical Leave Act time will run concurrently while you are away from work due to a workers' compensation injury or illness.

The maximum length of time you may be out on leave is 12 months except where otherwise required by legislation.

Medical expenses incurred due to your work-related injury may be covered by workers' compensation. However, if you need time off for your workers' compensation injury and you qualify for the Family and Medical Leave Act, you may also continue health insurance coverage if you continue to pay your portion of the premiums. Once your family medical leave expires, your county provided insurance coverage ends, but you and your eligible dependents will be given the opportunity to continue coverage for up to an additional 18 to 36 months as provided by the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA).

Should you not be eligible for family medical leave, you will be provided the opportunity to continue your health insurance coverage under Consolidated

Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) as soon as your county-provided health insurance ceases.

The Texas Legislature has enacted legislation providing for additional coverage under workers' compensation for law enforcement personnel. If you are employed in the capacity of Sheriff, Deputy Sheriff, Constable, Deputy Constable, or in another county or precinct law enforcement position, and are hospitalized or otherwise incapacitated in the official course of your duties, you may be eligible to continue to receive a salary for a longer period of time. Contact risk management for additional details.

## COLLIN COUNTY EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Collin County Employee Handbook. I am aware that it replaces all previous documents. I agree to read it and ask my supervisor or the Human Resources Department if I have any questions.

I understand that this handbook contains general personnel guidelines that shall govern my employment. In consideration of my employment with Collin County, I agree to comply with all policies, procedures and requirements of the county including those described in the handbook. I further understand that the failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

I am aware that Collin County may, in its sole and absolute discretion, alter, delete or add to any policy, procedure or requirement described in the Employee Handbook.

I realize that this handbook is distributed for informative purposes only and is not intended to create any contractual rights or obligations. Nothing in the Employee Handbook shall be construed as constituting any terms or conditions of employment, expressed or implied, nor does it guarantee continuation of benefits described therein.

I understand that the employment relationship between Collin County and me is at the will of either party and is not for any fixed period of time. Either I or the county, through my department head or elected official, or through the budget process, may end the employment relationship at any time for any reason. I acknowledge that this at-will relationship can only be modified by state or federal statute or by a written statement signed by the Commissioners' Court.

Employee Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_