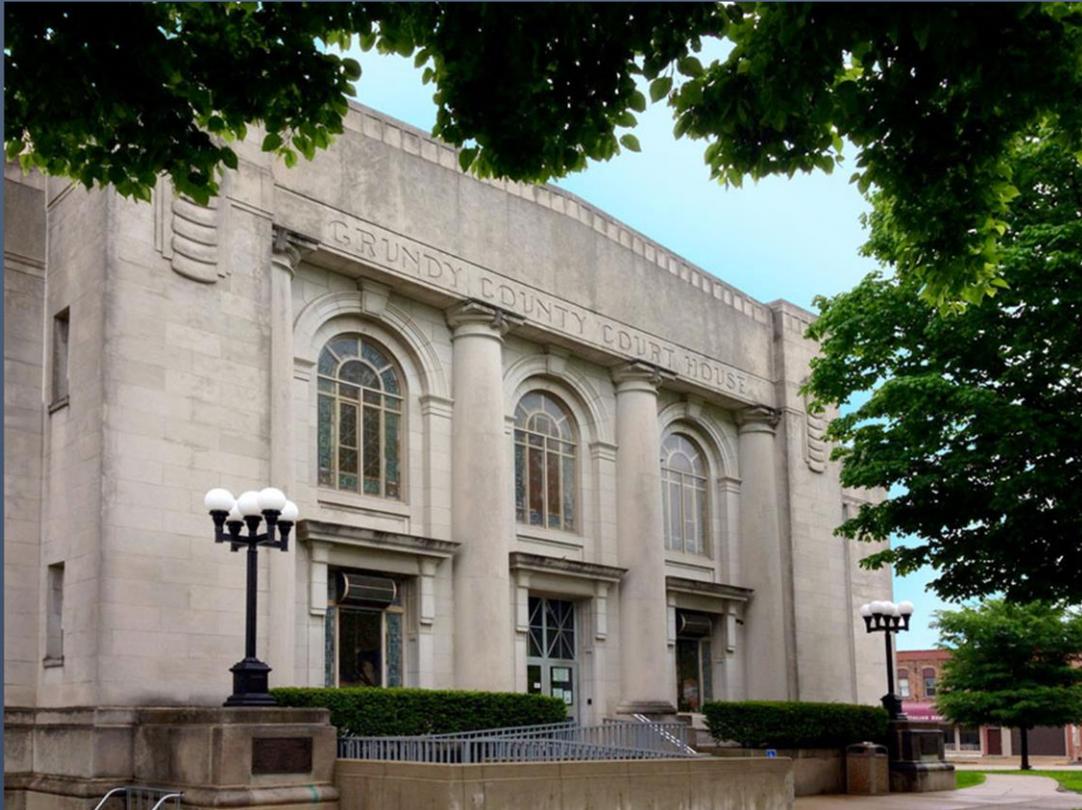


# GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



GRUNDY COUNTY  
1320 UNION STREET  
MORRIS, ILLINOIS 60450

REVISED NOVEMBER 2018, FEBRUARY 2019, JUNE 2019, DECEMBER 2019

## FOREWORD

Whether you have just joined our staff or have been with Grundy County, Illinois (hereinafter “Grundy County” or “County”) for a while, we are confident that you will find this a dynamic and rewarding place in which to work, and we look forward to a productive and successful association. We consider the employees of Grundy County to be one of its most valuable resources. This handbook has been written to serve as the guide for the employer/employee relationship.

This handbook applies to all employees listed in the Application of Handbook section herein unless otherwise provided under the terms of any applicable collective bargaining agreement. In the event of any conflict between the provisions of this handbook and the terms of any collective bargaining agreement, the terms of the agreement will control as to the employees covered by such agreement.

In addition, if applicable laws and/or regulations change or otherwise conflict with the provisions of this Handbook, the laws and/or regulations will control.

There are several things to keep in mind about this handbook. This handbook contains only general information and guidelines. It is not intended to be comprehensive or to address all the possible applications of, or exceptions to, the general policies and procedures described. For that reason, if you have any questions concerning eligibility for a particular benefit or the applicability of a policy or practice to you, you should address your specific questions with the Department Head. Neither this handbook nor any other document confers any contractual right, either express or implied, to remain in the County’s employ. Nor does it guarantee any fixed terms and conditions of your employment. Your employment is not for any specific time and may be terminated at will with or without cause and without prior notice by the County, or you may resign for any reason at any time. No supervisor or other representative of the County, other than the County Board, has the authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period of time or to make any agreement contrary to the above. Any such agreement with the Board must be by specific individual agreement in writing and signed by the Chairperson and the employee. No one has the authority to make any oral statements that should be considered or construed as a contract or guarantee of employment or compensation, or guarantee of employment in a particular position with the County.

The procedures, practices, policies and benefits described here may be modified or discontinued at any time, with or without notice. We will try to inform you of any changes as they occur. This handbook supersedes all previous versions of the Grundy Employee Handbook.

Some subjects described in this handbook are covered in detail in official policy documents. Refer to these documents for specific information because the handbook only briefly summarizes those guidelines and benefits. Please note that the terms of the written insurance policies are controlling and override any statements made in this or other documents.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>FOREWORD</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>DIVERSITY</b> .....	<b>1</b>
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA).....	1
AND THE ADA AMENDMENTS ACT (ADAAA).....	1
ANTI-HARASSMENT & DISCRIMINATION POLICY.....	1
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT.....	3
IMMIGRATION AND EMPLOYMENT.....	3
PROBLEM OR COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE.....	4
<b>EMPLOYMENT</b> .....	<b>5</b>
APPLICATION OF HANDBOOK.....	5
ATTENDANCE.....	6
ATTIRE AND GROOMING.....	6
BACKGROUND CHECKS.....	6
COMPUTER AND ELECTRONIC MAIL USAGE.....	7
CONFIDENTIALITY.....	8
EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.....	8
ELECTRONIC DEVICES CELL PHONES, SMARTPHONES & OTHER HANDHELD DEVICES.....	9
EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATION CATEGORIES.....	10
EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION.....	11
EMPLOYEE RELATIONS.....	12
EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION AND REFERENCE CHECKS.....	12
ETHICAL CONDUCT / CONFLICT OF INTEREST.....	13
HIRING AND TERMINATION AUTHORITY.....	14
INTRODUCTORY PERIOD.....	14
JOB POSTING / INTERNAL TRANSFERS AND PROMOTIONS.....	14
LAYOFF AND RECALL.....	15
MEDICAL EVALUATIONS.....	16
NEPOTISM, EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS.....	17
OFFICE CLOSURE.....	17
OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT.....	17
PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS.....	18
PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.....	18
PERSONNEL DATA CHANGES.....	19
PERSONNEL FILES.....	20
PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE.....	20
REHIRE.....	21
RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS.....	21
RETURN OF COUNTY PROPERTY AND TERMINATION PROVISIONS.....	21
RIGHT TO MONITOR.....	22
SEPARATION OF EMPLOYMENT.....	22
SOCIAL MEDIA—ACCEPTABLE USE.....	23
SOLICITATIONS, DISTRIBUTIONS AND POSTING OF MATERIALS.....	23
COUNTY OWNED OR LEASED VEHICLE POLICY.....	23
<b>COMPENSATION</b> .....	<b>32</b>
ADMINISTRATION AND REVIEW OF SALARY AND WAGES.....	32
BUSINESS TRAVEL EXPENSES.....	32
CALL BACK PAY.....	35
OVERTIME.....	36
PAYMENT OF WAGES.....	37
WORK HOURS AND TIMEKEEPING.....	38
<b>TIME OFF/LEAVES OF ABSENCE</b> .....	<b>38</b>
BEREAVEMENT LEAVE.....	38
DISABILITY LEAVE.....	39
FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT.....	42
HOLIDAYS.....	47
JURY DUTY.....	48

LACTATION/BREASTFEEDING.....	49
MEAL BREAKS.....	49
MILITARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE.....	49
PERSONAL TIME.....	49
PREGNANCY RIGHTS AND ACCOMMODATIONS.....	50
SCHOOL VISITATION RIGHTS.....	51
SICK LEAVE.....	51
VACATION.....	54
UNPAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE.....	55
VICTIMS ECONOMIC AND SAFETY ACT (VESSA).....	55
VOTING LEAVE.....	56
<b>BENEFITS.....</b>	<b>56</b>
CONTINUATION OF BENEFITS (COBRA).....	56
RETIREMENT, INSURANCE AND OTHER BENEFITS.....	57
WORKER'S COMPENSATION INSURANCE.....	58
<b>WORKPLACE SAFETY.....</b>	<b>58</b>
DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE.....	58
SAFETY AND HEALTH.....	61
SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE.....	62
VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE.....	62
WORKPLACE ACCOMMODATIONS / LIGHT DUTY.....	63
WORKPLACE BULLYING.....	63
WORKPLACE CONTRABAND AND SECURITY INSPECTIONS.....	64
WORK-RELATED ACCIDENT, INJURY OR ILLNESS.....	64
MANDATORY EMPLOYEE TRAINING.....	64
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND RECEIPT.....</b>	<b>66</b>

## **DIVERSITY**

### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) AND THE ADA AMENDMENTS ACT (ADAAA)**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA), Grundy County prohibits discrimination against applicants and individuals with disabilities, and provides reasonable accommodations as required by law.

It is the policy of Grundy County to comply with all federal and state laws concerning the employment of persons with disabilities and to act in accordance with regulations and guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Furthermore, it is our policy not to discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training, or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

"Disability" refers to a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual. An individual who has such an impairment, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment is an "individual with a disability". A "qualified individual with a disability" means an individual with a disability who satisfies the job-related requirements of the position (skill, experience, education, etc.) and who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the employment position that the individual holds or has applied for.

The County will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation and/or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to Grundy County. Contact the Human Resource department with any questions or requests for accommodation.

### **ANTI-HARASSMENT & DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Grundy County is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, Grundy County expects that all relationships among persons in the workforce will be business-like and free of bias, prejudice and harassment.

It is the policy of Grundy County to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, military status, status as a covered veteran, unfavorable discharge from military service, order of protection status, pregnancy, or any other legally protected characteristic or status. Grundy County prohibits any such discrimination or harassment.

Grundy County encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment. It is the policy of Grundy County to promptly and thoroughly investigate such reports. Grundy

County prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or who participates in an investigation of such reports.

### **Definitions of Harassment**

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is also strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal, written or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law, or that of someone with whom the individual has an association, and that a) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment; b) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or c) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group and that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the employer's premises or circulated in the workplace, on County time or using County equipment via e-mail, phone (including voice messages), text messages, tweets, blogs, social networking sites or other means.

### **Individuals and Conduct Covered**

These policies apply to all applicants and employees, whether related to conduct engaged in by fellow employees or someone not directly employed by Grundy County (e.g., an outside vendor, consultant or customer).

Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during business trips, business meetings and business-related social events.

### **Complaint Procedure**

Any employee who believes he or she has been subject to or witnessed illegal discrimination, including sexual or other forms of unlawful harassment, is requested and encouraged to make a complaint. You may, but are not required to, complain first to the person you feel is discriminating against or harassing you. You may complain directly to your immediate supervisor or department manager, the human resources director, or any other member of management with whom you feel comfortable bringing such a complaint. Similarly, if you observe acts of discrimination toward or harassment of another employee, you are requested and encouraged to report this to one of the individuals listed above.

No reprisal, retaliation, or other adverse action will be taken against an employee for making a good-faith complaint or report of discrimination or harassment or for assisting in the investigation of any such complaint or report. Any suspected retaliation or intimidation should be reported immediately to one of the persons identified above.

All complaints will be investigated promptly and, to the extent possible, with regard for confidentiality. If the investigation confirms conduct contrary to this policy has occurred, the County will take immediate and appropriate corrective action, including discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

Grundy County provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, military status, status as a covered veteran, unfavorable discharge from military service, order of protection status, pregnancy, or any other legally protected characteristic or status in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws. Grundy County complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the County has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.

Grundy County expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, genetic information, disability, veteran status, pregnancy, or any other characteristic protected by law. Improper interference with the ability of Grundy County employees to perform their expected job duties is absolutely not tolerated.

### **IMMIGRATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

It is the policy of Grundy County to employ only those individuals that are legally authorized to work in the United States. In complying with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, it is against Grundy County policy to discriminate because of an individual's national origin, citizenship, or intent to become a US citizen.

Each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility.

These requirements must be fulfilled within three business days of the employee's first day of work. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 with Grundy County within the past three years, or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid.

If documentation is unavailable, and has been applied for by the employee, a receipt is required for verification. The employee must produce the receipt within three (3) business days of hire, and the actual document within ninety (90) calendar days of hire.

The County cannot lawfully employ anyone who fails to comply with the employment eligibility verification and/or Form I-9 requirements.

## **PROBLEM OR COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE**

Grundy County realizes that employees of the County from time to time may have complaints or concerns regarding their jobs, working conditions, Department Heads or fellow employees that the employee may be unable to resolve on an informal basis. Therefore, this formal procedure is designed to resolve such complaints or concerns as quickly as possible, and/or clearly communicate to the involved employee why the matter of concern cannot be resolved to their satisfaction.

### **Procedure**

Any employee having a work-related concern, problem or complaint relating to his/her employment shall first discuss the concern, problem or complaint with his/her Department Head. If the problem is not settled to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may present his/her formal complaint in accordance with the following guidelines.

### **No Retaliation Pledge**

No employee will be subject to reprisal due to his/her good faith involvement in a complaint. An employee may submit a complaint even if resignation, suspension or termination occurs.

### **Subject Matter of Complaint**

Only one subject matter should be covered in any one complaint. A complaint should contain in writing the following:

- A statement of the employee's position;
- The date the dispute occurred;
- The relief sought;
- The signature of the employee filing the complaint; and
- The date the complaint was given to the Department Head.

### **Steps in Formal Complaint Procedure**

An employee's failure to submit a complaint to the next step/level within specified time limits shall mean that the employee has accepted the last answer given in this process.

- Step 1:** The employee shall present the complaint in writing to their department head, explaining its nature and circumstances, within ten (10) department working days after learning of the circumstances or conditions which gave rise to the complaint. The department head shall schedule a conference to discuss the written complaint

within ten (10) department working days of its presentation. The department head shall respond to the complaint with a written decision as soon as possible, but not to exceed ten (10) working days after the conference.

**Step 2:** If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved or no decision is given within the time limit set forth in Step 1, the employee may submit a copy of the written statement of complaint submitted in Step 1 within ten (10) working days from the date the decision was issued (or, if no decision was given, within 10 working days from the date the decision was due), to the Grundy County Personnel Committee for review and determination. The Grundy County Personnel Committee shall schedule a conference within twenty (20) working days of receipt of the complaint. The Grundy County Personnel Committee will communicate its decision to the Human Resources Director.

**Step 3:** In the event the decision of the Grundy County Personnel Committee does not resolve the complaint to the employee's satisfaction, the aggrieved employee may request an appearance before the next regularly scheduled official meeting of the Grundy County Board. Such meeting may be held in closed session, if permitted in accordance with the Illinois Open Meeting Act. The decision of the Grundy County Board will be final. The decision will be communicated to the complainant employee, typically within five (5) business days after the decision.

In the discussions or meetings in Step 1, 2, and 3, the employee shall be present. The parties involved may present any relevant explanations and supporting documents during any complaint discussions or meetings. Time periods specified for County responses at each Step will be followed under normal circumstances; if the time frames cannot be met and new time frames cannot be agreed upon by both parties under the specific circumstances, the employee will be notified and the remedy will be to advance to the next step.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### **APPLICATION OF HANDBOOK**

The Grundy County Board has deemed it advisable to establish a written employee handbook that sets forth operational guidelines concerning various aspects of the County of Grundy's personnel management procedures and benefits. This Employee Handbook applies to all Grundy County employees, except that elected officials may determine whether the handbook is applicable to their employees.

In addition, in the event of any conflict between the provisions of this handbook and the terms of any collective bargaining agreement, the terms of the collective bargaining agreement will control as to the employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement.

For purposes of this Handbook, the term "employee" includes individuals other than independent contractors, who receive compensation from the County for services, and unpaid volunteers when involved in activities covered by County-provided liability insurance.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Employees are expected to report to work when scheduled and be at their work station at starting time, and again after lunch break at the prescribed time. Failure to observe working hours could result in disciplinary procedures.

When an employee is unable to report to work because of illness or emergency, the employee must call his/her Department Head as far in advance as possible, but no later than one hour prior to his/her scheduled shift time, or in the event of an emergency, as soon as practicable. If the Department Head is unavailable, employees should notify the other office staff. Such notification should include a reason for the absence or tardiness and an indication of when the employee can be expected to report to work. The absent employee is responsible for ensuring that proper advance notice of absence or late arrival is given to the employee's Department Head or another office staff if the Department Head is unavailable. Failure to provide proper notification of an absence or late arrival may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. In addition, unexcused absences, unauthorized late arrivals or unauthorized early departures from work may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

An employee who fails to report to work and who fails to provide proper notification of the absence for two or more consecutive shifts, will be considered to have abandoned his/her position with the County.

## **ATTIRE AND GROOMING**

It is important for all employees to project a professional image while at work by being appropriately attired. Grundy County employees are expected to be neat, clean and well-groomed while on the job. Clothing must be consistent with the standards for a business environment and must be appropriate to the type of work being performed. If uniforms or specific dress requirements are provided, the employee must wear the uniform or comply with the dress requirement during all scheduled working hours.

Grundy County is confident that employees will use their best judgment regarding attire and appearance. Management reserves the right to determine proper dress standards and appropriateness for their department. Any employee who is improperly dressed will be counseled or in severe cases may be sent home to change clothes. Work time missed by a non-exempt employee will not be compensated. Continued disregard of this policy may be cause for disciplinary action, which may result in termination.

## **BACKGROUND CHECKS**

To ensure that Grundy County maintains a safe and productive work environment, it is our policy to conduct pre-employment background checks on all applicants who accept an offer of employment. Background checks may include verification of any information on the applicant's resume or application form.

All offers of employment are conditioned on receipt of a background check report that is acceptable to Grundy County. All background checks are conducted in conformity with the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and state and federal privacy and Grundy County, Illinois

antidiscrimination laws. Reports are kept confidential and are only viewed by individuals involved in the hiring process.

If information obtained in a background check would lead Grundy County to deny employment, a copy of the report may be provided to the applicant, and the applicant will have the opportunity to dispute the report's accuracy. Background checks may include a criminal record check. A felony offense conviction may affect an applicant's eligibility for employment, or may result in disciplinary action against a current employee.

Additional checks such as a driving record or credit report may be made on applicants for particular job categories if appropriate and job related.

Grundy County also reserves the right to conduct a background check for current employees to determine eligibility for promotion or reassignment in the same manner as described above, or upon suspicion of post-hire misconduct.

### **COMPUTER AND ELECTRONIC MAIL USAGE**

Computers, computer files, software, Internet service, the electronic mail system, and all other communication devices or systems furnished to employees are the exclusive property of Grundy County and are intended for business use only. The County reserves the right to monitor, review and/or trace, at any time and without notice, electronic communications (including e-mail), downloaded material, Internet usage and/or computer files stored on or transmitted via the County's computers or systems. Employees have no expectation of privacy in those files or communications.

Employees are advised that password protection does not confer any privacy right. Password protection is provided for security purposes; however, a password does not prevent or limit the County's access to files and communications (as explained above). In addition, employees are advised that deleting a communication or file does not eliminate the County's ability to retrieve and review the communication or file.

The County strives to maintain an efficient and appropriate workplace environment. Therefore, County employees are prohibited from using the County's computers, Internet, electronic mail system, and any other County communication system in any manner that is disruptive, discriminatory, unlawful, obscene, derogatory, offensive, defamatory, or otherwise inappropriate. For example, playing of games is not permitted, and the display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages, and cartoons is not allowed. Other such misuse includes, but is not limited to, ethnic slurs, racial comments, off-color jokes, or anything that may be construed as harassment or showing disrespect for others.

Employees should not use a password, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication without authorization.

Electronic mail may not be used to solicit others for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other non-business matters.

All electronic communications (including e-mail) must be performed in accordance with electronic communication methods and resources approved by the Grundy County Technology Committee. Electronic communications are subject to disclosure under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and are to be preserved, retained or destroyed in accordance with the Illinois Local Records Act, 50 ILCS 205/1, et seq.

Employees are required to notify their immediate supervisor or their department head upon learning of violations of this policy. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Our residents and other parties with whom we do business entrust the County with important information relating to them personally and/or their businesses. It is our policy that all information considered confidential will not be disclosed to external parties or to employees without a “need to know,” except as otherwise required by law. If an employee questions whether certain information is considered confidential, he/she should first check with his/her Department Head.

This policy is intended to alert employees to the need for discretion at all times and is not intended to inhibit normal business communications.

All requests by the media for information shall be coordinated through the County Administrator or County Board Chairman.

### **EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE**

The County recognizes that the skills and knowledge of its employees are critical to the success of the organization. The educational assistance program encourages personal development through formal education so that employees can maintain and improve job-related skills or enhance their ability to compete for reasonably attainable jobs within the County. Educational assistance will only be allowed if there is available budgeted funding.

Educational assistance may be available to eligible full-time non-temporary employees who have completed at least one year of service with the County. To maintain eligibility, employees must remain on the active payroll and be performing their job satisfactorily through completion of each course.

The County may reimburse 50% of the employee’s tuition and book fees for job related college courses, when the following conditions have been met:

- The course must be clearly job related and of benefit to the County as well as the individual. The County Personnel Committee shall determine, based on the department head’s recommendation, whether or not the course is job related, prior to the beginning of the semester or quarter.
- The County Personnel Committee must pre-approve the course and reimbursement.
- Funds for tuition and book fees must be provided for in the budget of the employee’s department and reimbursement approved by the County Personnel Committee.

- The course should be taken on the employee's own time and not during hours for which the employee receives salary.
- The employee must achieve an academic grade of "B" or above in the course, in order to receive reimbursement.
- A receipt for tuition and book fees must be presented to the employee's department or division head in order to document the employee's request for reimbursement. A copy of the employee's grade card must also be presented to document the academic grade received in the course.
- The employee must work for the county for an additional 12 (twelve) months after receiving educational assistance or refund the dollar amount of any approved tuition and fees prior to the disbursement of the final paycheck.

Any exception to these guidelines must be approved by the Human Resources Department, the department head and the Grundy County Personnel Committee.

While educational assistance is expected to enhance employees' performance and professional abilities, the County does not guarantee that participation in formal education will entitle the employee to automatic advancement, a different job assignment, or pay increases.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES CELL PHONES, SMARTPHONES & OTHER HANDHELD DEVICES**

This policy covers those aspects of an employee's work at the County regarding the use of cellular phones, Smartphones, or other handheld devices, whether County issued or personally owned, and the use of such electronic devices. Regardless of whether a cellular phone, or SMARTPHONES, is County or employee owned; such devices will be turned off, or set to vibrate/silent, during all meetings, conferences and other locations where incoming calls may disrupt workflow.

#### **Use of County Owned Electronic Devices**

Some job classifications require immediate access to an employee. Under such circumstances, the County may issue a cell phone, or other device, to an employee for work-related communication. The primary use of such a device is for County related communication. All personal use of such devices is expected to be kept to a minimum. If the personal use of these devices causes disruption or loss in productivity, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

Employees in possession of County equipment, such as cell phones and other electronic devices, are expected to protect the equipment from loss, damage or theft. Upon resignation or termination of employment, or at any time upon request of the County, the employee may be asked to produce the electronic device for return or inspection.

Only when there is a necessity to do so will the County consider replacing a County issued electronic device. Under no circumstances will the County replace business cell phones, or other electronic devices, to keep up with the changes in technology when there is not a need for such a replacement.

In the event an employee will be off work on a leave of absence, the County reserves the right to deactivate the device or request the device to be turned in for the duration of the employee's leave.

### **Use of Employee Owned Electronic Devices**

While at work, employees are expected to exercise the same discretion in using personal cellular phones and other electronic devices as is expected of them in using County owned devices. Excessive personal calls during the work day, regardless of the type of phone used, can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to other workers. Employees are encouraged to make personal calls on non-work time where possible and to ensure that friends and family members are made aware of the County's policy. Management reserves the right to request that the employee provide detailed cellular phone bills regarding usage reports of calls made during working hours to determine if such usage was excessive.

Use of personal cellular phones for making/taking County calls is discouraged. Under certain circumstances, an employee may submit a request to have such calls reimbursed. The County will not be liable for loss or damage to personal cellular phones, or other personal electronic devices brought into the workplace.

### **Safety and the Use of All Electronic Devices in the Workplace**

All employees are expected to follow applicable state and federal laws or regulations regarding the use of cellular phones and other electronic devices, at all times.

In compliance with state law regarding "hands-free" use of cell phones and electronic devices during the operation of any motorized vehicle, the County may issue employees hands-free equipment with County issued cellular phones and smartphones. However, employees remain responsible for the continued safe operation of motor vehicles at all times.

**EMPLOYEES WHO ARE CHARGED WITH TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS RESULTING FROM THE USE OF ANY CELLULAR PHONE OR ELECTRONIC DEVICE WHILE OPERATING A MOTOR DRIVEN VEHICLE WILL BE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL LIABILITIES THAT RESULT FROM SUCH VIOLATIONS.**

### **EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATION CATEGORIES**

All employees are designated as either nonexempt or exempt under state and federal wage and hour laws. The following is intended to help employees understand employment classifications and employees' employment status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. The right to terminate the employment-at-will relationship at any time is retained by both the employee and Grundy County.

- **Nonexempt employees** are employees whose work is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). They are NOT exempt from the law's requirements concerning minimum wage and overtime.
- **Exempt employees** are generally managers or professional, administrative or technical staff who ARE exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA. Exempt employees hold jobs that meet the standards and criteria established under the FLSA by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Grundy County has established the following categories for both nonexempt and exempt employees:

- **Full Time:** Employees who are regularly scheduled to work the County's full-time schedule of 40 hours each week or in compliance with any applicable collective bargaining agreement. Generally, these employees are eligible for the full benefits package, subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefits program.
- **Part Time:** Employees who are regularly scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week. Part-time employees are eligible for some of the benefits offered by the County subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefits program. This does not apply to employees of the Sheriff's Department.
- **Temporary:** Temporary employees are those who are hired to work for a temporary period of time. Such appointments are made when a special project requires the addition of an employee for a specific period of time, for student intern appointments, or for emergency appointments. Generally, the duration of time the employee is needed is specified at the time of hire. The schedule and duration of the temporary assignment may be altered or terminated at any time. Temporary assignments usually will not exceed six (6) calendar months. (Where the terms of a collective bargaining agreement permit a different period of temporary employment in a position, the collective bargaining agreement shall control.)

Temporary assignments can be extended beyond six (6) calendar months with approval from the Grundy County Personnel Committee. Temporary employees are only eligible to receive legally mandated benefits (such as Social Security and Workers' Compensation Insurance).

- **Independent Contractors/Contractual Staff:** Individuals or companies contracted on a limited basis for a specific purpose and paid at a predetermined rate for a specific project. Such individuals or companies are considered "self-employed" or independent contractors and are, therefore, not eligible for any fringe benefits or other indicia of employment available to employees of the County.
- **Volunteers:** Individuals who donate their time and talents in one or more services provided by the County and who are covered by County liability insurance. Volunteers shall preserve client confidentiality and shall observe the general rules of conduct applicable to regular employees.
- **Students and Interns:** Individuals who participate on a temporary basis in County activities and/or serve without compensation as a condition of fulfilling an academic requirement or training. The County will attempt to cooperate with college and high schools by allowing students to spend time in the County when it is convenient for the staff. The decision will be made by the Department Head. Students and interns shall preserve client confidentiality and shall observe the general rules of conduct applicable to employees.

### **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION**

Grundy County recognizes that its greatest asset is a pool of employees committed to the provision of high quality services to the residents of the County. To that end, the County believes that the longer an employee remains with the County the more likely that the experience they gain by

multiple years of service will enhance quality and level of service that they provide to residents. Therefore, Grundy County believes that it should annually recognize employees for their length of service. Years of service to the County will be recognized in five year increments beginning with the completion of the fifth year. In order to qualify, all service must be uninterrupted.

It is the responsibility of the Department Head to notify the Human Resources Director by September 30<sup>th</sup> of each year which of their employees have completed service to be recognized during that year.

The Grundy County Board will recognize County employees who meet the recognition criteria at the regular monthly meeting of the Grundy County Board held in December.

### **EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**

Grundy County is in the business of providing services to the communities and individuals who reside within its borders. The success of Grundy County is dependent upon the skill, dedication and productivity of its employees, and as such, employees are expected to act consistent with the County's purpose. Employee performance and achievement are enhanced in an open and supportive work environment which is characterized by mutual trust and respect. Department heads and supervisors are responsible for creating and maintaining a positive work environment in their operations by implementing the policies contained in the Grundy County Employee Handbook.

The pace of change and the need for greater flexibility necessitate that we work within a climate of openness and participation. This is achieved by establishing open channels of communications, developing personal ownership of our objectives and performance measures, and consulting over the strategic planning and management of Grundy County.

If employees have concerns about working conditions, compensation, or any other employment matter, they are to discuss these concerns openly and directly with their supervisors. Supervisors are responsible for responding to employee concerns. A Grundy County employee may pursue his or her issue using the formal complaint resolution procedure described earlier in this Handbook. Employees are encouraged to use these problem-solving procedures without fear of retaliation by their supervisor or the County. Resolution of employee problems and concerns at the earliest possible opportunity is recognized as a fundamental principle of sound employee relations.

To continue achieving our standards of service delivery, we need to maintain operational resilience while at the same time developing the ability to respond quickly and creatively to fluctuating demands. We recognize the need to critically assess our performance, plan for change, and be proactive in bringing further improvements.

### **EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION AND REFERENCE CHECKS**

As part of the hiring process, applicants will be required to complete an employment application. Resumes will not be accepted as employment applications.

Grundy County relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application and other employment-related documents. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

Skill tests, approved to the duties of position, may be administered by the Department Head.

To ensure that individuals who join Grundy County are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the policy of Grundy County to check the employment references of all applicants.

Within 10 days of employment, the Supervisor should make arrangements for a new employee to receive a County ID badge.

### **ETHICAL CONDUCT / CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The County has enacted an Ordinance in compliance with the Illinois State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (see Grundy County Code Chapter 7, Ordinance 04-013). Pursuant to the Ordinance, County employees (and certain relatives) are prohibited from soliciting or accepting any “gift” (as defined in the Ordinance) from any “prohibited source” (as defined in the Ordinance), subject to certain exceptions identified in the Ordinance. In addition, County employees are prohibited from: (1) performing “prohibited political activities” (as defined in the Ordinance) during “compensated time” (as defined in the Ordinance); (2) using County property or resources in connection with any “prohibited political activity” (as defined in the Ordinance); and/or (3) requiring any other employee to participate in any “prohibited political activity” (as defined in the Ordinance) as part of his/her duties, as a condition of employment, or during any compensated time off.

Employees are expected to be familiar with the terms of the Ordinance. If you have any questions or would like to review the complete Ordinance, please contact your Department Head or the Human Resources Department. Employees who violate the Ordinance are subject to penalties and discipline, up to and including termination.

Employees have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. This policy establishes only the framework within which the County wishes the business to operate. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general direction so that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. Employees should contact their department head or a member of the Personnel Committee for more information or questions about conflicts of interest.

Transactions with outside firms must be conducted within a framework established and controlled by the department heads and the County Board. Business dealings with outside firms should not result in unusual gains for those firms. Unusual gain refers to bribes, special fringe benefits, unusual price breaks, and other windfalls designed to ultimately benefit either the outside firm or a County employee.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for a relative as a result of the County's business dealings. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if employees have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, it is imperative that they disclose to their department head as soon as possible the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest in any situation that may give the appearance of a conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Personal gain may result not only in cases where an employee or relative has a significant ownership in a firm with which the County does business, but also when an employee or relative receives any bribe, substantial gift, or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealing involving the County. Failure to comply with the above could result in disciplinary action, including discharge.

### **HIRING AND TERMINATION AUTHORITY**

The necessary authority for hiring and termination of all County employees is vested solely in the duly elected officers of the County Board or their designees, specifically the Grundy County Personnel Committee, who are appointed by and who remain accountable to the full membership of the Grundy County Board. The Department Heads may request the Human Resources Department and Grundy County Personnel Committee to assist in selection and/or termination decisions.

### **INTRODUCTORY PERIOD**

In order to give the County an opportunity to review the work and qualifications of new employees, and to give new employees time to become familiar with their new positions and evaluate the County, there is an introductory period of one year for all new employees. Although evaluation of employees' job performance is a continuous, on-going process throughout the introductory period, your supervisor typically will formally evaluate you within three months after hire and your Department Head will meet with you to evaluate your performance at the end of the introductory period. Successful completion of the introductory period is not a promise or guarantee of continued employment and does not alter the at-will employment relationship.

### **JOB POSTING / INTERNAL TRANSFERS AND PROMOTIONS**

Grundy County provides employees an opportunity to indicate their interest in open positions. The job-posting program gives current Grundy County employees a means to apply for lateral and promotional positions before recruiting activities begin outside the organization. Department heads with open positions should notify the Human Resource Director of openings in their departments.

Normally, notices of all job openings are posted, although the County reserves the right not to post a particular opening. Job openings will be posted on employee bulletin boards at the Grundy County, Illinois

Administration Center and at the Courthouse and normally remain open for three (3) working days. After the three (3) working days, the department head may fill the open position or may begin recruiting activities outside the organization.

Each job posting notice will include the dates of the posting period, job title, department, location, salary range, job summary, essential duties, and qualifications (required skills and abilities).

Employees who have been suspended or have a written warning on file for less than a year, are not eligible to apply for posted jobs. The County encourages employees to discuss their developmental and career plans with their supervisors before applying for posted positions.

Employees interested in applying for a posted position should follow the instructions on the posting to apply. After the three (3) working day posting period, the department head will review all internal applications received, and may conduct interviews. If the department head determines that no internal candidate is satisfactory, the department head will begin recruiting activities outside of the Grundy County organization. The Human Resource Department will provide assistance with interviewing, scheduling, reference checking, or other recruiting activities.

This procedure does not preclude the County from recruiting from the outside when and if it is determined appropriate.

Grundy County offers the opportunity to be promoted or transferred, on the basis of need and the employee's work-related performance, job-related qualifications and County service.

For purposes of this policy and practice, a promotional opportunity is defined as a movement to a position in a higher classification. A lateral transfer is defined as a move from one position to another position which is not of a higher classification. Transfers may be initiated by the County to adjust to changes in workforce requirements, and other circumstances as determined by the County. Additionally, an employee may request a transfer in order to satisfy a personal preference. Such a transfer may also be suggested by the employee's supervisor when it is in the best interests of the County.

#### **Employee-Initiated Transfers and Promotions**

Employees may apply for posted internal positions (both lateral transfers and promotions) by applications through the job-posting program. Employees are eligible to pursue job opportunities for positions in which they are qualified. Employees are encouraged to contact their department head to discuss their qualifications and career interests prior to applying for an internal opening.

#### **County-Initiated Placements**

Placements may be initiated by the County to adjust to changes in workforce requirements, to accommodate an employee's disability or for other business reasons.

### **LAYOFF AND RECALL**

In some circumstances, it may become necessary to use a layoff procedure to adjust the work force. The term layoff is not used when employees are separated from the County because of failure to

perform their duties satisfactorily. The County may lay off an employee due to shortage of funds to work, the abolition of the position, lack of work, or other material changes in the duties of the position, or for related reasons which are outside the employee's control and which do not reflect discredit upon the service of the employee. The duties performed by any employee laid off may be reassigned to other employees already working. In identifying employees to be laid off, the County will consider various factors, which may include, but are not limited to, length of employment, work performance, and/or ability to satisfactorily perform job duties that are or may be assigned.

Qualified employees on layoff may be recalled at the discretion of the County and in any order determined by the County. Recall of any employees is contingent upon their ability to satisfactorily perform the work available. In addition, recall is contingent upon the satisfactory results of any required physical examination. Employees affected by a layoff are placed on a recall list for a maximum period of one calendar year. Employees not recalled within one year are removed from the list. If an employee is recalled after an absence of three months or more, the seniority or start date is adjusted to account for the time the employee was absent. If the employee is recalled within three months, the starting date is not adjusted.

Employees receiving a recall offer will be notified by registered mail, return receipt requested. Letters will be sent to the last known address on record in the employment files. Letters should be received by the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family. Such notification will require a reply by telephone or electronic communication within three (3) days of receipt. Failure to reply within the prescribed time will result in withdrawal of the recall offer.

Where the terms of a collective bargaining agreement conflict with this section, the terms of the collective bargaining agreement shall control (as to the relevant employees in the applicable collective bargaining unit).

### **MEDICAL EVALUATIONS**

It is the intent of Grundy County to provide a safe working environment for all employees. Because of the nature of some of the County's operations and processes, pre-employment medical examinations may be required to determine physical fitness to perform the essential functions of the job. Positions designated by the Grundy County Personnel Committee as requiring a physical examination include, but are not limited to, the following departments: building maintenance, animal control, EMA and county highway.

After an offer has been made to an applicant entering a designated position, a medical examination is to be performed by a health professional of the County's choice. Employment is contingent upon satisfactory completion of the exam. Such examinations will be scheduled at reasonable times and intervals and performed at the expense of Grundy County.

Current employees may be required to take medical examinations to determine fitness for duty, as permitted by and in accordance with applicable State and Federal law. Such examinations will be scheduled as warranted and performed at the expense of Grundy County.

Information on an employee's medical condition or history will be kept separate from other employee information and maintained confidentially. Access to this information will be limited to those who have a legitimate need to know.

### **NEPOTISM, EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Grundy County wants to ensure that County practices do not create situations such as conflict of interest or favoritism. This extends to practices that involve employee hiring, promotion and transfer. Close relatives, partners, those in a dating relationship or members of the same household are not permitted to be in positions that have a reporting responsibility to each other. Close relatives are defined as a spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece, or nephew, or any such relative who is "step" or "in-law".

If employees begin a dating relationship or become relatives, partners or members of the same household and if one party is in a supervisory position, that person is required to inform the Department Head of the relationship. If the employee is a Department Head they must report the relationship to Human Resources and the County Administrator.

Grundy County reserves the right to apply this policy in the case of actual or potential problems because of the relationship between employees, even if there is no direct-reporting relationship or authority involved. This can include reassignment or, if necessary, termination of employment for one or both of the individuals involved.

### **OFFICE CLOSURE**

Every reasonable effort will be made to keep the Courthouse and other County operated offices open during normal work days and the staff shall make every practical effort to report to work. Should it be necessary to officially close the Courthouse and other County operated offices, the decision to suspend operations will be made by the Chairperson of the Grundy County Board and/or the Sheriff. Employees will immediately be notified of the closing either in person or by telephone.

When County facilities have to be closed prior to 8:00 a.m. because of weather emergencies or other man-made or natural disasters, employees that are scheduled to work that day will not report to work and will be compensated for a normal work day. In the event of hazardous weather or other disaster conditions that occur during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., employees that are at work that day will be paid from the time the office closes until the end of their normal work day.

In the event of extreme weather conditions occurring locally, which make it impossible for the employee to report for work when their Department is in operation, the employee may take a paid vacation day, personal day, compensatory time, deferred time, or an unpaid day.

### **OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

Employees are permitted to engage in outside work or to hold other jobs, subject to certain restrictions as outlined below.

Activities and conduct away from the job must not compete with, conflict with or compromise the County interests or adversely affect job performance and the ability to fulfill all job responsibilities of County employment. Employees are prohibited from performing any services for residents and/or businesses on non-working time that are normally performed by Grundy County. This prohibition also extends to the unauthorized use of any County tools or equipment and the unauthorized use or application of any confidential information. In addition, employees are not to solicit or conduct any outside business during County-paid working time.

Employees are cautioned to carefully consider the demands that additional work activity will create before accepting outside employment. Outside employment will not be considered an excuse for poor job performance, absenteeism, tardiness, leaving early, refusal to travel or refusal to work overtime or different hours. If Grundy County determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment.

Employees who have accepted outside employment may not use paid sick leave to work on the outside job. Fraudulent use of sick leave will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS**

At a minimum all employees will receive a yearly performance review to be administered by their direct supervisor and communicated to the employee within the month of May. The County Administrator will evaluate department heads based on performance with input provide by their oversight committee. Evaluation forms shall be signed by both the supervisor and employee and returned to Human Resources by May 31<sup>st</sup> for record keeping.

In general, a new employee will be formally evaluated by his/her supervisor within 3 months after the date of hire. Additionally, each employee who has been transferred or promoted to a new position will be formally evaluated by his/her supervisor within 3 months after the date of the transfer or promotion.

The purposes of performance appraisal are to provide supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches to meeting goals.

The performance appraisal process is a continuous one, not an activity restricted to the production of a periodic performance appraisal form. Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis and summarize progress more formally and in writing in the annual performance appraisal.

### **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, the County expects employees to adhere to disciplinary rules and proper standards of conduct at all times. These rules and standards are necessary to protect the health and safety of all employees, to maintain uninterrupted operation, and to protect the County's property and goodwill.

It is not possible to list all forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are examples of infractions that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of County property.
- Falsification of timekeeping records.
- Misrepresentation or withholding information on the employment application or on any other records.
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment.
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace.
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace.
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned property.
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct.
- Violation of safety or health rules.
- Smoking in prohibited areas.
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment.
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace.
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness, or any absence without notice.
- Unauthorized absence from the work area during the workday.
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, computers or other employer-owned equipment.
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information.
- Unauthorized purchases.
- Violation of personnel policies.
- Conviction of a felony if job-related.
- Sleeping or loafing on the job.
- Obstruction of the work of fellow employees.
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct.
- Violation of any work rule or regulation set by an individual Department Head.
- Use of Camera Cell Phones not job related
- Failure to maintain appropriate working relationships with others in the work environment.
- Gambling or soliciting on County property.

This list is illustrative and not exhaustive. The County reserves the right to impose discipline, up to and including discharge, for any inappropriate behavior or misconduct.

### **PERSONNEL DATA CHANGES**

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly access the portal in order to notify the County Treasurer and Human Resources of personnel changes. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency, and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times. If any personnel data has changed, an employee should log onto the employee portal in order to notify the County Treasurer and Human Resources Department.

## **PERSONNEL FILES**

Employee files are maintained by the County and are considered confidential to the extent permitted by law. Managers and supervisors may only have access to personnel file information on a need-to-know basis.

A manager or supervisor considering the hire of a former employee or transfer of a current employee may be granted access to the file, or limited parts of it, in accordance with antidiscrimination laws.

An employee's request to review his/her personnel file will generally be granted within seven (7) working days of the request. Personnel files are to be reviewed in the County office where they are maintained and may not be taken outside the department.

Representatives of government or law enforcement agencies, in the course of their duties, may be allowed access to file information. Various personnel records may be subject to inspection and copying under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

## **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE**

Every employee has the duty and the responsibility to be aware of and abide by existing rules and policies. Each employee also has the responsibility to perform his/her duties to the best of his/her ability and to the standards as set forth in his/her job description or as otherwise established.

Grundy County imposes discipline to address issues such as poor work performance or misconduct. Our progressive discipline policy is designed to provide a corrective action process to improve and prevent a recurrence of undesirable behavior and/or performance issues. Our discipline policy has been designed consistent with our organizational values, HR best practices and employment laws.

Listed below are various disciplinary interventions that may be imposed. Grundy County reserves the right to determine the appropriate intervention depending on the facts of each situation and the nature of the offense. Some of the factors that will be considered are whether the offense is repeated despite coaching, counseling and/or training; the employee's work record; and/or the impact the conduct and performance issues have on our organization.

Disciplinary interventions include but are not limited to:

- **Verbal warning:** A supervisor verbally counsels an employee about an issue of concern, and a written record of the discussion is placed in the employee's file for future reference.
- **Written warning:** Written warnings are used for behavior or violations that a supervisor considers serious or in situations when a verbal warning has not helped change unacceptable behavior. Written warnings are placed in an employee's personnel file. Employees should recognize the grave nature of the written warning.
- **Final Warning / Performance improvement plan:** When an employee has been involved in a disciplinary situation that has not been readily resolved or when he/she has demonstrated an inability to perform assigned work responsibilities appropriately, the employee may be given a final warning or placed on a performance improvement plan

(PIP). PIP status will last for a predetermined amount of time not to exceed 90 days. Within this time period, the employee must demonstrate a willingness and ability to meet and maintain the conduct and/or work requirements as specified by the supervisor and the organization. At the end of the performance improvement period, the performance improvement plan may be closed or, if established goals are not met, dismissal may occur.

- **Suspension:** Suspension details are based on management discretion.
- **Termination:** When a situation is deemed to be very serious, previous warnings have not resulted in a change in unacceptable behavior/performance, or performance does not meet acceptable standards as determined by the County, an employee's employment may be terminated by the County.

Grundy County reserves the right to determine the appropriate level of discipline for any inappropriate conduct, including oral and written warnings, suspension with or without pay, demotion and termination.

### **REHIRE**

Former employees who left Grundy County in good standing and were classified as eligible for rehire may be considered for reemployment. An application must be submitted, and the applicant must meet all minimum qualifications and requirements of the position, including any qualifying exam, when required.

Rehired employees begin benefits just as any other new employee. Previous tenure will not be considered in calculating longevity, leave accruals or any other benefits.

An applicant or employee who is terminated for violating policy or who resigned in lieu of termination from employment due to a policy violation will be ineligible for rehire. In addition, if an employee does not work through the entire two-week minimum notice period they may be ineligible for rehire.

### **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

In general, employees in some positions may be required to be residents of Grundy County at the time of hire and throughout their employment with the County. However, the Grundy County Personnel Committee may approve exceptions to this requirement, in its discretion, on a case-by-case basis.

### **RETURN OF COUNTY PROPERTY AND TERMINATION PROVISIONS**

The separating employee must return all County property at the time of separation, including uniforms, cell phones, keys, PCs and identification cards.

The separating employee shall contact the Department Head as soon as notice is given to schedule an exit interview with the Human Resources Department. The interview will be on the employee's last day of work or another day, as mutually agreed on.

Unused accrued vacation leave will be paid in the last paycheck.

Health insurance terminates the last day of the last month of employment, unless an employee requests immediate termination of benefits. Information for Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) continued health coverage will be provided. Employees will be required to pay their share of the dependent health and dental premiums through the end of the month.

### **RIGHT TO MONITOR**

All County-supplied technology and County-related work records belong to the County and not to the employee. Grundy County routinely monitors use of County-supplied technology. Inappropriate or illegal use or communications may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### **SEPARATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

Separation of employment within an organization can occur for several different reasons.

- **Resignation:** Although we hope your employment with us will be a mutually rewarding experience, we understand that varying circumstances cause employees to voluntarily resign employment. Resigning employees are encouraged to provide as much notice as possible, with a minimum of two weeks' notice required, preferably in writing, to facilitate a smooth transition out of the organization. Once an employee has submitted a notice of resignation from their employment with the County, they may be denied use of accrued but unused vacation, personal or sick time. The County reserves the right to provide an employee with two weeks' pay in lieu of notice in situations where job or business needs warrant such action. If an employee provides less notice than requested, the employer may deem the individual to be ineligible for rehire depending on the circumstances regarding the notice given.
- **Retirement:** Employees who wish to retire are required to notify their Department Head in writing at least one (1) month before the planned retirement date.
- **Job abandonment:** Employees who fail to report to work or contact their supervisor for two or more consecutive shifts shall be considered to have abandoned the job without notice, effective at the end of their normal shift. Employees who are separated due to job abandonment are ineligible for rehire.
- **Termination:** Employees of Grundy County are employed on an at-will basis, and the County retains the right to terminate an employee at any time.
- **Death:** Separation will be effective as of the date of death. In the case of an employee death, all compensation due shall be paid to the estate of the employee.
- **Layoff** - involuntary employment termination initiated by the County for non-disciplinary reasons. The County may lay off an employee due to shortage of funds to work, the abolition of the position, lack of work, or other material changes in the duties of the position, or for related reasons which are outside the employee's control and which do not reflect discredit upon the service of the employee. The duties performed by any employee laid off may be reassigned to other employees already working. For benefit purposes, an employee's length of service will be reduced by the length of time the employee was laid off, unless the layoff period was less than 3 months. Vacation time earned but not taken will be paid according to current policy, to the laid-off employee. An opportunity to

continue coverage under Grundy County's employee benefit plan will be given in accordance with COBRA for covered individuals. The "Layoff and Recall" policy in this manual contains more information.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA—ACCEPTABLE USE**

Below are guidelines for social media use.

- Maintain the confidentiality of County trade secrets and private or confidential information. Trade secrets may include information regarding the development of systems, processes, products, know-how and technology. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures or other internal business-related confidential communications.
- Do not create a link from your blog, website or other social networking site to a County website without identifying yourself as a County employee.
- Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for the County. If the County is a subject of the content you are creating, be clear and open about the fact that you are an employee and make it clear that your views do not represent those of the County or people working on behalf of the County. If you do publish a blog or post online related to the work you do or subjects employed with the County, make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of the County. It is best to include a disclaimer such as “The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the County.”

### **SOLICITATIONS, DISTRIBUTIONS AND POSTING OF MATERIALS**

Grundy County restricts the solicitation, distribution and posting of materials in the workplace as follows:

- Nonemployees may not solicit employees or distribute literature in the workplace.
- Employees may only admit non-employees to work areas with management approval or as part of a county-sponsored program. These visits should not disrupt workflow. An employee must account for the nonemployee at all times.
- Employees may not solicit other employees during work times, except in connection with a county-approved or sponsored event.
- Employees may not distribute literature of any kind during work times or in any work area at any time, except in connection with a county-sponsored event.
- The posting of materials in work areas or electronic announcements may be permitted with approval from a Department Head.

Violations of this policy should be reported to your Department Head.

### **COUNTY OWNED OR LEASED VEHICLE POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to establish administrative procedures to be used by employees and authorized volunteers in the use of County owned or leased vehicles. This policy ensures that public funds are used properly in the use of vehicles. The County requires safe operation and use of any motor vehicle owned or leased. All drivers are required to hold a valid drivers' license within the proper classification and shall follow all County rules, policies and procedures as well as all federal, state, and local laws when driving on County business. Internal Revenue Service

(IRS) Fringe Benefit rules may apply in certain cases for employees issued a County owned or leased vehicle. This policy incorporates IRS Fringe Benefit Rules found in both the “Taxable Fringe Benefit Guide for Federal, State, and Local Governments” and Publication 15-B “Employer’s Tax Guide to Fringe Benefits”. Both publications can be found at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and are periodically updated by the IRS. According to the IRS, if the County provides a vehicle that is used by an employee exclusively for business purposes and substantiation requirements are met, there are no tax consequences or reporting required. If an employee is allowed to take a vehicle home and commuting mileage occurs, the fringe benefit must be taxed. This policy addresses all circumstances.

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to employees and authorized volunteers that regularly or occasionally drive a County owned or leased vehicle.

**STATEMENT OF POLICY:** The operation of County owned or leased vehicles is indispensable in conducting County business. The manner in which each vehicle is handled directly affects the performance of each County department. Vehicular collisions are potentially the most costly losses that the County can incur when the summation of property damage, bodily injury, fatalities, and liability suits are considered. The cost can mount to proportions that will adversely affect every department in its efforts to accomplish its mission and maintain good public relations. Proper procedures must be followed for the County to comply with Internal Revenue Service Taxable Fringe Benefit rules when issuing a vehicle to County employees.

**Definition of Law Enforcement Officer:** A law enforcement officer is a person employed on a full-time basis by a unit of government. An officer is responsible for the prevention and/or investigation of crime involving injury or death to persons or property, who is authorized by law to carry firearms, execute search warrants, and make arrests.

**Definition of On-Call/Emergency Assignment:** Employees are considered on-call or emergency assignment if they are required to perform their duties beyond normal working hours in order to ensure a quick response to emergency or after-hours calls for service.

**Definition of County Business:** County business means activities that an employee or volunteer is assigned, required, or directed to perform including education, conferences or training activities.

An activity does not become County business merely because a department permits an employee to do it, even if the County pays the employee’s expenses. The County Administrator or Department Head must require the employee to attend the education or training activity for the employee to be eligible to use a County owned or leased vehicle.

**Definition of Direct Travel:** Direct travel means the shortest, most reasonable, or ordinary route to the destination required to perform County business. Direct travel includes travel to sites near the direct route of destination for eating, lodging, or other personal needs that must be met when performing County business.

**Definition of Personal Use: Personal use of County vehicles is strictly prohibited, other than commuting to and from work, and de minimis usage while performing official business.** Personal use is taxable unless it is considered a qualified non-personal use.

**Definition of Prohibited Activities:** Prohibited activities are activities in direct violation of State of Illinois laws or written County policies.

Elected Officials and Department Heads are responsible for annually requiring employees and volunteers to complete the County Owned Vehicle Use Authorization form for employees and volunteers under their direction and control.

**The following criteria shall be followed to utilize County owned vehicles:**

- 1) All County vehicles, including those of Elected Officials and their employees, are required to utilize the Grundy County Highway Garage or City of Morris fuel pumps for fueling.
- 2) An employee utilizing a take-home vehicle must have a home residence within 25 miles of their home department. Any employee living over the 25 miles limit must have this exception approved by both the Elected Official/ Department Head and the County Administrator. Miles are determined by using Google mapping.
- 3) All employees are required to submit a County Owned Vehicle Use Authorization Form (Exhibit A) annually to utilize a County owned vehicle on a regular basis. Personal use of County Vehicles is strictly prohibited, other than commuting to and from work and de minimis usage while performing official business.

**Charge for Personal Use of Vehicles:** Authorized use of County owned vehicles by employees or volunteers is for bona-fide County business purposes and only when in the best interest of conducting County business. Authorizations for the use of County owned or leased vehicles are required annually or more frequently, if necessary, (i.e., seasonal assignment) by the County Administrator or elected official as part of the annual budget process or as needed.

Any violation of this section may subject the employee to disciplinary action under existing personnel disciplinary procedure. As defined by the current provisions and guidelines of the IRS, employees provided with County vehicles for authorized commuting purposes due to their job positions may incur additional taxable income, calculated by using the IRS Commuting Rules. Other fringe benefit valuation methods may apply on a limited basis, which will be determined and implemented by County Administration and the County Treasurer.

For commuting miles, employees are required to submit a sworn detailed mileage report to their respective departmental payroll administration each payroll period by using the procedures established by County Administration for payroll reporting.

**IRS Safe Harbor Substantiation Rule:** The safe harbor rule relieves employees of the requirement to keep detailed records in two (2) situations.

Employees using County owned or leased vehicles are **not** required to keep detailed records of vehicle use if all of the tests below are met:

- a) For vehicles **not** used for personal purposes:

- The vehicle is owned or leased by the employer and is provided to the employee for use in the employer's business.
- When not in use, the vehicle is kept on the employer's premises.
- The employer has a written policy prohibiting personal use, except for de minimis use (such as driving to lunch while out of office on business or stopping at a store located on the way home)
- The employer reasonably believes the vehicle is not used for any personal use (other than de-minimis).

b) For vehicles **not** used for personal purposes other than commuting:

- The vehicle is owned or leased by the employer and is provided for use in the employer's business.
- For bona fide non-compensatory reasons, the employer requires the employee to commute to and/or from work in the vehicle.
- The employer has established a written policy prohibiting the use other than commuting and de minimis use.
- Where the employee is not a control employee, and the employer reasonably believes that, except for commuting and de minimis use no individual uses the vehicle for personal purposes.
- The employer accounts for the commuting use by including the commuting value in the employee's wages.

All Elected Officials and Department Heads, and employees who are issued a County owned vehicle are subject to the provisions of this tax law and shall be required to adhere to all administrative procedures. The County Treasurer shall establish the necessary administrative procedures to ensure countywide compliance with applicable tax law.

Eligible tax exceptions for County government are:

1) Clearly marked police vehicle if:

- a. The employee must always be on call.
- b. The employee must be required by the employer to use the vehicle for commuting.
- c. The employer must prohibit personal use (other than for commuting) for travel outside of the officer's jurisdiction.
- d. It is readily apparent, by words or painted insignia, that the vehicle is a public safety vehicle. A marking on a license plate is not a clear marking for this purpose.

2) Unmarked law enforcement vehicles are qualified non-personal use vehicles only if the following apply:

- a. The employer must officially authorize personal use.
- b. Personal use must be incidental to use for law enforcement purposes; i.e., no vacation or recreational use.
- c. The employer must be a governmental unit responsible for preventing or investigating crime or death

- 3) The vehicle must be used by a full-time law enforcement officer
  
- 4) Specialized utility repair trucks that qualify as a qualified non-personal use vehicle, which are designed to carry tools, equipment, etc.; has a permanent interior construction, including shelves and racks; and the County requires the employee to commute for emergency call-outs to restore or maintain utility services (i.e., gas, water, sewer).
  
- 5) Vans and pickup trucks do not qualify for the exemption unless specifically modified to allow minimal personal use, and must be designed to carry cargo with a loaded gross vehicle weight over 14,000 pounds.
  - a. Vans must have a seat for the driver only (or the driver and one other person) and either of the following items:
    - i. Permanent shelving that fills most of the cargo area; or
    - ii. Open cargo area that always carries materials or equipment used in the department's business function.
  - b. Pickup trucks must either be equipped with at least one for the following items:
    - i. A hydraulic lift gate;
    - ii. Permanent tanks or drums; or
    - iii. Permanent sideboards or panels that raise the sides of the truck bed.
  
- 6) A passenger bus with a capacity of at least 20 passengers used for its specific purpose.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR DRIVING COUNTY OWNED OR LEASED VEHICLE**

County employees and volunteers must be mindful that while driving they are representatives of the County. Their conduct in adhering to the rules of safety and courtesy on the road is a reflection on the entire County. Employees and volunteers are responsible for the care and conservation of County owned or leased vehicles and shall report accidents, breakdowns, and/or malfunctions promptly so that necessary repairs can be made.

- 1) All employees and volunteers are required to submit a County Owned Vehicle Use Authorization Form (Exhibit A) every January 31st to utilize a County owned vehicle on a regular or occasional basis.
- 2) Elected Officials and Department Heads must annually submit to Human Resources every January 31st a County Owned Vehicle Use Authorization (Exhibit A) for each employee and volunteer that uses County vehicles, or intends to.
- 3) All County employees must record their commuter value as payroll code as determined by the County Treasurer in the County's timekeeping system during each bi-weekly or monthly payroll period in order to have the proper fringe benefit value added to their payroll information. It is the responsibility of the department head to ensure the time card documenting commuter value is approved by employee and manager. If employee is unable to approve their time in the timekeeping system the department is responsible for maintaining all paper documentation showing approval of commuter miles for seven (7) years.

- 4) The County's excess vehicle liability insurance company requires employees and volunteers who regularly or occasionally drive a County owned or leased vehicle to submit the following information to Human Resources by January 31st.
- 5) Risk Management requests the required updated information be submitted to Human Resources each January 31st:
  - Employee/volunteer name
  - Driver's license number and state of issuance
  - Date of birth
  - Date of hire
  - Driver's license issue date and expiration date
  - Is a CDL license required as a condition of employment
  - Photocopy of employee's or volunteer's driver's license (after the original photocopy, photocopy only required for license renewed during the past year)
  - Photocopy of employees/volunteer proof of insurance coverage minimums as required by the State of Illinois when employee/volunteer driving their personally owned vehicle on county business

All Grundy County employees intending to operate County vehicles, or use personal vehicles on County business, must hold a valid driver's license. If an employee is using a personal vehicle for business purposes, they must insure their personal vehicle. On January 31<sup>st</sup> of each year all Department heads must submit a list of those employees who use County vehicles or personal vehicles for county business. Individuals will be required to submit a copy of proof of automobile insurance for personal vehicle use. Those that operate County vehicles or operate their personal vehicle for company business will be subjected to an audit of their driver's license record by the sheriff department. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Operating a County owned or leased vehicle is prohibited without possessing a valid driver's license within the proper classification and carrying such license on driver's person. Any employee or volunteer whose operator license is revoked, suspended, or restricted in any way by the issuing state shall notify their supervisor immediately. If an employee or volunteer fails to notify his/her department of a suspension, revocation, or restrictions in writing, he/she shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS shall:**

- 1) Ensure that independent contractors do not operate County vehicles.
- 2) Submit County Owned Vehicle Use Authorization Form (Exhibit A) by January 31st of every year to HR and as circumstances change or as new drivers are added.
- 3) Establish firm internal vehicle use requirements, policy, and procedure for employees/volunteer to adhere to including frequent internal compliance checks.
- 4) Supervise periodic inspection of vehicles for signs of abuse, unreported damage, and cleanliness.

- 5) Review each vehicle collision and/or reported unsafe driving report(s) with the employee/volunteer and his/her supervisor to emphasize management's commitment to safe driving practices.
- 6) Establish a firm procedure regarding disciplinary actions that will be taken against an employee who show a repeated disregard for good driving practices. Such procedures shall be applied consistently.
- 7) Support the County's defensive driver program to promote safe driving.
- 8) Ensure their employees and volunteers follow County, State, and Federal safety rules and regulations to avoid vehicle accident or incidents.
- 9) Comply with regulations listed for Employees/Volunteers.

**EMPLOYEES/VOLUNTEERS driving County owned or personal vehicles on County business shall:**

- 1) Follow defensive driving practices that are established for the protection of themselves, their fellow employees and volunteers, and the citizens of the County and the State of Illinois.
- 2) Not drive when under the influence of alcohol or drugs as identified by State of Illinois law. Any such use shall be considered a violation of work rules and may be the grounds for disciplinary action up to and including discharge.
- 3) Not transport alcoholic beverages (whether opened or unopened), narcotics, firearms or other explosive materials unless designed as part of the employee's job responsibilities.
- 4) Notify Elected Official or Department Head should their drivers' license be revoked, suspended, or restricted in any way by the issuing state.
- 5) Be personally responsible for the cost of all traffic citations and parking tickets.
- 6) Be responsible for enforcing seat belt usage by all occupants at all times.
- 7) Not park in front of or in parking areas associated with taverns or liquor stores unless on official County business. Restaurants serving liquor are not included in this prohibition.
- 8) Not use vehicles for vacations, transporting family members, car-pooling, or for personal gain, such as delivering goods or services, or operating private pools where the riders pay the driver.
- 9) Not affix signs, stickers, antennas, trailer hitches, bike racks, ski racks, etc. to County owned or leased vehicles unless approved by Department Head Towing or hauling loads for personal reasons are not permitted.
- 10) Not jump-start other vehicles except in emergencies, and then only to start another County owned or leased vehicle.
- 11) Upon leaving the vehicle unattended, remove the keys, close all windows, and lock all doors, except when performing emergency duties of the vehicle or in a County owned secured garage.
- 12) Not park overnight on the street when possible and ensure the vehicle is secured.
- 13) Not smoke in County owned or leased vehicles. State law prohibits smoking in any government owned or leased vehicle.
- 14) Not operate vehicle outside the County unless on official county business as assigned and approved.
- 15) No driver may transport non-employees in a County owned or leased vehicle unless on bona-fide County business. Bona-fide County business does not include providing transportation to members of the public to attend educational, social or training programs.

- 16) Operate County owned or leased vehicle in a manner that ensures maximum fuel savings including compliance with the following fuel saving tips:
  - a. Eliminate unnecessary trips
  - b. Plan all travel routes in advance
  - c. Remove excess weight in vehicle
  - d. Operate vehicle at the speed limit
  - e. Avoid unnecessary idling of vehicle
  - f. Develop and maintain proper driving habits, i.e., do not over accelerate, avoid constant braking, and maintain properly inflated tires
  - g. Before returning to work place, fill fuel tank if less than ¼ tank remains
- 17) Immediately report all accidents, theft, and/or damage to County vehicles to the County Board Administrative Assistant.
- 18) Contact local law enforcement to report all accidents and/or damage to County vehicles
- 19) Assume responsibility for resolution, which may include payment, of any traffic citation received while operating a County vehicle.

### **REPORTING VEHICLE ACCIDENT OR INCIDENT**

All County owned or leased vehicles are required to have a current insurance card in the glove compartment at all times. Replacement insurance cards will be annually emailed to each Department Head Employees and volunteers are required to report immediately all vehicle accidents or vehicle incidents to their Department Head and the County Board Administrative Assistant. In the event of an injury, Human Resources should be contacted as well.

### **PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING VEHICLE ACCIDENT OR INCIDENT**

- 1) Stop Immediately and take steps to prevent another accident at the scene.
- 2) Life Safety Takes Priority. Obtain emergency medical care at the closest medical facility.
  - a. In the event of personal injury, workers' compensation forms are to be completed and submitted as required by the Workers' Compensation Policy.
  - b. Workers' compensations forms must be filed timely to obtain medical care.
- 3) Contact local law enforcement. All property damage and/or personal injury accident or incident shall be investigated by law enforcement. A police report is required regardless of severity of accident or incident. If the local police jurisdiction refuses to take a report, the driver must document that refusal in their written report.
  - a. Obtain as much information about the accident as possible, (i.e., name and addresses of witnesses, license number of vehicles involved, etc.)
  - b. Do not discuss the accident or give statement to anyone at the scene other than law enforcement.
  - c. If possible, take photos of the damaged vehicle/property and submit them with the incident report. Do not take video of the accident scene as this is against the law.
- 4) Do not discuss fault, liability, or responsibility for the accident.
- 5) Do not agree to pay for anything or say that the County will take care of the cost or damage
- 6) Do not sign any papers.
- 7) Timely reporting of all vehicle accidents or incidents is mandatory.

8) Submit all vehicle accident or incident reports to the County Board Administrative Assistant within 24 hours of occurrence. Should an accident or incident occur outside of regular business hours, report the accident on the next business day.

9) A current Illinois Insurance Identification Card **MUST** be kept in the glovebox of every County vehicle.

### **USE OF HAND-HELD ELECTRONIC DEVICES WHILE DRIVING**

As of January 1, 2014, Illinois banned the use of all hand-held devices while driving. Only hands-free technology such as speakerphones, Bluetooth and headsets are permitted. In addition: (1) all cell phone use is prohibited while driving in a school zone; (2) all cell phone use is prohibited while driving in a highway construction zone, and (3) all cell phone use is prohibited if you are a novice driver under the age of 21. In addition to the ban on hand held devices, Illinois prohibits texting while driving. Illinois' anti-texting law (625 ILCS 5/12-610.2) states that "A person may not operate a motor vehicle on a roadway while using an electronic communication device to compose, send, or read an electronic message."

If you must make a work-related call while driving, you shall wait until you can pull over and stop in a safe and legal location before placing your call. If you receive a work-related call while driving, you must let the call go to voice mail

The only exceptions to the above policy are to:

1) Place a 911 emergency call for situations such as a fire, traffic, accident, road hazard, weather, or medical emergency when it is not safe or practical to do so. In such cases, the communications should be as short as reasonably necessary to communicate the nature of the emergency, location, etc.

2) Law enforcement officer or operator of an emergency vehicle while performing his or her official duties  
(as identified in 625 ILCS 5/12-610.2)

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Immediate and positive corrective action is required for violations of policy directly associated with saving lives, preventing injuries, or eliminating expensive lawsuits. Disciplinary action shall be taken when any person causes injury to himself or others, or destroys or damages equipment by willfully violating work rules, disregarding traffic regulations or demonstrating an attitude of indifference or defiance.

The improper, careless, negligent, destructive, unauthorized or unsafe use or operation of equipment or vehicles, as well as excessive or avoidable traffic and parking violations, can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Elected Officials and Department Heads shall have latitude in determining the extent of disciplinary action to be taken within their departments; however, a continuation of this latitude is dependent upon the adequacy of action taken. A County employee or volunteer involved in a

preventable collision or demonstrating questionable driving capabilities shall be required to retake a Defensive Driving Course, or be reassigned to non-driving tasks.

In the course of conducting County business, all county owned vehicles are to be operated by County employees or volunteers only. No unauthorized persons may operate County owned vehicles. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Any employee or volunteer who deliberately and/or willfully violates and/or circumvents the County Owned or Leased Vehicle Use Policy shall be subject to loss of County vehicle privileges and be subject to other applicable disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

## **COMPENSATION**

### **ADMINISTRATION AND REVIEW OF SALARY AND WAGES**

The Grundy County pay plan is intended to provide fair compensation for positions in the County within its affordability to do so. In establishing the pay plan, the County takes into consideration the general rates of pay for similar employment in private establishments and other public jurisdictions in the area as well as the financial condition of the County. From time to time, the County may make comparative studies of factors affecting the pay plan to determine whether its pay objectives are being met.

New employees or current employees entering a new classification are generally paid at the entrance rate for that position.

While the performance of each employee is under constant review, overall performance and pay level shall be appraised at least once during each 12-month period. Pay rate advancements may or may not be implemented, in the County's discretion. When a pay rate advancement is implemented, the employee is generally advanced to the new pay rate within their classification on December 1st, provided his or her performance level is at a satisfactory level. Pay rate advancements, as well as any exceptions, must be recommended by the appropriate department head and must be approved by the Grundy County Personnel Committee and have appropriate funding within the Fiscal Budget. Pay rates are subject to change, as determined by the County. A new employee hired 90 days before any effective wage increases will not be eligible for that wage increase.

### **BUSINESS TRAVEL EXPENSES**

The County shall reimburse all Elected Officials, Appointed Officials and Employees for allowable authorized expenses incurred while conducting County business.

County officials and employees are expected to exercise good judgment and proper regard for public funds when incurring business and travel expenses.

Any deposit, pre-registration fees or other pre-trip costs that are lost or forfeited due to an alteration in the official's or employee's plans other than those caused by emergencies of work or family, shall be reimbursed to the County.

### **Vehicle Use**

- a) **County-owned vehicles shall be used whenever possible.** Use of personal vehicles while a County vehicle is available and suitable for use will not be reimbursed.
- b) County personnel using their privately owned vehicle for official County business will be reimbursed for mileage in excess of commute miles at the amount established by the Internal Revenue Service valid on the date of travel. Does not require preauthorization.
- c) Any person driving his/her own vehicle or a privately leased or rented vehicle while on County business is required to maintain vehicle liability insurance on such private vehicle in an amount equal to at least the minimum amount required by law. An employee's personal automobile insurance policy is primary to any County coverage.
- d) When more than one County employee travels to the same destination, the employees will be required to travel in the same vehicle and reimbursement will be made to only one employee. If not, the department head shall submit a memo indicating the reason why the employees did not travel together. If a letter is not submitted, the reimbursement shall not be made.
- e) The rental of an automobile while on travel status is allowed if circumstances require. The most economical vehicle available that is suitable for the County's business shall be obtained.

### **Travel Expenses**

- a) All overnight/out of state travel shall be pre-approved in advance by the appropriate oversight committee. **No reimbursement of expenses will occur for any trips taken without prior approval.**
- b) Eligible expenses include:
  - a. Airfare (most economical)
  - b. Surface transportation (train, bus, taxi, Uber/Lyft, etc.). The traveler is asked to seek the most economical surface transportation method.
  - c. Parking fees and tolls (note that violations are not reimbursable)
  - d. Conference registration (if not prepaid)
  - e. Meals and lodging as described below
  - f. Other pre-approved expenses directly related to the County's business

### **Meal Allowances**

Meal per diems and allowances will be paid in accordance with the current Illinois Department of Central Management Services Travel Reimbursement Schedule at the time of travel.

Maximum meal reimbursement rates at the time of filing of this document are:

**Per Diem/Meals – Within Illinois:**

Category	Rate
Breakfast	\$5.50
Lunch	\$5.50
Dinner	\$17.00
Per Diem – Day	\$28.00

**Per Diem/Meals – Outside the State of Illinois**

Category	Rate
Breakfast	\$6.50
Lunch	\$6.50
Dinner	\$19.00
Per Diem – Day	\$32.00

- a) Per diem shall be paid for travel which includes overnight lodging or is 18 or more continuous hours. It is given in lieu of the meal allowance and is to cover the cost of meals and meal tips. Receipts need not be submitted to support this allowance. Meal allowance and per diem may not be mixed on the same trip.
- b) Meal allowances are given when the traveler is not eligible to receive the per diem. Receipts shall be provided to support meal allowances. Note that only the maximum rate will be paid, irrespective of total cost of the meal and inclusive of a gratuity of no more than 18 percent.
  - a. Breakfast is payable when an employee is on travel status and leaves their office or residence (if reporting directly to the destination) at or before 6 a.m.
  - b. Lunch is not a reimbursable expense. The amount for lunch is established for the purpose of setting a per-meal ceiling on conference lunches.
  - c. Dinner is payable when an employee is on travel status and arrives back at their office or residence (if reporting directly from destination) at or after 7 p.m. For employees commencing travel after close of business, but before 6:30 p.m., dinner reimbursement is allowed if the traveler would not be eligible for per diem.
- c) If a conference includes a meal, the meal or per diem allowance shall be reduced by the actual value of the meal or the amount of the applicable meal allowance shown in the reimbursement schedule, whichever is less.
  - a. For example, if a traveler is at a conference within Illinois that provides lunch (but not breakfast or dinner), the per diem would be reduced by \$5.50 to \$22.50.

**Lodging Rates**

- a) The maximum allowable reimbursement rates shall be as outlined below. It is the responsibility of the employee to request the lowest lodging rate available, including government rates when applicable.

Region Type	Population	Maximum Rate
Small	Under 50,000	\$100/night
Suburban	50,000 to 99,999	\$125/night
Urban	100,000 to 499,999	\$150/night
Metropolitan	500,000+	\$200/night

b) Conference Lodging

a. Any employee attending a conference or seminar in the course of County business may stay in the lowest-priced room available at or near the hotel in which the conference or seminar is located in accommodations arranged by conference/seminar organizations, and shall be reimbursed for actual lodging expenses in excess of those allowed in the reimbursement schedule. The traveler must assert in writing that accommodations were the lowest priced available at or near the conference/seminar site.

c) Lodging that requires travel 75 miles or less will not be reimbursed.

a. Exceptions: If documented business meetings extend past 8 p.m. and then resume again by 8 a.m. the next morning, or if weather conditions make a return trip unsafe.

d) Where a multiple occupancy involving a spouse or other family member has occurred, the employee may only claim the actual and necessary cost of his/her single occupancy at a single rate.

e) The number of nights for which an employee may obtain reimbursement will be limited to the number necessary to conduct County business. Reimbursement may be considered for those conferences/meetings that begin in the morning and require travel over 75 miles the night before.

**Non-Reimbursable Expenses:**

- a) Entertainment expenses
- b) Alcoholic beverages
- c) Amenities such as movies or video rentals, in-room bar service
- d) Fines for parking violations or towing charges
- e) Magazines, books, or other personal reading material
- f) Laundry service
- g) Other personal expenses not listed in the eligible expenses

All receipts for lodging, transportation & registration shall be in the name of the employee. Expense form GC301 (including receipts) must be submitted to department head within sixty (60) days of completion of travel. The department head must submit the forms to the appropriate committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

**CALL BACK PAY**

Employees who are called back to work after their scheduled work day or workweek are eligible for a "Call Back Premium" which provides 150 percent of the employee's regular hourly rate for a minimum of two hours, or for the actual hours worked, whichever is greater. The primary intent

is to compensate the employee for the inconvenience caused by returning to work at an unscheduled time.

Example: An employee who has completed a regular shift and is called at home to return to work for emergency repairs and completes the repairs in one hour. The call back premium policy will result in the following payment for that additional period:

Two hour minimum at 1.5 time = 3 hours paid for 1 hour worked

Should the repairs require a total of 4 hours of work (i.e. greater than 2) by the employee, pay would be based on the actual time worked as follows:

4 hours of time at 1.5 time = 6 hours paid for 4 hours worked

Call Back Premium is not paid in addition to overtime. For example, if the employee cited in the example above has worked a 40-hour week in addition to call back, the employee would receive pay in the same manner and amount. The employee will always receive the greater of overtime or Call-Back Premium for a minimum of two hours (but not both).

### **OVERTIME**

When operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, employees may be needed to work overtime. All overtime work must receive the supervisor's prior written authorization.

Overtime compensation is paid to all non-exempt employees in accordance with federal and state wage and hour restrictions. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Time off on sick leave, vacation leave, or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations.

Overtime shall be paid at a rate of time and one half for all work hours exceeding forty hours worked in a workweek. Typically, the work week begins on Monday and ends on the following Sunday; however, a different work week schedule maybe requested by the Department Head and approved by the Personnel Committee.

Where appropriate, all department heads are encouraged to offer comp-time in lieu of overtime pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek. Compensatory time will be granted to Non-Exempt employees at the rate of 1.5 hours for each hour of overtime worked. Compensatory time may accumulate to a maximum of 40 hours, after which additional overtime worked will be paid. Upon termination of employment, an employee will be paid for accrued unused compensatory time

Exempt Employees, Administrative, and executive employees who have duties and responsibilities which are primarily managerial, or employees for whom specialized training or certification is required, may be determined exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). When exempt employees work in excess of forty hours per week, they are not eligible for overtime pay.

### **Deferred Time:**

Exempt employees may be granted “deferred time” for extra hours worked, under certain circumstances. If deferred time is granted, an employee will receive one hour of deferred time for each extra hour worked.

In order to receive deferred time, an employee must obtain the prior written approval of the employee’s supervisor. Specifically, the supervisor’s approval must be granted prior to the extra hours worked, and must specify the number of approved extra hours and the corresponding approved deferred time.

Approved deferred time will be granted for each hour worked beyond the employee’s regularly scheduled hours. Deferred time must be used within 12 months of the date on which it is earned; any deferred time not used by the deadline will be forfeited. Use of deferred time must be pre-arranged with the employee’s supervisor. Employees are eligible to be paid for accrued but unused deferred time.

Each exempt employee must maintain an accurate record of time worked by the employee in excess of the employee's regular work day.

If an exempt employee works extra hours without first requesting deferred time and receiving approval for the extra hours and the deferred time, the employee will not receive deferred time. If an employee accrues deferred time in excess of the 40-hour cap, the deferred time will be lost, without compensation.

### **PAYMENT OF WAGES**

All employees are paid biweekly, on every other Thursday. The County reserves the right to alter pay date and schedule, typically with one month’s written notice to employees. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period. It is the County's policy that employee paychecks will only be given personally to that employee or mailed to his/her home address. No salary or wage advances will be made.

In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a recognized holiday, employees will receive pay on the last day of work before the regularly scheduled payday.

If an employee's marital status changes or the number of exemptions previously claimed increases or decreases, a new Form W-4 must be submitted to the County.

The law requires that the County make certain deductions from every employee's compensation. Among these are applicable federal, state, and local income taxes. The County also must deduct Social Security taxes on each employee's earnings up to a specified limit called the Social Security wage base.

All full time employees hired for the County of Grundy shall be signed up for the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) or SLEP in the Sheriff’s Department at the time of hire. Wages will be deducted on a pre-tax basis at the rate required by the specific fund.

The County offers programs and benefits beyond those required by law. Eligible employees may voluntarily authorize deductions from their paychecks to cover the costs of participation in these programs.

The County takes all reasonable steps to ensure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck and that employees are paid promptly on the scheduled payday.

In the unlikely event that there is an error in the amount of pay, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of his or her supervisor and the County Treasurer so that corrections can be made as soon as possible.

If you have questions concerning why deductions were made from your paycheck or how they were calculated, your supervisor can assist in having your questions answered.

### **WORK HOURS AND TIMEKEEPING**

The work week begins on Monday and ends on the following Sunday or a different work week schedule maybe requested by the Department Head and approved by the Personnel Committee.

Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every employee and his or her supervisor. Federal and state laws require the County to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties.

Non-exempt employees should accurately record the time they begin and end their work, as well as the beginning and ending time of each meal period. They should also record the beginning and ending time of any split shift or departure from work for personal reasons. Overtime work must always be approved before it is performed. If the employee's department has a time clock the employee must use it.

Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

If corrections or modifications are made to the time record, both the employee and the supervisor must verify the accuracy of the changes by initialing the time record.

## **TIME OFF/LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

### **BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

In the event of the death of an immediate family member, an employee shall be permitted to be absent from his job for up to three (3) days per year for each occurrence with the Department Head's approval, and for each such day's absence, the employee shall receive compensation at his/her normal rate of pay. If the employee desires to be absent for more than three (3) days, he/she

may utilize previously earned, unused, vacation or personal time and receive compensation for each such additional day's absence at his normal rate of pay, provided that the Department Head approves such additional absence.

Definition of Immediate Family – For purposes of bereavement leave, a member of the immediate family shall be defined to be an employee's spouse, parent/step-parent/in-law, son/daughter in-law, grandchild, grandparent, sibling/step-sibling/half-sibling or legal guardian.

### **Child Bereavement Leave**

In the event of the death of a child (natural, adopted, foster, stepchild, a legal ward or the child of a person standing in loco parentis), employees who have worked for the County for a minimum of 12 months and 1250 hours during the immediately preceding 12 months are entitled to a maximum of 2 weeks of unpaid bereavement leave and up to 6 weeks of bereavement leave in the event of the death of more than one child during a twelve-month period.

The time may be used to attend the funeral or alternative to a funeral, make arrangements necessitated by the death, or to grieve the death of the child. The leave must be completed within 60 days after the date employee receives notice of the death of the child. Employees must give 48 hours of notice before the leave, unless it is not practicable, and may be requested to provide documentation demonstrating the need for the leave.

Child bereavement leave may not be taken in addition to unpaid leave permitted under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and may not exceed unpaid leave time allowed under that law.

## **DISABILITY LEAVE**

Disability leave may be available to an employee who has a physical or mental condition that incapacitates an employee to a point that he/she is unable to perform their job requirements. Disability may be work or non-work related, and must be certified by a licensed physician. It is the responsibility of the employee or his/her representative to contact the Department Head to keep him/her advised of the extent of the disability and contact the Treasurer's Office for a disability leave application as soon as it is anticipated that the employee may go on disability leave. Employees with a disability may qualify for IMRF or workman's compensation disability benefits; however, IMRF disability benefits are not paid for the first 30 days of disability. An employee may also be eligible for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) policy, if the employee meets certain eligibility requirements and the employee's disability qualifies as a serious health condition. In such cases, disability leave will run concurrently with FMLA leave and the terms of the FMLA policy will control to the extent such terms conflict with the provisions of this disability policy, until the employee's FMLA leave rights are exhausted.

- Employees requesting a disability leave must submit a request for leave in writing, stating the reason for the leave, at least thirty (30) days in advance to his or her supervisor. In emergencies, written notice must be provided as soon as possible under the circumstances. The employee must also submit certification from his or her physician stating the diagnosis and nature of the disability, why the disability will preclude the employee from working, and the estimated length of time that the employee will be out of work because of the

disability. This medical certification generally must be provided at the time of the request of the leave, but no later than fifteen (15) days after the request for leave is made. The County reserves the right to require a second medical opinion by another physician at its designation.

- Employees must use all accrued sick days in conjunction with a disability leave. Employees are required to use vacation, sick and personal days during a disability leave within the first 30 days to continue disability payments. Sick leave, vacation and personal time will continue to be accrued only during the period when the employee is being paid by the County. Otherwise, sick leave, vacation, or personal days will not be accrued while the employee is on disability.
- Disability beyond 30 calendar days may be covered by the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF). The County Treasurer's Office will prepare the required forms to request IMRF disability coverage and forward them to the disabled employee. It is the employee's responsibility to sign the forms as required, provide the necessary physician's statement or proof of disability, and return all forms to the County Treasurer's Office for processing. The amount of IMRF disability benefits is 50% of the employee's average monthly earnings for the 12 calendar months prior to the date he or she is disabled.
- An employee will be returned to his or her former position if the employee returns from a sick/disability leave within 30 calendar days after the first day of absence, provided that the employee is able to perform the essential job functions of the position. Employees who are unable or unwilling to resume their duties on the same schedule to which they were assigned immediately prior to the period of disability within the thirty days are not guaranteed reinstatement. For example, a full-time staff member is not guaranteed the right to demand reinstatement on a part-time basis.
- If the employee's leave continues beyond thirty (30) days, the County will attempt to return the employee to his or her former position or to a comparable position for which the employee is qualified if available when the employee returns from an approved leave. However, the County's need to fill a position may override its ability to hold a position open until an employee returns from his or her leave. The County, therefore, cannot assure that it will be able to return an employee to any position after an approved leave of more than thirty (30) days. If during the leave the employee's position has been filled or eliminated, or the duties and responsibilities have been significantly changed requiring new skills and abilities, the returning employee may be offered a position, if open, comparable to the position the employee held immediately prior to the leave. The County has the sole discretion to determine comparable jobs and the employee's qualifications for any such positions. In the event that the employee's same or a comparable position for which the employee is qualified is not open at the end of the leave of absence, the employee may be terminated from employment. Additionally, if an employee refuses to accept any position offered within one week after such offer, the employee may be terminated from employment, at which time the employee will be notified, as applicable, of any conversion rights and/or rights to group health plan coverage.

- Please note that employees returning from an FMLA leave have alternate rights to reinstatement.
- Health Insurance will be paid by Grundy County only while on paid absence, unless otherwise required by applicable law. Continued participation by the employee in the Group Life and Health Insurance program during unpaid disability leave will be at the employee's expense of paying the premium for continued coverage, unless otherwise required by applicable law.
- During a disability leave, the County may require the employee to periodically report on his or her status and intent to return to work. The County may also periodically require certification of the employee's medical condition.
- Unused vacation, and personal time will be held pending the employee's return. In the event the employee does not return to work, unused benefits will be paid in accordance with the County's separation policy.
- In any event, if after six months of a disability leave the employee is unable or unwilling to perform the essential job functions of their position, the employee will be subject to separation and all unused benefits paid in accordance with routine separation policy.
- If the employee's disability continues beyond the original requested and approved leave time but the employee has not yet used the maximum six months allowed for a disability leave, the County may extend the disability leave for up to the maximum leave available upon written request for an extension and presentation of a statement from the employee's physician stating the reason why the employee cannot report back to work and the estimated additional time that will be required for the employee to recover from the disability.
- Failure to return from a disability leave upon the expiration of the approved leave period will be considered a voluntary resignation.
- When an employee returns from a disability leave, the employee must provide a fitness-for-duty statement from his or her physician stating that the employee is medically fit to return to work and further stating any limitations that may be imposed by the physician on the employee's ability to work. The County, in its sole discretion, may require an employee to be examined by a physician designated by the County before the employee is permitted to return to work from a disability leave. The final decision on whether an employee is ready to return to work rests with the County.

## **FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT**

Upon hire, Grundy County provides all new employees with notices via the employee handbook required by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) on Employee Rights and Responsibilities under the Family and Medical Act.

The function of this policy is to provide employees with a general description of their FMLA rights. In the event of any conflict between this policy and the applicable law, employees will be afforded all rights required by law.

If you have any questions, concerns or disputes with this policy, you must contact your Department Head in writing.

### **General Provisions**

Under this policy, Grundy County will grant up to 12 weeks (or up to 26 weeks of military caregiver leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness) unpaid, job protected leave during a 12-month period to eligible employees.

### **Eligibility**

To qualify to take family or medical leave under this policy, the employee must meet the following conditions:

- The employee must have worked for the County for 12 months or 52 weeks. The 12 months or 52 weeks need not have been consecutive. Separate periods of employment will be counted, except that the County will not count any employment periods prior to a break in service of seven years or more (unless the break in service was due to National Guard or Reserve military service obligations or when there is a written agreement, including a collective bargaining agreement, stating the employer's intention to rehire the employee after the service break). For eligibility purposes, an employee will be considered to have been employed for an entire week even if the employee was on the payroll for only part of a week or if the employee is on leave during the week.
- The employee must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately before the date when the leave is requested to commence. The principles established under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) determine the number of hours worked by an employee. The FLSA does not include time spent on paid or unpaid leave as hours worked. Consequently, these hours of leave should not be counted in determining the 1,250 hours for the eligibility test for an employee under FMLA.
- The employee must work in a work site where 50 or more employees are employed by the County within 75 miles of that office or work site. The distance is to be calculated by using available transportation by the most direct route.

### **Type of Leave Covered**

To qualify as FMLA leave under this policy, the employee must be taking leave for one of the reasons listed below:

- 1. The birth of a child and in order to care for that child.
- 2. The placement of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for a newly placed child.
- 3. To care for a spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition in loco parentis.
- 4. The serious health condition (described below) of the employee.
- 5. Because of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a military member on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty status.
- 6. To care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the covered service member.

An employee may take leave because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's position.

A serious health condition is defined as a condition that requires inpatient care at a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity or any subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care or as a condition that requires continuing treatment by a health care provider.

Generally, a health condition that would result in a period of more than three consecutive days of incapacity with the first visit to the health care provider within seven days of the onset of the incapacity and a second visit within 30 days of the onset of the incapacity would be considered a serious health condition. For chronic conditions requiring periodic health care visits for treatment, such visits must take place at least twice a year. A "serious health condition" also includes a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive days and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also involves treatment by a health care provider on at least one occasion, which results in a regimen of continuing treatment under the supervision of the health care provider.

Employees with questions about what conditions qualify for leave under this FMLA policy or under the County's sick leave policy are encouraged to consult with their Human Resources Department.

If an employee takes paid sick leave for a condition that progresses into a serious health condition, the County may designate all or some portion of related leave taken as leave under this policy, to the extent that the earlier leave meets the necessary qualifications.

### **Qualifying Exigency Leave**

Eligible employees may take FMLA leave (up to 12 weeks) for a qualifying exigency while the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent (the military member or member) is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty). The qualifying exigency must be one of the following: a) short-notice deployment, b) military events and activities, c) child care and school activities, d) financial and legal arrangements, e) counseling, f) rest and recuperation, g) post-deployment activities, h) parental care, and i) additional activities that arise out of the active duty or call to active duty status,

provided that the employer and employee agree, including agreement on timing and duration of the leave.

Covered active duty or call to covered active duty means:

- In the case of a member of the Regular Armed Forces, duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country.
- In the case of a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces, duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country under a Federal call or order to active duty in support of a contingency operation pursuant to 10 U.S.C. §101(a)(13)(B).

*Son or daughter* for this type of FMLA leave is defined as the employee's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stood in loco parentis, and who is of any age. This type of leave would be counted toward the employee's 12-week maximum of FMLA leave in a 12-month period.

### **Military Caregiver Leave**

An eligible employee may take up to 26 weeks in a single 12-month period to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness.

In order to care for a covered service member, an eligible employee must be the spouse, son, daughter, or parent, or next of kin of a covered service member.

*Next of kin* is defined as the nearest blood relative, other than the covered service member's spouse, parent, son, or daughter, in the following order of priority: blood relatives who have been granted legal custody of the service member by court decree or statutory provisions, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins, unless the covered service member has specifically designated in writing another blood relative as his or her nearest blood relative for purposes of military caregiver leave under the FMLA.

The term "covered service member" means:

- A current member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves) who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy or is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness.
- A covered veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy for a serious injury or illness. "Covered veteran" means an individual who was a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves), and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered veteran. An eligible employee must commence leave to care for a covered veteran within five years of the veteran's active duty service.

The term "serious injury or illness" means:

- In the case of a current member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves), an injury or illness that was incurred by the member in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces (or that existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces) and that may render the member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank or rating.
- In the case of a covered veteran, an injury or illness that was incurred by the member in line of duty on an active duty in the Armed Forces (or that existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces) and that manifested itself before or after the member became a veteran, and that meets other criteria as set forth in FMLA regulations.

### **Amount of Leave**

An eligible employee may take up to 12 weeks for the first five FMLA circumstances above (under heading "Type of Leave Covered") under this policy during any 12-month period. The County will measure the 12-month period as a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any leave under this policy. Each time an employee takes leave, the County will compute the amount of leave the employee has taken under this policy in the last 12 months and subtract it from the 12 weeks of available leave, and the balance remaining is the amount of time the employee is entitled to take at that time.

An eligible employee can take up to 26 weeks for the FMLA military caregiver leave circumstance described above during a single 12-month period. For this military caregiver leave, the County will measure the period as the 12-month period measured forward from the date an employee's first military caregiver leave begins. During that 12-month period, an eligible employee's FMLA leave entitlement is limited to a combined total of 26 weeks for any qualifying reason.

If spouses both work for the County and each wishes to take leave for the birth of a child or to care for a newborn child, for placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care, or to care for a parent (but not a parent "in-law") with a serious health condition, the spouses may only take a combined total of 12 weeks of leave. If spouses both work for the County and each wishes to take leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness, the spouses may only take a combined total of 26 weeks of leave.

### **Employee Status and Benefits During Leave**

While an employee is on FMLA leave, the county will continue the employee's health benefits during the leave period at the same level and under the same conditions as if the employee had continued to work. However, the employee will still be responsible for their portion of the premiums.

### **Employee Status After Leave**

An employee who takes leave under this policy may be asked to provide a fitness for duty (FFD) clearance from the health care provider upon return to work.

### **Use of Paid and Unpaid Leave**

The County requires the substitution of accrued paid leave for unpaid leave during FMLA periods. All paid vacation, personal and sick leave runs concurrently with FMLA leave.

Disability leave for the birth of a child and for an employee's serious health condition, including workers' compensation leave (to the extent that it qualifies), will be designated as FMLA leave and will run concurrently with FMLA.

### **Intermittent Leave or a Reduced Work Schedule**

The employee may take FMLA leave in consecutive weeks (up to 12 weeks in the applicable 12-month period), may use the leave intermittently (take a day periodically when needed over the year) or, under certain circumstances, may use the leave to reduce the workweek or workday, resulting in a reduced-hour schedule. In all cases, the leave may not exceed a total of 12 workweeks (or 26 workweeks to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness) over the applicable 12-month period.

### **Certification for the Employee's Serious Health Condition**

The County will require certification from a health care provider for the employee's serious health condition. The employee must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave.

### **Certification for the Family Member's Serious Health Condition**

The County will require certification from a health care provider for the family member's serious health condition. The employee must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave.

### **Certification of Qualifying Exigency for Military Family Leave**

The County will require certification of the qualifying exigency for military family leave. The employee must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave.

### **Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of Covered Service Member for Military Family Leave**

The County will require certification completed by an authorized health care provider for the serious injury or illness of the covered service member. The employee must respond to such a request within 15 days of the request or provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a denial of continuation of leave.

### **Recertification**

The County may request recertification for the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member when circumstances have changed significantly, or if the employer receives information casting doubt on the reason given for the absence, or if the employee seeks an extension of his or her leave. Otherwise, the County may request recertification for the serious

health condition of the employee or the employee's family member periodically in connection with an FMLA absence, as permitted by law.

#### **Procedure for Requesting FMLA Leave**

All employees requesting FMLA leave must provide the Department Head with verbal or written notice of the need for the leave. Within five business days after the employee has provided this notice, the Human Resources Department will provide the employee with the DOL Notice of Eligibility and Rights.

When the need for the leave is foreseeable, the employee must provide the employer with at least 30 days' notice. When an employee becomes aware of a need for FMLA leave less than 30 days in advance, the employee must provide notice of the need for the leave as soon as practicable. When the need for FMLA leave is not foreseeable, the employee must comply with the County's usual and customary notice and procedural requirements for requesting leave.

#### **Designation of FMLA Leave**

Within five business days after the employee has submitted the appropriate certification form (or after the employer otherwise gains enough information to determine whether the leave is FMLA-qualifying), the Human Resources Department will provide the employee with a written designation notice relating to the employee's request for FMLA leave.

#### **Intent to Return to Work from FMLA Leave**

The county may require an employee on FMLA leave to report periodically on the employee's status and intent to return to work.

### **HOLIDAYS**

Grundy County will grant holiday time off to all employees on the following days:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Spring Holiday (Friday before Easter)
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Election Day (Only During Election Years)
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas

A recognized holiday that falls on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday. A recognized holiday that falls on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. In the event

there is a discrepancy concerning the day a holiday is to be observed, the holiday will be observed as the day designated by the State of Illinois.

If a recognized holiday falls during an eligible employee's paid absence (such as vacation or sick leave), holiday pay will be provided instead of the paid time off benefit that would otherwise have applied.

Holiday pay will be calculated based on the employee's straight-time pay rate (as of the date of the holiday) times the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked on that day. Part-time employees shall be paid on a pro-rated basis according to the number of hours the employee is normally scheduled to work on that day. In order to qualify for holiday pay, all employees shall work their last regularly scheduled workday before the holiday and their first regularly scheduled workday after the holiday. Paid time off for holidays will not be counted as hours worked for the purposes of determining overtime.

An employee in a non-exempt position working on one of the above enumerated holidays may, at the option of the Department Head, be given an equivalent time off or time and one-half pay for the number of hours worked.

An employee in an exempt position who is required to work on a day designated as a holiday shall be entitled to exchange time for hours worked.

### **JURY DUTY**

Serving on a jury or serving as a witness when called is a civic duty, and as such is recognized and supported by Grundy County.

An employee who receives a valid summons or subpoena for jury service or County-related witness duty and serves during work hours will be paid the difference between the earnings from the court system and his or her current base rate of pay. Employees would need to sign their court system check over to the county and they will continue to receive their normal paycheck. Only full-time and part-time employees are eligible to receive paid jury and County-related witness duty leave. Temporary employees are not eligible for paid jury and witness duty leave. If an employee is released from jury service four or more hours before the end of the employee's work day, the employee is expected to report to work.

If an employee is asked to appear in court as a witness at the request of a party other than the County, the employee is free to use vacation leave. If the subpoena is County related, the employee will receive paid time off for the entire period of witness duty.

In the event the employee is engaged in litigation against the County, other County employees and/or County Elected officials, the employee will not be paid in any manner for their absence to appear as a witness and/or litigant. However, if an employee is a witness for the County in a litigation matter, the employee will receive their regular hourly rate of pay for the time scheduled away from their assignment by their Department Head.

The County will continue to provide health insurance benefits for the full term of the absence, if the employee has coverage. However, the employee is responsible for their portion of the premiums. Vacation, sick leave, and holiday benefits, will also continue to accrue during the leave.

### **LACTATION/BREASTFEEDING**

Any employee who is breastfeeding her child will be provided reasonable break times as needed to express breast milk for her baby. The Department Head in conjunction with Human Resources Department will designate a room for this purpose upon request.

### **MEAL BREAKS**

In accordance with Illinois State Law, employees whose workday is at least 7 1/2 hours long are given a meal period beginning no later than the end of the fifth hour. The duration of the meal period will be at least twenty minutes. Nonexempt employees are to be completely relieved of all job duties while on meal breaks. Supervisors arrange time schedules and meal periods to accommodate operating requirements.

### **MILITARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Grundy County is committed to protecting the job rights of employees absent on military leave. In accordance with federal and state law, it is the County's policy that no employee or prospective employee will be subjected to any form of discrimination on the basis of that person's membership in or obligation to perform service for any of the Uniformed Services of the United States. Specifically, no person will be denied employment, reemployment, promotion or other benefit of employment on the basis of such membership. Furthermore, no person will be subjected to retaliation or adverse employment action because such person has exercised his or her rights under applicable law or County policy. If any employee believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination in violation of County policy, the employee should immediately contact your Department Head.

Employees taking part in a variety of military duties are eligible for benefits under this policy. Such military duties include leaves of absence taken by members of the uniformed services, including Reservists and National Guard members, for training, periods of active military service and funeral honors duty, as well as time spent being examined to determine fitness to perform such service. Subject to certain exceptions under the applicable laws, these benefits are generally limited to five years of leave of absence.

Employees requesting leave for military duty should contact their Department Head or Human Resources to request leave as soon as they are aware of the need for leave.

### **PERSONAL TIME**

Personal time provides an all-purpose time-off policy for eligible employees for personal business. Full-time and part-time employees are eligible, after one year's employment, to take personal time which equals three (3) paid working days per year (prorated by the average number of hours scheduled per work day over the immediately preceding six months). The personal time taken will be deducted from the employee's accumulated sick leave for the year. An employee's year for

establishing personal days will commence on the date of employment. Personal days cannot be accumulated from year to year.

Personal days can be used in minimum increments of one hour. To schedule planned personal days, employees should request advance approval from their supervisors. When employees have an unexpected need to be absent from work, they should notify their direct supervisor before the scheduled start of their workday, if possible. The employee's supervisor based on business need and staffing requirements will review requests for personal days. The direct supervisor must also be contacted on each additional day of absence.

Personal days are paid at the employee's base rate of pay at the time of absence, not including any overtime or special forms of compensation such as bonuses or shift differentials.

## **PREGNANCY RIGHTS AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

Pursuant to the Illinois Human Rights Act, the County provides reasonable accommodations, to the extent required by law, for conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions. Employees requesting a leave or reasonable accommodation should promptly notify their Department Head and Human Resources Department.

### **Use of accrued paid leave**

The County requires employees to use accrued paid sick leave for qualifying absences, concurrently with some or all of the leave taken under this policy. Additionally, employees must comply with the County's normal procedures for the applicable leave policy (e.g., call-in procedures, advance notice).

### **Maintenance of health benefits**

If employees and their families participate in the County's group health plan, the County will maintain coverage during leave under this policy on the same terms as if employees had continued to work. If applicable, employees must make arrangements to pay their shares of health plan premiums while on leave. In some instances, the County may recover premiums it paid to maintain health coverage or other benefits for employees and their families. Use of leave under this policy will not result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of leave under this policy. Employees should consult the applicable plan document for information regarding eligibility, coverage and benefits.

### **Procedures**

When seeking leave or a reasonable accommodation under this policy, an employee may be required to provide their Department Head and Human Resources with the following:

- As soon as practicable and if possible prior to commencing leave, a statement from a health care provider supporting the request for leave or reasonable accommodation. The statement should confirm that the requested leave or reasonable accommodation is based on a pregnancy-related condition, and if the statement is provided in support of a leave request, the statement should include an anticipated start and end date. An employee must also supply periodic reports as deemed appropriate during the leave regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work.

- Upon return from leave, medical certification of fitness for duty before returning to work. The County will require this certification when warranted to address whether employees can perform the essential functions of their positions.

Failure to comply with the foregoing requirements upon request may result in delay or denial of leave, or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **Employer responsibilities**

To the extent required by law, the County will inform employees whether they are eligible for leave under this policy. As detailed in the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Policy, the County will also inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and, to the extent possible, note the amount of leave counted against employees' leave entitlements. If employees are not eligible for FMLA leave, the County will provide a reason for the ineligibility.

### **Job restoration**

Upon returning from leave, employees will typically be restored to their original positions or to equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

### **Failure to return after leave**

If an employee fails to return to work as scheduled after leave under this policy, or if an employee exceeds the leave entitlement, the employee will be subject to the County's other applicable leave of absence, accommodation and attendance policies. This may result in termination if the employee has no other County-provided leave available that applies to the continued absence. Likewise, if leave under this policy ran concurrently with FMLA leave, following the conclusion of the FMLA leave, the County's obligation to maintain the employee's group health plan benefits ends (subject to any applicable COBRA rights).

## **SCHOOL VISITATION RIGHTS**

Pursuant to the Illinois School Visitation Rights Act of 1993, as amended, the County provides employed parents and guardians (who are otherwise unable to meet with educators because of work conflicts) the right to 8 hours of unpaid time off during each school year to attend conferences or classroom activities at their children's schools. To be eligible for this benefit, the employee must have been employed on at least a part time basis for a minimum of six (6) months. No more than four (4) hours of time may be taken at any one day, and time can only be taken if the employee has exhausted all earned vacation, personal, and compensatory leave time. The employee must provide the employer with a written request for leave at least 7 days in advance. In an emergency situation, 24 hours' notice is required.

## **SICK LEAVE**

Grundy County provides paid sick leave benefits to all eligible employees for periods of temporary absence due to non-occupational illness, accident, injury, disability or medical appointment. In addition, sick leave can be used in the event of illness, accident, injury, disability or medical appointment of the employee's child, stepchild, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, parent, parent-in-law, grandchild, grandparent or stepparent.

Full-time and part-time employees are eligible to use accrued sick leave after six months of employment. Eligible employees will accrue sick leave benefits up to a maximum rate of 12 days per year (1 day for every month of service) depending on the number of hours worked per week as described below. Sick leave benefits are calculated on the basis of a "benefit year", the 12-month period that begins when the employee starts to earn sick leave benefits.

HOURS WORKED PER WEEK	SICK LEAVE EARNED PER MONTH
0-15	None
16-24	4 hours
25-32	6 hours
33-40	1 work day

An eligible staff employee scheduled to work irregular hours each week will accrue at a rate based on the average weekly hours scheduled per month.

During the first 180 days after an employee is hired, sick leave time will accrue but may not be taken until after the end of that 180-day period. If an employee becomes ill during his/her initial 180 days of employment, the matter will be referred to the Personnel Committee for appropriate action.

Paid sick leave can be used in minimum increments of one hour. Employees who are unable to report to work due to illness or injury should notify their direct supervisor at least one hour before they are to report to work. The direct supervisor must also be contacted on each additional day of absence. Failure to notify the direct supervisor, except under extenuating circumstances, shall be cause for disciplinary action.

For absences greater than three (3) consecutive work days, employees are required to provide a physician's statement to their supervisor verifying the absence and the employee's inability to perform the duties of the position during the absence. For absences greater than five (5) consecutive work days, employees are required to provide a physician's statement to their supervisor verifying the absence and the employee's inability to perform the duties of the position during the absence, plus a statement that the employee can safely return to work and listing restrictions or accommodations, if any. A physician's verification is not required for absences of three (3) days or less, except in cases where there is a pattern of suspected abuse or repeated illness.

Any employee who submits a falsified absence report and/or physician's statement will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

An employee "abuses" sick leave when the employee uses or attempts to use sick leave for reasons that do not qualify for sick leave (as identified above). An employee who is determined to have abused sick leave will not be paid for the inappropriate sick leave. "Abuse" of sick leave shall subject the employee to disciplinary action.

Sick leave benefits will be calculated based on the employee's base pay rate at the time of absence and will not include any special forms of compensation, such as bonuses or shift differentials.

Unused sick leave benefits will be allowed to accumulate until the employee has accrued a total of 100 calendar days of sick leave benefits. If the employee's benefits reach this maximum, further accrual of sick leave benefits will be suspended until the employee has reduced the balance below this limit. Active employees will have the ability to reduce their balance through pension enhancement and/or cash out.

In January of each year, an employee who has accumulated sick leave over the 100 day max will have the ability to receive compensation for the additional time at the rate of 25% of their regular rate of pay as determined on November 30<sup>th</sup> (of the previous year) up to a max of 3 days' pay or convert time to service credit for retirement through IMRF. Converted sick days may only be used for pension enhancement purposes and may not under any circumstance be taken from the pension bank or be paid by the County. Upon separation from the County the employee will not be paid for any sick days in their pension enhancement bank. All converted sick time in your pension bank will be reported to IMRF for service credit at time of retirement. Sick leave time for which an employee elects cash compensation or IMRF service credit shall be deducted from such employee's accumulated sick leave. An employee is required to notify the Human Resource department in writing of their intent by January 31<sup>st</sup> otherwise the excess sick days will be forfeited.

Accumulated unused paid sick leave is an earned benefit granted during employment. Upon an employee's resignation or retirement, but not if the employee is discharged for cause, twenty-five percent (25%) of the accumulated unused paid sick leave shall be paid as part of their final compensation only if the employee is employed by the County in excess of eight (8) years. An employee retiring has the option to use these accumulated days for pension enhancement with IMRF (Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund) or SLEP in lieu of payment.

In recognition of the financial hardship that an extended catastrophic illness can cause employees, the County is willing to facilitate the voluntary donation of sick leave among employees. If an employee voluntarily requests that the County transfer a portion of that employee's accrued sick time to an employee with a catastrophic illness, the County will facilitate that transfer. Such a request must be submitted in writing to Human Resources for processing. The name of the donor can be kept anonymous.

An employee seeking to donate sick leave will be required to retain enough sick time to equate to one month of scheduled work time off, hours and number of days will vary based on part time or full time status. Donated time is not otherwise limited in the amount of sick time the employee can donate. An employee can only receive donations of sick time from employees once they have otherwise exhausted all accrued time off. Donated sick time will be used by the employee in the order in which the donated time is received and will cease when the employee returns to work or separates from employment. If an employee does not use all the donated sick time, the unused donated sick time will be returned to the donor's sick bank in the order it was received.

## VACATION

The Grundy County vacation policy is intended to provide eligible employees with opportunities for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits. Part-time and full-time employees earn vacation time according to their length of service on their anniversary date as shown below:

YEARS OF SERVICE	VACATION TIME EARNED
After 1 year of service	2 weeks
After 5 years of service	3 weeks
After 13 years of service	4 weeks
After 18 years of service	5 weeks

The length of eligible service is calculated on the basis of a "benefit year". This is the 12-month period that begins when the employee starts to earn vacation time. Vacation shall be granted to employees once a year on the anniversary date of their employment. An employee's benefit year may be extended for any significant leave of absence except a military leave of absence (military leave has no effect on the vacation calculation). Earned vacation time is available for use in the year following its accrual. Temporary employees are not eligible for vacation.

Vacation is earned in proportion to the average number of hours worked by an employee during the normal workweek. For example, an employee who works an average of 20 hours per week earns two 20-hour weeks of vacation after one year.

Paid vacation time can be used in minimum increments of half a day. To use vacation benefits, employees must request advance approval from their supervisor. Vacation requests are reviewed based on business needs and staffing requirements.

Vacation time off is paid at the employee's base pay rate at the time of vacation. It does not include overtime or any special forms of compensation such as incentives, bonuses, or shift differentials.

In the event that available vacation is not used by the end of the benefit year, an employee will forfeit the unused time, unless an extension is recommended and approved by the employee's department head.

Vacation time is granted in addition to any recognized holidays which may fall during the employee's vacation.

When an employee's service with the County is terminated, he or she will receive compensation for any unused, accumulated vacation leave.

Except for employees that are retiring, an employee must be physically at work at least one day in the new anniversary year to earn and be entitled to vacation in that anniversary year.

## **UNPAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

An Unpaid Leave of Absence is intended to provide Grundy County with a means to allow employees to be reinstated with past seniority if they need to suspend active employment status. Unpaid leaves are granted to employees in good standing at the discretion of the appropriate department head and the Grundy County Personnel Committee.

An employee requesting an unpaid leave must be a full-time employee with at least one year of service. An employee requesting an unpaid leave must provide a written request (to the appropriate department head) which relates the anticipated term of the leave and its purpose. The department head will recommend its acceptance or denial on the basis of operational needs. Unpaid leaves are without pay with a minimum duration of one month, a maximum duration of six months. At the end of an unpaid leave of absence, at the request of an employee who is unable to return to work, the Personnel Committee will review the situation to determine whether additional leave should be granted.

During the leave of absence, employees can continue to receive group benefits provided such continuances are acceptable under the terms of the adopted programs. In that event, employees must pay full premium costs for employees and dependents in advance. Employees will not earn sick leave or vacation credit while on an unpaid leave and no pay will be given for holidays occurring during this period. Time spent on an approved unpaid leave shall not be credited toward seniority or vacation benefits.

An employee returning from an unpaid leave is requested to provide the supervisor with at least two weeks' advance notice of the date the employee intends to return to work. The employee may be reinstated to his or her former position, if it exists, or, if not, to another vacant position in the same class. Reinstatement from an unpaid leave is not guaranteed.

## **VICTIMS ECONOMIC AND SAFETY ACT (VESSA)**

In accordance with the Illinois Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA), leave shall be granted to an employee who is a victim of domestic (sometimes referred to as "intimate partner violence") or sexual violence or who has a family or household member (defined as a spouse, parent, son, daughter, other person related by blood or by present or prior marriage, other person who shares a relationship through a son or daughter, and persons jointly residing in the same household) who is a victim. Up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave per year (12-month period) may be taken. For purposes of this policy, the initial one-year period will commence on the first day that VESSA is taken. VESSA does not create a right for the employee to take unpaid leave that exceeds the unpaid leave time allowed under, or is in addition to, the unpaid leave time permitted by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). For employees on VESSA leave who are also eligible for FMLA leave, VESSA leave time is not in addition to the 12 week FMLA entitlement when the reason for VESSA leave also qualifies under FMLA, but depletes the 12 week FMLA entitlement when used.

An employee who may have exhausted all available leave under FMLA for a purpose other than that which is available under VESSA, remains eligible for leave under VESSA. Employees taking leave under VESSA may "voluntarily" use other accumulated unused leave days first. However,

the employer cannot require that these unused leave days be used. When an employee is taking a VESSA leave of absence concurrently with FMLA, they will be required to use accumulated, unused paid leave days as outlined in FMLA policy.

While on a VESSA qualifying leave, employees will retain health insurance benefits at the same level as if continuously employed. Upon return to employment following a VESSA leave, the employee is entitled to be returned to his or her same or equivalent position. Contact your Department Head for additional information.

## **VOTING LEAVE**

### **Voting Time**

The County encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by participating in elections. Generally, employees are able to find time to vote either before or after their regular work schedule. All employees who are scheduled to work on election day are encouraged to vote absentee. If the polls are not open at least two hours before or after the employee is scheduled to work, the County will grant up to two hours off to vote.

Employees are required to request time off to vote from their supervisor at least two working days prior to the Election Day. Advance notice is required so that the necessary time off can be scheduled at the beginning or end of the work shift, whichever provides the least disruption to the normal work schedule.

Employees must submit a voter's receipt to their supervisor on the first working day following the election to qualify for paid time off.

### **Election Leave**

Employees who are chosen to serve as election officials at polling sites will be permitted to take required time off to serve in this capacity. It is incumbent on employees who are chosen to act as election officials to notify their manager a minimum of seven days in advance of their need for time off in order to accommodate the necessary rescheduling of work periods. Time engaged as an election official should be reported and coded appropriately on timekeeping records.

## **BENEFITS**

### **CONTINUATION OF BENEFITS (COBRA)**

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under the County's Health plan when a 'qualifying event' would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common "qualifying events" are as follows:

- Death of the employee;
- Termination of the employee's employment for any reason other than gross misconduct;
- Reduction in the employee's hours of work below the minimum required for eligibility under the plan;
- Divorce or legal separation;

- Employee becoming entitled to Medicare; or
- Dependent child ceasing to be a "dependent child" under the terms of the County's health care plan.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full premium at applicable rates as determined by the plan actuary, plus a service fee. The County provides each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under the County's Health Insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations.

## **RETIREMENT, INSURANCE AND OTHER BENEFITS**

The County provides retirement, group health insurance, life insurance, disability insurance and other benefits for eligible employees. These various benefits are described below. Additional information, including summary of benefits and coverage ("SBCs") which explain coverage of our benefits in greater detail are available from the Human Resources Department. Please note, however, that the actual plan documents are the final authority in all matters relative to the benefits described in this handbook or the SBCs, and will govern in the event of any conflict, including any oral representations or statements concerning such benefits. Grundy County also reserves the right to change or eliminate benefits at any time at its discretion in accordance with applicable law.

### **Retirement Plan**

The County of Grundy shall on behalf of all full-time and part-time employees who work a minimum of 1000 hours per year contribute to the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF). The County's contribution shall be in accordance with the rules promulgated by the IMRF program and actions taken by the Grundy County Board. The Grundy County Treasurer's Office shall make a payroll deduction for the employees' proportionate share.

### **Group Health Insurance**

The County of Grundy provides group health insurance benefits to eligible full-time employees. The covered employee has the option to add their spouse and children for inclusion in the insurance plan, provided the appropriate deductions will be taken from the employee's salary. Those Grundy County employees off work as a result of non-work related illness or accidents, who have used up all sick leave, vacation time, personal days, and other paid leave and are no longer being paid by the County shall pay the full premium for coverage under the said policy, except as otherwise required by law (e.g., FMLA).

County employees who retire, shall be eligible to participate in the County's insurance plan by paying the premium for coverage under the said policies. For more details regarding such benefits, please contact the Human Resources Department.

Employees who do not elect to receive health insurance benefits will receive a \$50 incentive for every full month of employment. The incentive is paid quarterly. If an employee terminates their employment with the County, the incentive will be paid on their final paycheck.

### **Life Insurance**

While employed full-time, the County of Grundy shall provide, on behalf of full-time employees, life insurance coverage in the amount of \$15,000.

### **Disability Insurance**

An employee who has twelve (12) consecutive months of service and cannot perform the duties of his or her position because of illness or injury that lasts more than thirty (30) days may be entitled to disability benefits, equivalent to 50% of average monthly earnings in accordance with IMRF regulations. For more details regarding such benefits, please contact the County Treasurer's Office.

## **WORKER'S COMPENSATION INSURANCE**

Grundy County provides a Workers' Compensation insurance program at no cost to employees. This program covers injuries or illnesses sustained in the course of employment that require medical, surgical, or hospital treatment. Subject to applicable legal requirements, Workers' Compensation insurance provides benefits after a short waiting period or, if the employee is hospitalized, immediately.

Under the provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSHA), Grundy County is required by law to keep a log of all occupational injuries and illnesses. Therefore, it is mandatory that all potentially work-related injuries must be reported IMMEDIATELY to the Department Head and the Human Resources Department. An Accident Report Form must be completed within 24 hours of a work-related accident (forms are available from the supervisor). This report will be the basis of a review to determine if the illness/injury is covered by Workers' Compensation under the guidelines of the State of Illinois.

Grundy County retains the right to investigate and contest any Worker's Compensation claims made by employees. The County may require that a medical examination be conducted to determine the nature and extent of injuries claimed. Any such required medical exams will be performed at the County's expense.

In order to limit the obligations of the County for each new separate injury, the County (or the insurer or administrator, as applicable) requires the employee to furnish medical proof or submit to a medical examination, whether any subsequent injury is a new and separate injury or an aggravation of a former injury received while in the County's service. Neither the County nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of Workers' Compensation benefits for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by the County.

## **WORKPLACE SAFETY**

### **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

Grundy County has a longstanding commitment to provide a safe and productive work environment. Alcohol and drug abuse pose a threat to the health and safety of employees and to

the security of our equipment and facilities. For these reasons, Grundy County is committed to the elimination of drug and/or alcohol use and abuse in the workplace.

This policy outlines the practice and procedure designed to correct instances of identified alcohol and/or drug use in the workplace. This policy applies to all employees and all applicants for employment of Grundy County.

### **Employee Assistance and Drug-Free Awareness**

Illegal drug use and alcohol misuse have a number of adverse health and safety consequences. Information about those consequences and sources of help for drug/alcohol problems is available from the Department Head.

Grundy County implements a drug free awareness program, to inform employees about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace and available drug counseling and rehabilitation programs.

Grundy County will assist and support employees who voluntarily seek help for such problems before becoming subject to discipline and/or termination under this or other policies. Such employees may be allowed to use accrued paid time off, placed on leaves of absence, referred to treatment providers and otherwise accommodated as required by law. Such employees may be required to document that they are successfully following prescribed treatment and to take and pass follow-up tests if they hold jobs that are safety sensitive or that require driving or if they have violated this policy previously.

Employees should report to work fit for duty and free of any adverse effects of illegal drugs or alcohol. This policy does not prohibit employees from the lawful use and possession of prescribed medications. Employees must, however, consult with their doctors about the medications' effect on their fitness for duty and ability to work safely, and promptly disclose any work restrictions to their supervisor. Employees should not, however, disclose underlying medical conditions unless directed to do so.

### **Work Rules**

The following work rules apply to all employees:

- Whenever employees are working, are operating any County vehicle, are present in the workplace, or are conducting related work off-site, they are prohibited from:
  - Using, possessing, buying, selling, manufacturing or dispensing alcohol, marijuana, or an illegal drug (to include possession of drug paraphernalia).
  - Being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana or an illegal drug as defined in this policy.
- The presence of any detectable amount of any illegal drug or illegal controlled substance in an employee's body while performing County business or while in a County facility is prohibited.
- Grundy County will not allow any employee to perform their duties while taking prescribed drugs that are adversely affecting the employee's ability to safely and effectively perform their job duties. Employees taking and possessing a prescribed medication must carry it in

the container labeled by a licensed pharmacist or be prepared to produce the container if asked.

- Any illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia will be turned over to an appropriate law enforcement agency and may result in criminal prosecution.
- Any employee of the County who is convicted of any criminal drug statute violation occurring within the county workplace shall notify his/her immediate supervisor of such conviction within five (5) days after such conviction. The County will notify appropriate state and federal grant agencies within ten (10) days after receiving notice of such convictions.
- Employees may also be subject to discipline for off duty conduct involving alcohol, marijuana, illegal drugs or controlled substances regardless of whether such conduct constitutes or results in any criminal action, where, in the opinion of the County, the employee's conduct adversely affects the County or a Department, including the County's reputation for honesty and safety.

### **Required Testing**

The County retains the right to require the following tests:

- **Pre-employment:** Some applicants may be required to pass a drug test before beginning work or receiving an offer of employment. Refusal to submit to testing will result in disqualification from further employment consideration.
- **Reasonable suspicion:** Employees are subject to drug/alcohol testing based on observations by a supervisor of apparent workplace use, possession or impairment.

### **Consequences**

Applicants who refuse to cooperate in a drug test or who test positive will not be hired. Employees who refuse to cooperate in required tests or who use, possess, buy, sell, manufacture or dispense an illegal drug in violation of this policy will be terminated. The first time an employee tests positive for alcohol or illegal drug use in violation of this policy, the result may be discipline up to and including discharge.

Employees may be suspended pending the results of the drug/alcohol test. After the results of the test are received, a date/time will be scheduled to discuss the results of the test; this meeting will include a Department Head. Should the results prove to be negative, the employee may receive back pay for the times/days of suspension, dependent on any other circumstances surrounding the suspension.

The County may require employees, as a condition of continued employment, to participate satisfactorily in an approved drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program, at the employee's expense, as an alternative to, or in conjunction with discipline.

### **Confidentiality**

Information and records relating to positive test results, drug and alcohol dependencies and legitimate medical explanations provided to the medical review officer (MRO) shall be kept

confidential to the extent required by law and maintained in secure files separate from normal personnel files.

### **Inspections**

Grundy County reserves the right to inspect all portions of its premises for drugs, alcohol or other contraband. All employees, contract employees and visitors may be asked to cooperate in inspections of their persons, work areas and property that might conceal a drug, alcohol or other contraband. Employees who possess such contraband or refuse to cooperate in such inspections are subject to appropriate discipline up to and including discharge.

### **Crimes Involving Drugs**

Grundy County prohibits all employees from manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing or using alcohol, marijuana, or an illegal drug in or on County work premises or while conducting County business. Employees are also prohibited from misusing legally prescribed or over-the-counter (OTC) drugs. Law enforcement personnel shall be notified, as appropriate, when criminal activity is suspected.

## **SAFETY AND HEALTH**

Grundy County is committed to maintaining safe and healthy working conditions. It is the responsibility of every employee to do their part to help us achieve this goal.

Every employee is expected to take all safety and health policies seriously and help enforce these policies within the work place-safety is everyone's job. The responsibilities of all employees in this regard include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Approach your job from the point of view of SAFETY - don't take risks. Come to your job well-rested and alert;
- Eliminate fire and other hazards by practicing good housekeeping;
- Never block fire exits, extinguishers, fire alarm boxes, aisles, switches, or power panels;
- Familiarize yourself with the location of the nearest outside exit from your work area;
- Wear proper safety equipment as required by job duties;
- Follow all safety instructions and policies relating to the performance of your job duties
- Do not operate any machines, mechanical equipment, etc., unless you have been properly trained and authorized to do so;
- Turn off all machinery when unattended or not in use, and when making repairs or cleaning;
- Do not perform any task that calls for more than one person until the required number of persons are present;
- Bring any unsafe conditions that you may notice to the Department Head's attention immediately;
- Report all accidents or injuries to the Department Head immediately;

Common sense is the most important rule of all. Please try to use it all times. Failure to observe and follow safety rules and procedures will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate discharge.

## **SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE**

Pursuant to the Smoke Free Illinois Act (410 ILCS 82/1, et seq.), smoking and use of tobacco products is prohibited in all County facilities and within 20 feet of all entrances, exits, windows that open, and ventilation intakes that serve an enclosed area where smoking is prohibited. In addition, smoking and use of tobacco products are prohibited in any vehicle owned, leased, or operated by the County. The law defines smoking as the "the carrying, smoking, burning, inhaling, or exhaling of any kind of lighted pipe, cigar, cigarette, hookah, weed, herbs, or any other lighted smoking equipment." This policy also applies to the use of the "E-cigarette" technology currently available.

In keeping with the County's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, smoking or the use of tobacco products on County property is permitted only in designated outdoor smoking areas. Even while smoking outdoors, employees must remember that tobacco use of any kind (including "chewing" tobacco) in the presence of others may be offensive. The rights of others must be a consideration at all times. In situations where the preference of smokers and non-smokers conflict, the preferences of the non-smokers will be observed.

Employees who violate the smoking restrictions may be subject to disciplinary action. Employees are free to report violations without fear of retaliation, in accordance with the Grundy County Personnel Policy.

## **VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE**

All employees, customers, vendors and business employees must be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from conduct that may be dangerous to others.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, coerces or creates a hostile work environment towards another employee, customer, vendor or business employee will not be tolerated. Grundy County resources may not be used to threaten, stalk or harass anyone at the workplace or outside the workplace. Grundy County treats threats coming from an abusive personal relationship as it does other forms of violence.

Indirect or direct threats of violence, incidents of actual violence and suspicious individuals or activities should be reported as soon as possible to a Department Head, Human Resources or security personnel. When reporting a threat or incident of violence, the employee should be as specific and detailed as possible. Employees should not place themselves in peril, nor should they attempt to intercede during an incident.

Employees should promptly inform their Department Head of any protective or restraining order that they have obtained that lists the workplace as a protected area. Grundy County will not retaliate against employees making good-faith reports.

Grundy County will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of violence or incidents of actual violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as possible. Grundy County will not retaliate against employees making good-faith reports of violence, threats or suspicious individuals or activities. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, Grundy County may suspend employees suspected of workplace violence or threats of violence, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

Anyone found to be responsible for threats of or actual violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Grundy County encourages employees to bring their disputes to the attention of their Department Head before the situation escalates. Grundy County will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

### **WORKPLACE ACCOMMODATIONS / LIGHT DUTY**

In general, Grundy County's light duty position classification is reserved for employees in the worker's compensation program and otherwise-qualified disabled employees subject to temporary work restrictions.

Each request by an employee for a deviation from the duties and requirements of his/her position will be treated on an individual basis in conformance with applicable State and Federal Laws. The employee must submit requests for work restrictions, in writing, to their department head. Generally, any accommodation or modification of an employee's job duties will be permitted on a temporary basis, and will be reviewed by the County at periodic intervals.

### **WORKPLACE BULLYING**

Grundy County defines bullying as “repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment.” Such behavior violates the Performance Standards, which clearly state that all employees will be treated with dignity and respect.

The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all employees, including supervisors, managers and executives, that the County will not tolerate bullying behavior. Employees found in violation of this policy will be disciplined up to and including termination.

Bullying may be intentional or unintentional. Grundy County considers the following types of behavior examples of bullying:

- **Verbal bullying:** Slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or his/her family; persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as the butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- **Physical bullying:** Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of physical assault; damage to a person's work area or property.

- **Gesture bullying:** Nonverbal threatening gestures or glances that convey threatening messages.
- **Exclusion:** Socially or physically excluding a person in work-related activities.

### **WORKPLACE CONTRABAND AND SECURITY INSPECTIONS**

Grundy County wishes to maintain a work environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol, unauthorized firearms, explosives, or other improper materials. To this end, the County prohibits the possession, transfer, sale or use of such materials on its premises. The County requires the cooperation of all employees in administering this policy.

Desks, lockers, and other storage devices may be provided for the convenience of employees, but remain the sole property of the County. Accordingly, they, as well as any articles found within them, can be inspected by any agent or representative of the County at any time, either with or without prior notice.

The County likewise wishes to discourage theft or unauthorized possession of the property of employees, the County, visitors, and customers. To facilitate enforcement of this policy, the County or its representative may inspect not only desks and lockers, but also persons entering and/or leaving the premises and any packages or other belongings, in accordance with and to the extent permitted by applicable law and relevant legal standards.

### **WORK-RELATED ACCIDENT, INJURY OR ILLNESS**

In accordance with applicable state law, employees will be paid benefits (lost salary and medical expenses) if disabled as result of a work-related accident or illness. The amount and duration of these benefits are specified by law based upon the nature and circumstances of the illness or injury.

Employees must immediately report to their Department Head who will also advise Human Resources all injuries, illnesses, or accidents that occur while working - no matter how minor. This ensures that the County can assist the employee in obtaining any necessary medical treatment, and determine if the employee is eligible for worker's compensation benefits. Failure to promptly report any illness, injury, or accident or to otherwise cooperate with the County's investigation and documentation of the incident may affect eligibility for worker's compensation benefits, and will result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate discharge. (See also Worker's Compensation Insurance section under Benefits)

### **MANDATORY EMPLOYEE TRAINING**

All Grundy County new hires are required to complete the mandatory computer security training within 5 (five) business days of receiving the training materials. Grundy County employees are required to complete ongoing computer based training to bring awareness to computer usage and ethics for computer use. This training must be completed by the end of each County fiscal year. The Information Technology Department will monitor employee's progress towards completion of this training during the year. Employees that have not completed the training by the end of the fiscal year, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

To comply with Federal and State regulations, Grundy County employees will be required to complete various mandatory training programs within the period of time determined by the County. Failure to complete any mandatory training within the pre-determined time may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND RECEIPT

I have received my copy of the Employee Handbook.

The employee handbook describes important information about Grundy County, and I understand that I should consult my Department Head regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I have entered into my employment relationship with Grundy County voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment. **Accordingly, either I or Grundy County can terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time, consistent with applicable federal or state law.**

I understand and agree that no manager, supervisor or representative of Grundy County has any authority to enter into any agreement for employment other than at will.

This handbook and the policies and procedures contained herein supersede any and all prior practices, oral or written representations, or statements regarding the terms and conditions of my employment with Grundy County. By distributing this handbook, the County expressly revokes any and all previous policies and procedures that are inconsistent with those contained herein. However, in the event of any conflict between the provisions of this handbook and the terms of any collective bargaining agreement, the terms of the collective bargaining agreement will control as to the employees covered by the collective bargaining agreement.

I understand that, except for employment-at-will status, any and all policies and practices may be changed at any time by Grundy County, and the County reserves the right to change my hours, wages and working conditions at any time. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify or eliminate existing policies.

I understand and agree that nothing in the Employee Handbook creates, or is intended to create, a promise or representation of continued employment and that employment at Grundy County is employment at will, which may be terminated at the will of either Grundy County or myself. Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I understand and agree that employment and compensation may be terminated with or without cause and with or without notice at any time by Grundy County or myself.

I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

Employee's Signature

Date

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Employee Name (Print)

TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE

Grundy County, Illinois

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Employee Handbook July 8, 1997, Revised: November 2018, February 2019, June 2019, December 2019