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**PERSONNEL MANUAL**

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## **PREFACE**

Peach County is an Equal Opportunity employer. We conduct all employment-related activities without regard to race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, creed, disability, or any other classification protected by applicable State or Federal employment discrimination laws.

Policies within this manual have been officially adopted by the Peach County Board of Commissioners at the regular meeting on April 12, 1988. Each employee of the county will be given a copy of the personnel manual and be required to have knowledge of the policies. Whenever a new employee is hired, he or she will likewise receive copies and have knowledge of the said policies. All employees will keep their individual copies of the personnel manual up-to-date and current by inserting any copies of changes or amendments which may be subsequently adopted by the Board of Commissioners. Employees will be expected to participate in a training session in order to know the policies and abide by them. Lack of knowledge of these policies by the employees will not be considered as justification for noncompliance.

## **ARTICLE I ORGANIZATION OF PERSONNEL SYSTEM**

### **SECTION I. INTRODUCTION**

This manual represents a commitment on the part of Peach County to conduct personnel administration in a professional manner. The purpose of the manual is to set forth;

- a. Personnel policy guidelines which will enable the county employee to know what privileges and benefits are by virtue of their employment, and to ensure fair and equitable treatment for all employees; and
- b. Position (job) titles with examples of the work to be expected in each situation.

Efficient and effective operation of a government unit is most likely when there is good morale among the employees of the government. Good morale depends, in large measure, upon personnel problems either not arising or being resolved quickly while still in scope. Use of this manual should serve to prevent some problems from developing and aid in the resolution of infallibility or permanence on the part of this document. It is expected that changes will be made from time-to-time as necessary. Employees are encouraged to make known to their supervisor any matters of discontent and seek a solution. If satisfaction is not received, the problem can be carried up through successively higher levels of supervision by filing a written report with copies going to the employee, supervisor and clerk of this board of commissioners.

### **SECTION 2. GENERAL**

The personnel policy for Peach County is predicated upon the belief that all employees are willing servants of the people, and to be more effective in public service, the needs and welfare of the employees should be met through fair dealings and equitable compensation for their work. Accordingly, this policy shall be applied equitably for all personnel in all departments of the county's administration.

### **SECTION 3. EMPLOYEE DEFINITIONS**

- a. Permanent Employees – A person appointed to serve in a position for an indefinite duration and who has served a period of more than six (6) months.
- b. Temporary Employee – A person appointed to serve in a position for a definite duration.
- c. Probationary Employee – A person may be appointed or re-appointed to a permanent position upon the completion of an observation period. (See Article III, Section I).
- d. Full-Time Employee – Any employee, either permanent or temporary, who is regularly scheduled to work the number of hours per workweek herein designated as full-time.

- e. Part-Time Employee – An employee, either permanent or temporary, who is regularly scheduled to work the number of hours per workweek herein designated as full-time.

## **ARTICLE II PAY PLAN**

### **SECTION 1. PAY PERIOD**

Employees of Peach County will be paid on a regular weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly schedule.

### **SECTION 2. PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

Federal and state income taxes, social security tax and any items authorized by the employee shall be deducted each pay period from the employee's pay.

### **SECTION 3. OVERTIME**

Overtime work is that work performed by an employee on a legal holiday or which exceeds the number of hours constituting the established workweek for the employee's position. There is no recognized overtime when a position involves professional or managerial work as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended.

Overtime opportunities will be distributed as equally as practicable among employees in the same job class and department regardless of age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, national origin or handicap. Overtime will be permitted only when absolutely necessary and when approved by the Peach County Board of Commissioners.

### ARTICLE III CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

#### SECTION I. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

- a. Duration. The probationary period shall be six (6) months in duration. However, no employee will have a property interest in his/her position until the completion of one (1) year of employment. During an employee's probationary period, the employee may be released or returned to his/her previous position without notice, by recommendation of the department head to the County Administrator, and with the approval of the County Administrator. The department head may recommend to the County Administrator that the probationary period of a newly hired, transferred, or promoted employee be extended for a period not to exceed three (3) months.
- b. Promotional Appointments. The probationary period shall be used in connection with promotional appointments in the same manner as it is used for initial appointments.
- c. Transfer Appointments. The probationary period shall be used in connection with employees placed in different positions due to a transfer.
- d. Interruption of Probationary Period. If an employee is laid off (that is, terminated not by fault of the employee) during a probationary period, and such person is subsequently reappointed in the same department, he or she may be given credit for that portion of the probationary period completed before the lay-off.
- e. Demotion During Probationary Period. A department head may demote an employee during the probationary period with the approval of the County Administrator. A written report of such demotion must be filed with the County Administrator before the effective date of the demotion.
- f. Probationary Period Reports. At the expiration of the employee's probationary period, the department head shall notify the County Administrator, in writing, of whether or not the employee has completed the probationary period. Failure to send such a notice within twenty (20) working days after the scheduled expiration date of the probationary period will be construed as completion of the probationary period. The department director is to maintain documentation on the employee's performance during the probationary period to assure that performance needing corrections is communicated clearly to the employee.
- g. Accrued Annual Leave. Employees will not obtain a property interest in any accrued annual leave until the completion of one (1) year of employment. Annual leave may not be requested by the new employee until after the one (1) year period is complete. If the new employee leaves the service of Peach County prior to completing his or her first year of employment, the employee will not be entitled to payment of any accrued annual leave. Employees placed on probation due to promotions or transfers will not

lose their property interest in any accrued annual leave unless the employee fails to give proper notice of his or her resignation.

## SECTION 2. NORMAL WORKING HOURS AND DAYS/NORMAL WORK WEEK

Normal working hours and days are from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday for all county office personnel. Deviations from the normal working hours and days may be scheduled by individual department heads, as necessary, to fulfill the work requirement of a particular department.

The normal work week is forty (40) hours for all county offices except the Sheriff's Department.

Normal working hours and days are from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday for all personnel in the public works and sanitation department.

Lunch break for employees reporting for work at 8:00 a.m. may normally take a one (1) hour break each day between the hours of 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. or as close to that time as possible. Employees reporting for work at 8:30 a.m. will be authorized a thirty (30) minute lunch break. This will be scheduled by their immediate supervisor.

## SECTION 3. ATTENDANCE

Employees are expected to be present for work during normal working hours on normal working days or as schedule by their supervisors. If an employee is unable to be at work for any reason, sickness, injury, or other reasons, he or she is expected to notify his supervisor of the situation as soon as possible.

## SECTION 4. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Outside employment is any compensated activity performed by an employee of Peach County for any person or organization other than Peach County, and any such outside employment must conform to the following conditions:

- a. The outside employment must not interfere with the efficient performance of the employee's duties for the county.
- b. It must not in any way present a conflict of interest with the duties of employees for the county.
- c. It cannot involve the performance of duties which the employee should perform as part of his/her employment for the county.
- d. No employee may be employed in outside employment during the regular working hours and days for Peach County, unless the employee is on annual vacation leave, compensatory leave or time-off, or leave without pay.



## SECTION 5. SAFETY AND HEALTH

Peach County will provide the cleanest, safest and most healthful working environment as possible. Nevertheless, safety shall be the concern and responsibility of all personnel, and employees are expected to observe all posted or announced safety regulations, and to reserve cleanliness and order in their place of work. All accidents are to be reported to the supervisor regardless of how slight the accident may appear. The report must be submitted within ten (10) days from the date of the accident to be covered by Workman's Compensation.

## SECTION 6. ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS AND GRATUITIES

No employee may accept gifts, gratuities, or loans from any organization, business concern, or individual with whom he has official relationships through his or her employment by Peach County. These limitations are not intended to preclude the acceptance of articles of negligible value which are distributed generally, to prohibit social courtesies which promote good public relations, nor to prevent employees from obtaining loans from regular lending institutions. Nevertheless, it is particularly important that inspections, contractor's officers, and enforcement officers maintain consistent relations of impeccable propriety.

## SECTION 7. PEACH COUNTY DRIVING AND VEHICLE USAGE POLICY

The following policies and procedures have been established in an effort to provide consistency in the management and usage of Peach County vehicles. All references to "County" in this policy means Peach County. All references to "BOC" in this policy means Board of Commissioners.

### A. General Policy Provisions

1. Every employee in charge of any vehicle owned by the county shall exercise care in the operation of that vehicle and avoid accidents. Disregard of this obligation shall be grounds for discharge. Each department head shall inform, in writing, each person within their department entrusted with the operation of a motor vehicle of this section.
2. Use of any county-owned vehicle for personal use is prohibited.
3. Drivers must drive responsibly at all times and follow all traffic regulations, including the speed limits.
4. Any suspected problems with a county vehicle should be reported immediately to department supervisor to schedule an evaluation of the suspected problem. The vehicle is not to be driven until the potential problem is resolved.
5. All vehicles are to be maintained free of all trash and debris.

6. County employees driving or riding in county-owned vehicles in seats for which seatbelts are provided must wear seatbelts at all times consistent with the manufacturer's specifications.
7. Smoking in any county motor vehicle is prohibited.
8. Holding or supporting, with any part of the body, a wireless telecommunications device (cell phones, gps receiver, personal digital assistant, portable telephones, text messaging devices, any similar portable wireless device used to send/receive communication or data) or stand-alone electronic device is prohibited.
9. Reaching for a device if it means you're no longer in a seated, driving position or properly restrained by a seatbelt is prohibited.
10. Watching a video or movie other than watching data related to the navigation of your vehicle is prohibited.
11. While driving a county vehicle you may only use an electronic device to report an accident, medical emergency, fire, a crime or delinquent act or a hazardous road condition
12. You may use your device if you're lawfully parked off or beside the road in an area open to parking.
13. Only speaking or texting will be allowed by the usage of hands free technology.
14. Only first responders are exempt from the hands free law if they are performing official duties.
15. The operation by or transportation of non-county personnel in a county vehicle is strictly prohibited except as required for legitimate county business purposes.
16. All employees authorized to drive a county vehicle will be required to have a clean drug screening on file and be subject to future random drug testing per county policy. A signed acknowledgement of having read and received a copy of the Peach County Substance Abuse Policy must be on record in the employee's personnel file.

#### B. Driver's Licensing Requirements

1. Driver's must have and maintain a valid Georgia driver's license and maintain a driving history that is in compliance with this policy. A signed acknowledgement of having read and received a copy of the Peach County Driving and Vehicle Usage Policy must be on record in the employee's personnel file. A signed and notarized consent form allowing periodic driver history checks during the term of the approved driver's Peach County employment or voluntary service must be on file in the employee's personnel file.

2. All employees who are required to drive a Peach County vehicle in the performance of their jobs must adhere to the following driving policy:
  - a. No major violations in the last three years, which includes Eluding a Police Officer and Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol or Drugs.
  - b. No more than one speeding violation in the last three years where the violation was found to be at least 15 mph above the posted speed limit.
  - c. No more than one at-fault accident in the last three years.
3. Peach County will periodically check the driving record of each employee required to drive a Peach County vehicle to verify that the employee is in compliance with the above policy.
4. County employees authorized to operate county vehicles are to notify their department head and the Human Resources Manager immediately upon receiving a traffic citation of any kind.
5. County employees authorized to operate county vehicles are to notify their department head and Human Resources Manager immediately upon being issued a citation or charge involving the operation of a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or an illegal controlled substance.

#### C. Seatbelt Policy

Peach County values the lives and safety of its employees. It is estimated that seatbelts reduce the risk of death in a motor vehicle crash by 45 percent; therefore, Peach County has adopted the following policy concerning employee seatbelt usage:

1. All employees and their passengers are required to use a seatbelt when traveling in any vehicle while conducting Peach County business. This requirement applies to business travel in a vehicle owned by Peach County, in a rental vehicle, or in a vehicle owned by an individual employee, regardless of whether the employee is compensated for the use of his/her vehicle.
2. The Peach County employee and all passengers are to use seatbelts in a manner that is consistent with the manufacturer's specifications at all times that the vehicle is in motion.
3. The use of seatbelts shall be a condition of employment with Peach County. Failure to abide by this policy will be considered a breach of that condition of employment and subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Peach County Personnel System, Article V, Separation, Discipline, Reinstatement, SECTION 8, FAILURE IN PERSONAL CONDUCT.

#### D. Vehicle Assignments

1. The BOC shall make vehicle assignments to specific departments for use in conducting official county business. Vehicle assignments will be reviewed and approved by the BOC on an annual basis as part of the annual budget preparation process.
2. The BOC shall make specific vehicle assignments where a vehicle is more appropriately assigned to a single employee for the conduct of official county business. No vehicles are to be taken home at the end of the workday except where specifically authorized by the BOC after reviewing the job-related responsibilities of each position to determine if that vehicle will be needed to ensure the safety and benefit of Peach County citizens by providing the employee the ability to respond on a 24-hour basis to emergency situations, or to provide medical aid or for other county purposes as determined at the sole discretion of the BOC. In no event will an employee residing outside the boundaries of Peach County be allowed to retain use of a county vehicle on a continuous 24-hour basis without explicit approval by the BOC.
3. Vehicles can be taken home due to an impending emergency or in the event special circumstances arise where taking an assigned vehicle home will better meet the need and financial benefit of Peach County citizens, if pre-approved permission is received from the Peach County Administrator. Said pre-approved permission shall not extend beyond a 24-hour period, and at no time extend beyond the conclusion of the emergency event or special circumstances.

#### E. Reporting an Accident

1. County employees authorized to operate a county vehicle are to notify their department head and the Human Resources Manager immediately upon being involved in any motor vehicle accident.
2. Any approved driver involved in an accident or situation which has caused any amount of damage or injury while operating a county motor vehicle must immediately notify Peach County E911 at 478-822-9111 to report the occurrence and begin the process and procedures outlined in the Peach County Safety Policy for reporting accidents.
3. A signed acknowledgement of having read and received a copy of the Peach County Safety Policy must be on record in the employee's personnel file.
4. Any driver involved in an accident or situation which has caused any amount of damage or injury while operating a county motor vehicle must submit to a post-accident alcohol/substance screening according to county policy.

#### F. Policy Enforcement

1. Peach County employees found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the Peach County Personnel Policy, Article V, Separation, Discipline, and Reinstatement.
2. In addition to the disciplinary process outlined in Article V of the Peach County Personnel Policy, the privilege of driving a county vehicle may be withdrawn for any of the following reasons:
  - a. Abuse or misuse of the vehicle or failure to comply with the rules and procedures stipulated in this policy.
  - b. A driving record which becomes deficient according to the Peach County Driving and Vehicle Usage Policy.
  - c. Failure of a county employee to notify the Human Resources Manager of any motor vehicle accident involving said employee.
  - d. Failure of a county employee to notify the Human Resources Manager of any traffic citation issued to the county employee.
  - e. Failure of a county employee to notify the Human Resources Manager of any citation or charge issued to the county employee for any charges involving the operation of a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or an illegal substance.
  - f. Failure of a county employee who has been assigned a take-home vehicle to report that he/she has moved his/her primary residence to a location outside the boundaries of Peach County.
  - g. Failure of a random or post-accident alcohol/substance screening.
3. Peach County reserves the right to install a GPS monitoring system on any county motor vehicle used for official county business to monitor the location of the vehicle, to encourage proper usage of the vehicle, to provide added safety to all approved drivers, to protect the vehicle in case of theft. Tampering with the GPS System is prohibited.

#### SECTION 8. DRUG-FREE POLICY STATEMENT

It shall be the policy of Peach County that its workplace shall be drug-free in compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988.

It is the policy of Peach County to assure that employees are not impaired in their ability to perform assigned duties in a safe, productive, and healthy manner, create a workplace environment free from the adverse effects of drug abuse and alcohol misuse, prohibit the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of controlled substances; to encourage employees to seek professional assistance anytime personal problems, including

alcohol or drug dependency, adversely affect their ability to perform their assigned duties; and to protect our employees and the public from the risks posed by the misuse of alcohol and use of prohibited drugs.

All job applicants considered for employment, and applicants requesting to be transferred into a safety-sensitive position shall be required to pass a drug/alcohol test prior to employment. Failure of a pre-employment drug test will disqualify an applicant for employment for a period of 120 days. Evidence of the absence of drug dependency from a Substance Abuse Professional that meets with the approval of Peach County and a negative pre-employment drug test will be required prior to further consideration for employment. The cost for the assessment and any subsequent treatment will be the sole responsibility of the individual. All job applicants shall be informed in advance that said testing shall be required.

#### SECTION 9. NEPOTISM

It is hereby declared to be the policy of Peach County that no department head, member of the County Commission, or County Administrator shall appoint or employ any person to any regular classified position in the county who is a member of the immediate or extended family of such officer if such appointment or employment would cause a relative of such officer to come under the direct supervision of such officer.

The employment of relatives is not prohibited by the county as long as none of the related persons are employed in a supervisory role in which they might have an effect on a relative's progress, performance, or welfare as an employee.

An employee may not be promoted into a position in which they would have supervisory responsibility over a relative, unless the relative can be transferred to another position that would not be under the supervision of the relative that is being promoted.

For this nepotism policy, "relatives" are defined as spouse, mother, father, stepmother, stepfather, son, daughter, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, stepson, stepdaughter, brother, brother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, half-brother, half-sister, grandchild, grandparent, and grandparent of spouse.

This section does not apply to any situations constituting a violation of this policy at the time of this policy's adoption.

#### SECTION 10. SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Sexual Harassment is prohibited under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has issued guidelines stating part that unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature amounts to sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is implicitly or explicitly made a condition of an individual's employment.

2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis of employment decisions, or
3. Such conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile work environment.

It is Peach County Government's policy that all employees have a right to work in an environment free of discrimination, which encompasses freedom from sexual harassment. Peach County Government does not tolerate sexual harassment of its employees in any form, and states that all employees at all levels of our government must avoid offensive or inappropriate sexual and/or sexually harassing behavior at work and will be held responsible for insuring that the workplace is free of sexual harassment.

Specifically, Peach County Government prohibits the following:

1. Unwelcomed sexual advances
2. Requests for sexual favors, whether or not accompanied by promises of threats regarding the employment relationship
3. Other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature made to any employee that may threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that any employee's submission to or rejection of sexual advances will in any way influence any personnel decision regarding that person's employment, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts, or any other condition of employment or career development.
4. Any verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the employee's ability to do his/her job.
5. Any verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Such conduct will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Sexually harassing conduct in the workplace, whether physical or verbal, committed by supervisors or non-supervisory personnel is prohibited. This behavior includes but is not limited to, commentary about an individual's body, sexually degrading words to describe an individual, offensive comments, off-color language or jokes, innuendoes, and sexually suggestive objects, books, magazines, photographs, cartoons, or pictures.

Employees who have complaints of sexual harassment by anyone at work, including any supervisors, coworkers, employees, or visitors, must report such conduct to their immediate supervisor, or other management personnel, the County Administrator, or a person or persons designated by the Peach County Board of Commissioners to receive this information, so that an immediate investigation can be conducted, and the situation resolved. Upon being informed of a complaint, management receiving the complaint must immediately notify the County

Administrator. If the complaint involves the employee's supervisor or someone in the direct line of supervision, or if the employee for any reason is uncomfortable in dealing with his/her immediate supervisor, the employee may go to another supervisor or directly to the County Administrator or a Board Designee. Persons currently appointed as Board Designees are Chief Registrar, Peach County Voter Registrar, and Peach County Sheriff's Department.

Peach County Government will investigate all complaints as expeditiously and as professionally as possible. Where investigations confirm the allegation, timely and appropriate corrective action will be taken.

Peach County Government will make every attempt to maintain the information provided to it in the complaint and investigation process as confidential as possible.

There will be no retaliation against employees for reporting sexual harassment or assisting in the investigation of a complaint. However, if after investigating any complaint of harassment or unlawful discrimination, it is learned that an employee has intentionally provided false information regarding the complaint, disciplinary action may be taken against the individual who falsified the information, up to and including termination.

#### **SECTION 11. ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER, INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Use of the Internet by employees of Peach County is permitted and encourage where such use supports the goals and objectives of the government.

However, Peach County has a policy for the use of the Internet whereby employees must ensure that they:

1. Comply with current legislation
2. Use the Internet in an acceptable way
3. Do not create unnecessary business risk to the county by their misuse of the Internet.

#### **Monitoring**

Peach County accepts that the use of the Internet is a valuable business tool. However, misuse of this facility can have a negative impact upon employee productivity and the reputation of the business.

In addition, all of the county's Internet-related resources are provided for business purposes.

Therefore, the county maintains the right to monitor the volume of Internet and network traffic, together with the Internet sites visited. The specific content of any transactions will not be monitored unless there is suspicion of improper use.

#### **Unacceptable behavior**



In particular the following is deemed unacceptable use or behavior by employees:

1. Visiting Internet sites that contain obscene, hateful, pornographic or otherwise illegal material
2. Using the computer to perpetrate any form of fraud, or software, film or music piracy
3. Using the Internet to send offensive or harassing material to other users
4. Downloading commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, unless this download is covered or permitted under a commercial agreement or other such license
5. Hacking into unauthorized areas
6. Publishing defamatory and/or knowingly false material about Peach County, your colleagues and/or customer on social networking sites, "blogs" (online journals), "wikis" and any online publishing format
7. Revealing confidential information about Peach County in a personal online posting, upload or transmission – including financial information and information relating to our citizens, customers, business plans, policies, staff and/or internal discussions.
8. Undertaking deliberate activities that waste staff effort or networked resources
9. Introducing any form of malicious software into the government network

### **County-owned information held on third-party websites**

If you produce, collect and/or process business-related information in the course of your work, the information remains the property of Peach County. This includes such information stored on third-party websites such as webmail service providers and social networking sites, such as Facebook and LinkedIn.

### **Social Media Policy**

Employees of Peach County Board of Commissioners shall not use any form of social media in any way so as to tarnish the image or reputation of the County or its employees. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet.

Employees of the Peach County are prohibited from using social media during working hours or on equipment that is provided by the County, unless it is work-related as authorized by the Department Director and consistent with the Computer and Internet use Policy. Employees are not permitted to use their assigned County email address to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

Employees must refrain from engaging in any social media activity which disqualifies them from performing, or in any way reasonably calls into question their ability to objectively perform, any essential function of their jobs. Examples of such functions include, but are not limited to, making hiring or promotion decisions or recommendations and conducting performance evaluations.

Employees who choose to maintain or participate in social media or social networking platforms while off duty shall conduct themselves with professionalism and in such a manner that will not reflect

negatively upon Peach County. Employees should be mindful of all postings on social media. Postings that include discriminatory remarks, sexually harassing statements, threats of retaliation or violence will not be tolerated. These types of postings will lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

No employee, whether through social media activity or otherwise, may disclose or reveal any privileged or confidential information of Peach County, any other current or former employee of Peach County, or any applicant for employment with Peach County.

Peach County shares notices about county government and its activities via social media to reach a broader audience and so that interested citizens can also share our information. Peach County encourages the public to submit comments, questions or concerns. Peach County reserves the right to delete any vulgar language, personal attacks of any kind and any offensive comments that target or disparage any ethnic, racial or religious group. Please note that all comments are subject to open records laws and are subject to be monitored only during business hours.

## **Sanctions**

Refer to Article V, Section 6: disciplinary Actions

## **Agreement**

All county employees, contractors or temporary staff who have been granted the right to use the county's Internet access are required to sign this agreement confirming their understanding and acceptance of this policy.

**ARTICLE IV  
HOLIDAYS, LEAVE, AND BREAKS**

**SECTION I. HOLIDAYS**

For the purpose of establishing uniformity in the administration of paid holidays, all county offices, except those that must remain open on said holidays because of work requirements, shall be closed the following days:

New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday	January, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday
National Memorial Day	May, 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday
Juneteenth	June 19 <sup>th</sup>
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	September, 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday
Veteran's Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	November, 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday
Day after Thanksgiving Day	November, 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday
Christmas Eve	December 24
Christmas Day	December 25

All regular employees of Peach County shall be eligible for holiday leave for the days listed above and other days as designated by specific action of the County Commission. Regular employees shall be paid for holidays based on the number of hours they normally work each day, exclusive of overtime. Temporary status employees will not be paid for holidays not worked.

When the holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be designated as the official holiday for that year. When the holiday falls on Sunday, the following Monday shall be designated as the official holiday for that year.

An employee who is not on approved leave and fails to report on his/her scheduled work day before and after a holiday shall not be paid for the holiday. Holidays which occur during approved annual or sick leave shall not be charged against the employee's annual or sick leave accruals.

**SECTION 2. ANNUAL VACATION LEAVE**

Permanent, full-time employees will be entitled to annual leave according to the following:

- a. After one (1) year of service, employees are entitled to ten (10) days of annual leave.
- b. After six (6) years of service, one (1) day of annual leave is added for each additional year of service.

- c. A maximum of thirty (30) days of annual leave may be earned.

For example, an employee who has six (6) years of service with the county will earn ten (10) days of annual leave; an employee who has seven (7) years of service with the county will earn eleven (11) days; an employee who has eight (8) years of service with the county will earn twelve (12) days; and so on up to a maximum of thirty (30) days.

Requests for annual leave must be made at least two (2) weeks prior to the first day of annual leave unless in a case of an emergency and are subject to the department supervisor's approval for both date and duration. Employees will continue normal salary during annual leave. On March 1 of each year, any annual leave in excess for thirty (30) days will be lost. Also, no more than ten (10) days of annual leave may be taken in any consecutive three (3) month period.

In the event of termination of service, an employee will be compensated for those days of annual leave to which he/she is entitled up to thirty (30) days.

### SECTION 3. SICK LEAVE

Sick Leave with pay is a privilege granted by Peach County for the benefit of an employee when sick. Regular full-time employees shall be credited with one day of sick leave for each month of service with the county. Sick leave may be used by the employee only for injury, illness, or medical and dental examination and/or treatment of the employee or members of the immediate family (spouse or children). Notifications of the desire to take sick leave should be submitted to the department supervisor prior to the leave or as soon as possible after the beginning of a schedule workday. Employees who are out due to sickness, injury, etc. for more than two (2) consecutive working days will be required to submit a physician's statement of cause upon their return.

Salaried employees will continue their normal pay during sick leave. Hourly employees shall receive hourly wages, not to exceed eight (8) hours per regular working day during sick leave.

Employees in all county departments may accumulate no more than one hundred twenty (120) days of sick leave. Also, sick leave will be taken in units of whole hours or days only. In the event of termination, no employee will be compensated for accumulated sick leave.

### SECTION 4. CIVIC LEAVE

Peach County feels that it is the civic duty of each county employee to serve when called for jury duty. To this end, employees called for jury duty will be given leave of absence with pay for the duration of their service on the jury. Such pay will be determined as follows:

The county will pay an employee given leave for jury duty the sum equal to his/her normal rate of pay while working.

Likewise, county employees are encouraged to vote and will be afforded necessary time to do so up to two (2) hours. Time off to vote shall be granted by the supervisor in a manner

not to interfere with work progress.

#### SECTION 5. MILITARY LEAVE

Military leave, in accordance with the Official Code of Georgia Annotated § 38-2-279, is available to employees who are members of the National Guard or Armed Forces Reserve. During the period of military leave, the employee will not exceed thirty (30) days in any one (1) calendar year, nor will it exceed thirty (30) days in any single occurrence of such leave. Military leave is in addition to annual leave and will not count against the individual's annual vacation leave.

#### SECTION 6. TRAINING/EDUCATION LEAVE

An educational leave of absence at full pay during regular working hours may be granted to permit an employee to take courses of study which will better equip him/her to perform assigned duties, subject to board approval. Items required for training and tuition will be paid by the county. Further, approval of educational leave with pay will necessarily be controlled by county work requirements and the availability of funds in the budget.

#### SECTION 7. MATERNITY LEAVE

(Note: Pursuant to action taken by the Peach County Board of Commissioners on December 9, 2003, Section 7 has been removed. Please see Section 10, Family and Medical Leave Act.)

#### SECTION 8. EMERGENCY LEAVE

Employees will be granted three (3) days of leave with pay in the event of the death or illness of members of their immediate family (spouse, mother, father, children, brothers, sisters) upon request by the employee and approval by the department supervisor.

#### SECTION 9. OTHER LEAVE

Leaves of absence without pay for other personal reasons may be granted by department supervisors on an individual basis after consideration for the requirements of Peach County.

#### SECTION 10. FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

In accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), codified at 29 USC Sections 2611 *et seq.*, eligible employees are covered under the Act. Eligible employees are defined in Section C. The law requires Peach County to provide up to 12 weeks of leave to employees who need to care for themselves, a parent, child or spouse.

The 12-month period during which each 12 weeks of leave may be taken is measured forward from the date of when each employee's first FMLA leave begins.

- A. Purpose for Which Leave May Be Taken. Employees are entitled to take up to twelve (12) weeks unpaid leave per year for:

1. The birth of the employee's child.
  2. The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care.
  3. To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition; or,
  4. A serious health condition of the employee rendering the employee unable to perform his/her job.
- B. Reinstatement Rights. At the end of the FMLA leave, the employee will have the right to reinstatement to his/her former position or an equivalent position, with all of the rights, privileges, and benefits that had accrued to the employee, as if the leave had not been taken. If the employee is unable to return to work at the end of the twelve (12) weeks of approved FMLA leave, Peach County will be authorized to terminate all leave accruals and payments made by Peach County toward the employee's health and life insurance, and Peach County will be authorized to hire a replacement for the employee's position. However, at the discretion of the county, if the employee is unable to return to work at the end of the allowed 12 weeks of FMLA leave, such employee may be eligible for reinstatement within six months following the expiration of the FMLA leave, if the position or a comparable position is available and if the employee is in good standing with respect to the employee's employment status. An employee returning to his/her position within this six-month period following the expiration of the FMLA leave will be allowed to regain his/her years of service toward retirement and qualified leave accrual rates. The county will not provide health insurance during the six months period, although COBRA rights may be applicable.
- C. Eligibility. Peach County employees are eligible for FMLA leave if they have been employed by the county for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1250 hours over the previous 12 months.
- D. Intermittent Leave or Reduced Work Schedule. Leave may be taken intermittently or by working a reduced schedule. However, in no event will the employee's right to FMLA leave exceed twelve (12) weeks in the 12-month period following the date when the approved FMLA begins.
- E. Use of Accrued Sick or Annual Leave.
1. Any sick leave or annual leave that the employee has accrued must be used in conjunction with the FMLA leave. Such paid leave will count toward the twelve (12) weeks of FMLA leave due the employee.
  2. Exception: Employees on Family Medical Leave Act for a Peach County workplace injury or illness resulting in a serious health condition have the option between choosing workers' compensation income benefits at 2/3 of their average weekly wages, up to a maximum of \$675.00 per week, **OR** using

their balance of accrued leave. If the employee ceases to be eligible for or elects not to receive Workers' Compensation Income Benefits, it will be required that any remaining balance of the employee's accrued sick leave, accrued annual leave, and accrued compensatory time shall be used for any additional FMLA leave or other absences taken pursuant to the workplace injury or illness, either continuous or intermittent, until the conclusion of the FMLA Leave, or until the employee is deemed eligible again for Workers' Compensation Income Benefits due to changes in medical condition and elects the change, in writing, from usage of accrued leave balance to Workers' Compensation Income Benefits.

- F. Notice Required. The employee must request FMLA leave, if practical, at last thirty (30) days prior to the date the proposed leave is to begin. If the need is based on an emergency, the leave request should be made to the employee's supervisor as soon as possible. Furthermore, the county may request periodic status reports from the employee, including a statement regarding the employee's intention to return to work.
- G. Medical Certification. Medical certification of the employee's or family member's serious medical need, made by the treating healthcare provider, is required before FMLA leave will be granted. At the county's request, and at its expense, a second opinion of the nature of the medical need may be required. Failure to provide the medical certification may result in denial of the FMLA leave request.
- H. Reinstatement. Prior to returning the employee to work, if otherwise eligible, the county may require an unconditional release form from the treating healthcare provider stating that the employee is fit to return to unrestricted work prior to permitting reinstatement.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **SEPARATION, DISCIPLINE, REINSTATEMENT**

#### **SECTION 1. TYPES OF SEPARATION**

All separation of employees from positions in Peach County shall be designated as one of the following types and shall be accomplished in the manner indicated; resignation, reduction in force, disability, retirement, dismissal, or death.

#### **SECTION 2. RESIGNATION**

An employee who desires to terminate his employment with Peach County is expected to give notice to his supervisor two (2) weeks prior to his last intended day of employment. An employee who does not provide the required notification shall have recorded on his service record that he resigned without giving proper notice. After a resignation has been submitted, and in the opinion of the department supervisor, the employee's general attitude, punctuality, and overall performance level declines, the supervisor may make the resignation effective immediately. Any employee who is absent from work three (3) consecutive workdays without reporting to this supervisor the reasons for an absence shall be considered to have terminated employment with the county unless in the case of an emergency.

#### **SECTION 3. REDUCTION IN FORCE**

If a reduction in force becomes necessary, consideration shall be given to the quality of each employee's past performance, the need for the employee's service, and seniority in determining those employees to be retained. Employees who are laid off because of reduction in force shall be given at least four (4) weeks' notice of anticipated layoff.

#### **SECTION 4. DISABILITY**

An employee may be separated for disability when the employee cannot perform the required duties because of a physical or mental impairment. Action may have been initiated by the employee or Peach County, but in all causes it shall be supported by medical evidence and certified by a practicing physician. Peach County may require an examination at its expense and performed by a physician of its choice. Before an employee is separated for disability, a reasonable effort shall be made to locate alternative positions with the county's service for which the employees may be suited.

#### **SECTION 5. RETIREMENT**

All personnel with (10) years of service with Peach County may retire on the day in which the employee reaches age fifty-five (55) with compensation commensurate with that set forth in the Retirement Policy of Peach County.



## SECTION 6. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Peach County employees will be subject to the following progressive discipline actions:

1. Employee counseling or Oral Reprimand in which the employee is counseled by the immediate supervisor about the employee's performance or conduct in an effort to eliminate misunderstandings, to improve performance, and/or to explain what constitutes acceptable conduct.
2. Written reprimand will be given to an employee for repeated offenses or when the immediate supervisor and/or department head believes that an offense in the first instance is serious enough to warrant issuing a formal written warning without giving an oral reprimand. Written reprimands should inform the employee of area of improvement, corrective actions needed and what action will be taken if the problem is not satisfactorily resolved.
3. Suspensions without pay or termination will occur when an employee fails to correct performance problems after repeated warnings. The Department supervisor shall make a recommendation to the County Administrator for such action.

The supervisor shall provide the employee with a written notice including the effective date, reason for the action, appeal rights available to the employee and all disciplinary actions will be placed in the employee's file. Although disciplinary documentation will remain in the employee's file, disciplinary action taken against the employee more than six years previously will not be considered in any new disciplinary procedures or employment decisions.

All employees will be subject to disciplinary procedures for sections 7 and 8 of this policy.

## SECTION 7. FAILURE IN PERFORMANCE OF DUTIES

An employee whose work is unsatisfactory over a period shall be notified by the supervisor in what way his/her work is deficient and what must be done if the work is to be satisfactory.

The following causes relating to failure in the performance of duties representative of those considered to be adequate grounds for disciplinary actions:

- a. Inefficient, negligent, or incompetent performance of duties
- b. Careless, negligent or improper use of county property or equipment
- c. Physical or mental incapacity of perform duties
- d. Discourteous treatment of the public or other employees

- e. Absence without approved leave
- f. Habitual improper use of sick leave; and
- g. Habitual pattern of failure to report for duty at the assigned time and place

#### SECTION 8. FAILURE IN PERSONAL CONDUCT

An employee may be suspended, demoted, or dismissed for causes relating to personal conduct detrimental to service with Peach County – (1) in order to avoid undue disruption of work; (2) to protect the safety of persons or property; or (3) other serious reasons.

The following causes relating to failure in personal conduct are representative of those considered to be adequate grounds for disciplinary actions.

- a. Fraud, Theft;
- b. Conviction of a felony
- c. Misappropriation of Peach County funds;
- d. Negligent abuse of county equipment and property;
- e. Violation of the Peach County Driving and Vehicle Usage Policy;
- f. Violation of the Peach County Substance Abuse Policy;
- g. Engaging in physical conduct of a sexual nature on or within county property tending to cause undue disruption of work performance, hostile work environment, or tending to substantially interfere with an employee's ability to do his/her job.
- h. Violation of the Acceptable Computer, Internet and Social Media Policy
- i. Insubordinate or uncooperative behavior
- j. Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace

#### SECTION 9. DISCIPLINARY SUSPENSION

An employee who is suspended for disciplinary reasons shall be temporarily relieved of all duties and responsibilities and shall receive no compensation for the period of suspension.

#### SECTION 10. NON-DISCIPLINARY SUSPENSION

During the investigation hearing, or trial of an employee on any criminal charge, or during the course of any civil action involving an employee, the supervisor may suspend the employee without pay for the duration of the proceedings as a non-disciplinary action. However, the investigation, hearing, trial, or civil action must involve matters that may form the basis for

disciplinary suspension, demotion or dismissal in order for the non-disciplinary suspension to be allowed.

Full recover of pay and benefits for the period of non-disciplinary suspension will be authorized by the County Commissioners if the suspension is terminated with full reinstatement of the employee.

#### SECTION 11. EMPLOYEE APPEAL

A permanent employee wishing to appeal a demotion, suspension, or dismissal may present the matter in accordance with the provisions of the grievance procedure prescribed in Article VI of this policy.

#### SECTION 12. REINSTATEMENT

An employee who enters extended active duty with the Armed Forces will be granted reinstatement rights as set forth below. An employee who is reinstated shall be credited with previous service and previously earned sick leave and will receive all benefits provided in accordance with this policy and under supplementary rules and regulations. The salary paid to a reinstated employee shall be as close as reasonably possible, given the circumstances of each employee's case, to the salary step previously attained by the employee in the salary range for the previous class of work, plus any across-the-board pay increase.

## **ARTICLE VI GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

### **SECTION 1. ORGANIZATION OF GRIEVANCE APPEALS COMMITTEE**

The Peach County Board of Commissioners shall serve as the Grievance Appeals Committee and shall be responsible for calling for such meetings. Meetings shall be held from time-to-time as necessary. A county secretary shall serve as secretary to the committee and shall perform such duties as the committee may direct.

### **SECTION 2. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE - PURPOSE**

This procedure has been set to;

- a. Provide employees a procedure by which their complaints can be considered rapidly, fairly, and without reprisal;
- b. Provide a means for employees to express themselves about the conditions of work which affect them as employees;
- c. Promote better understanding of policies, practices, and procedures that affect employees;
- d. Instill confidence in employees that personal actions are taken in accordance with established, fair, and uniform policies and procedures; and
- e. Develop in supervisors a greater sense of responsibility in their dealings with employees.

### **SECTION 3. GRIEVANCE - DEFINITION**

A grievance is a claim or complaint based upon an event or condition which affects the circumstances under which an employee works, allegedly caused by misinterpretation, unfair application, or lack of established policy pertaining to employment conditions. A grievance might involve alleged safety or health hazards, unsatisfactory physical facilities, surroundings or disciplinary practices, unjust treatment by fellow workers, unreasonable work quotas, or any other matter relating to conditions of employment.

### **SECTION 4. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

When an employee or group of employees has a claim or complaint concerning the condition of his/her employment with Peach County, the following successive steps are to be taken.

**Step 1.** The employee (s) with a grievance shall present the matter orally or in writing to their department supervisor within twenty (20) calendar days of its occurrence or within twenty (20) days of the time that the employee learns of its occurrence. The supervisor shall give the employee an answer as soon as possible, but within three (3) working days.

**Step 2.** If the grievance is not resolved during Step 1, the employee (s) may file a written request for reconsideration within three (3) working days after the supervisors' Step 1 decision. The supervisor shall respond in writing to the reconsideration request within a maximum of five (5) working days.

**Step 3.** If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the employee or group of employees, they may, in writing, ask the department supervisor to refer the written request to the Grievance Appeals Committee, which shall arrange a time to hear the employee or group of employees and their representative and give an answer within ten (10) working days. The written request for referral of the grievance to the Appeals Committee shall state the basis for dissatisfaction with the department supervisor's decision.

The Board of Commissioners of Peach County may decline to hear the grievance if it concludes, after examining the written materials submitted, that the reason for dissatisfaction with the Grievance Appeals Committee's decision is groundless, lacks specificity, or for other reasons.

**APPENDIX A**  
**PEACH COUNTY RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM POLICY**

It is the policy of Peach County to provide and establish a Return-to-Work Policy and Procedure for employees with work-related injuries and illnesses who are unable, temporarily and permanently, to return to their permanent job duties.

Because Peach County recognizes that their employees are a valued and limited resource, this program is designed to:

*Assist the medical recovery process by providing a focus and a goal for return of the injured employee.*

*Benefit employees by allowing them to return to full wages as soon as possible.*

*Benefit employer by reducing workers' compensation costs.*

Peach County will seek return to work opportunities through the use of transitional employment for all employees who are temporarily disabled due to an on-the-job injury as quickly as medically possible. Transitional employment opportunities will be considered in all departments, not just the department in which the injured employee was working before the injury or illness occurred.

Transitional employment assignments are intended to assist workers who are transitioning back to work after a temporary disability that resulted from a work-related injury. All transitional employment duties must be productive. Duties must never be demeaning or appear worthless in any way.

In compliance with the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia Group Self Insured Workers' Compensation Fund Safety Discount Program Peach County agrees to adopt this Return-to-Work Policy and attend at least one training session on implementation of the Return-to-Work Program in a calendar year.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **PEACH COUNTY SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

#### **1.0 POLICY**

Peach County is dedicated to providing safe, dependable, and economical services to citizens of Peach County. Peach County employees are our most valuable resource, and it is our goal to provide a healthy, satisfying working environment, which promotes personal opportunities for growth. In meeting these goals, it is our policy to (1) assure that employees are able to perform assigned duties in a safe, productive, and healthy manner; (2) create a workplace environment free from the adverse effects of drug abuse and alcohol misuse; (3) prohibit the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of controlled substances; and (4) encourage employees to seek professional assistance any time personal problems, including alcohol or drug dependency, adversely affect their ability to perform their assigned duties.

#### **1.1 ZERO TOLERANCE**

Peach County regards the use of illegal drugs, the improper use of legal drugs and the use of alcohol while on the job or at such time or in such manner as to impact one's job performance, as unacceptable behavior for its employees. Accordingly, Peach County adopts a "zero tolerance" policy toward such behavior. Employees who are found to have in their systems any discernible trace of alcohol, illegal drugs, or legal drugs except as permitted by Section 4.2 of this policy; shall be subject to discipline up to and including termination, as provided herein.

#### **2.0 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to assure worker fitness for duty and to protect our employees and the public from the risks posed by the misuse of alcohol and use of prohibited drugs. This policy is also intended to comply with all applicable federal and state regulations governing workplace anti-drug and alcohol programs. The policies set forth herein shall in no case be construed as according to employee's greater privacy rights, or as placing greater restrictions on the county's freedom to investigate and, where appropriate, discipline suspected employee manufacture, possession, distribution, dispensation, or use of alcohol or controlled substances (as defined in the United States Controlled Substances Act, 21 USC Chapter 13), then is required by applicable state and federal law. In any case where this policy is found ambiguous or inapplicable, the relevant state and federal law shall control and is hereby declared to be county policy.

This policy is also intended to conform with the requirements of 41 USC 701 *et seq*, as amended, and 49 CFR Part 29, as amended, which require the establishment of drug-free workplace policies.

#### **3.0 APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all Peach County employees. As used in this policy and for purposes thereof, the term "employee" encompasses persons receiving compensation from Peach County for personal services, whether full or part-time, temporary or regular; volunteers who are not

compensated; and independent contractors doing business with the county, who as a condition of doing such business must assent to be bound by the terms of this policy and of all state and federal laws, rules, and regulations relating to controlled substances. The term “employee” as used in this policy does not include elected officials and members of their immediate office staffs (other than the immediate staff of the Peach County Commission), unless such official specifically elects to include their employees in the definition for purpose of this policy. The term “employee” as used in this policy does include the Peach County Commission’s immediate staff.

As stated in Section 6.0, TESTING PROCEDURES, all safety-sensitive employees (as defined in Section 3.1) shall be subject to drug and alcohol testing prior to employment; where there is reasonable suspicion; and following an accident occurring while the said employee is performing employment-related duties. Safety-sensitive employees shall be subject to testing on a random, unannounced basis throughout their employment with Peach County. A listing of Peach County safety-sensitive positions is found at 3.1

Non-safety-sensitive employees shall be subject to alcohol and drug testing where there is reasonable suspicion of violation of this policy or of state or federal controlled substances laws, rules, or regulations.

Any employee, who has failed a drug or alcohol test shall be subject to retesting prior to returning to work. Follow-up testing of individuals who have failed alcohol and drug tests will also, be conducted for a period of up to five years following a return-to-duty, and at least six tests will be performed during the first year.

3.1 PEACH COUNTY SAFETY-SENSITIVE POSITIONS: As used in this policy and for purposes hereof, the terms “safety-sensitive position” and “safety-sensitive employee” shall include those employees and positions:

1. Authorized to drive any Peach County vehicle;
2. Required to carry a Commercial Driver’s License;
3. Who carry a weapon in the course of performing their jobs;
4. Who serve as dispatchers and communication officers;
5. Who serve as medical service providers;
6. Who serve as firefighters;
7. Who have physical custody of detained persons in the course of performing their jobs;
8. Who operate heavy equipment, including but not limited to;

Motor grader

Bulldozer

Back hoe

Road moving equipment

Tractors

Bush hogs

Any heavy equipment designed for the maintenance of roads



9. Who operate motorized equipment and machinery, including but not limited to;

Stripping and floor waxing machines

Lawnmowers

Power tools

Any motorized equipment and machinery designed for the maintenance of buildings and grounds.

In addition, the terms “safety-sensitive position” and “safety-sensitive employee” encompass safety-sensitive functions, which include any duty related to the safe operation of Peach County services including the operation of any Peach County vehicle operation of any heavy equipment or machinery, dispatch, medical service, fire service, maintenance of Peach County vehicles or equipment, security personnel who carry firearms. The terms “safety-sensitive position” and “safety-sensitive employee” also encompass any employees and positions with the responsibility to regularly perform high-risk work wherein inattention to duty or errors in judgement have the potential for significant risk of harm to the employee, other employees or the general public. The terms shall not be construed to include employees and positions who do not regularly perform high-risk work regardless of the fact that other employees in the same classification do perform such high-risk work.

#### 4.0 PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

“Prohibited substances” addressed by this policy include the following:

##### 4.1 ILLEGALLY USED CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES OR DRUGS

*The use of any illegal drug, not approved for medical use by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, or any substance identified in Schedules I through V of Section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C. Chapter 13), as further defined by 21 CFR 1300.01 through 1308.15 is prohibited at all times unless a legal prescription has been written for the substance and its lawful use will not interfere with the employee’s performance or safety-sensitive duties.*

Illegal substances include, but are not limited to;

Marijuana

Amphetamines

Opiates

Phencyclidine (PCP)

Cocaine

Any drug not approved for medical use by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Use of any illegal drug, misuse of legally prescribed drugs, and use of illegally obtained prescription drugs.

The following drugs may also be tested for:

Methaqualone  
Benzodiazepines  
Barbiturates  
Methadone  
Propoxyphene

Effective March 6, 2018, the Peach County drug testing panel has been updated to include four new semi-synthetic opioids. The new opioids are;

Hydrocodone  
Hydromorphone  
Oxycodone  
Oxymorphone

Common brand names for these semi-synthetic opioids include, but may not be limited to; OxyContin, Percodan, Percocet, Vicodin, Lortab, Norco, Dilaudid and Exalgo.

#### 4.2 LEGAL DRUGS

The appropriate use of legally prescribed drugs and non-prescription medications is not prohibited. However, the use of any substance which carries a warning label that indicates that mental functioning, motor skills, or judgement may be adversely affected must be reported to the appropriate Peach County Department Head or the Peach County Administrator. In addition, the employee must obtain a written release from the attending physician releasing the person to perform their job duties any time they obtain a prescription with potentially performance-altering effects.

A legally prescribed drug means that an individual has a prescription or other written approval from a physician for the use of a drug in the course of medical treatment. The said written release must include the patient's name, the name of the substance, quantity/amount to be taken, and the period of authorization. The misuse or abuse of legal drugs while performing Peach County business is prohibited.

#### 4.3 ALCOHOL

Use by employees of beverages containing more than trace amounts of alcohol or controlled substances, including any medication, mouthwash, food, candy, or any other substance, such that alcohol or a controlled substance is present in the employee's body while performing Peach County business is prohibited.

#### 5.0 PROHIBITED CONDUCT

##### 5.1 MANUFACTURE, TRAFFICKING, POSSESSION, USE

Peach County employees are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of prohibited substances at all times, consistent with state and federal law. Employees who violate this provision will be discharged. Law enforcement shall be notified, as appropriate where criminal activity is suspected.

## 5.2 INTOXICATION/UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Any employee who is reasonably suspected of being intoxicated, impaired, under the influence of a prohibited substance, or not fit for duty shall be suspended from job duties pending an investigation and verification of condition. Employees found to be under the influence of a prohibited substance or who fail to pass a drug or alcohol test shall be removed from duty and be subject to disciplinary action. A drug or alcohol test is considered positive if the individual is found to have a quantifiable presence of a prohibited substance in the body.

## 5.3 ALCOHOL USE

No employee may drive, operate, or be in physical control of a Peach County vehicle for which the operator is required to possess a commercial driver's license, if such employee has any measurable alcohol in his/her system. No employee shall use alcohol while on duty; or while on scheduled call; or while wearing any Peach County uniform; or while on Peach County property; or while performing Peach County business. Employees are responsible for controlling their alcohol consumption to ensure that no measurable level of alcohol can be detected in their system at any time when it is prohibited by this policy. Violation of these provisions is prohibited and punishable by disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## 5.4 COMPLIANCE WITH TESTING REQUIREMENTS

All safety-sensitive employees will be subject to urine drug testing and breath alcohol testing as a condition of employment. Any safety-sensitive employee (or non-safety-sensitive employee where reasonable suspicion has been found) who refuses to comply with a request for testing shall be removed from duty and discharged from employment with Peach County. Any employee who is suspected of providing false information in connection with a test or who is suspected of falsifying test result through tampering, contamination, adulteration, or substitution will be required to undergo an observed collection. Verification of these actions will result in the employee's removal from duty and termination of employment. Refusal can include an inability to provide a sufficient urine specimen, saliva sample, or breath sample without a valid medical explanation, as well as a verbal declaration, obstructive behavior, or physical absence resulting in the inability to conduct the test.

## 5.5 TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS

All employees are encouraged to make use of the available resources for treatment for alcohol misuse and illegal drug use problems following the guidelines set forth by Peach County. The cost of any treatment or rehabilitation services will be paid for directly by the employee or their insurance provider. Employees who make self-referrals (i.e., no management intervention or positive test results) will be allowed to take accumulated sick leave and vacation leave to

participate in the prescribed rehabilitation program. Employees that test positive will be referred to the Substances Abuse Professional (SAP) for assessment. No treatment opportunities will be afforded to those who test positive for illegal use of drugs, and they will be discharged from employment with Peach County.

#### 5.6 NOTIFYING PEACH COUNTY OF CRIMINAL CONVICTION

*All employees are required to notify their Peach County Department Head, within five days after such conviction, of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation. Failure to comply with this provision shall result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.*

#### 5.7 PROPER APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

Peach County is dedicated to assuring fair and equitable application of this substance abuse policy. Therefore, supervisors/managers are required to use and apply all aspects of this policy in an unbiased and impartial manner. Any supervisor/manager who knowingly disregards the requirements of this policy, or who is found to deliberately misuse the policy in regard to subordinates, shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

#### 6.0 TESTING PROCEDURES

Analytical urine drug testing and breath testing for alcohol may be conducted when circumstances warrant or as required by federal regulations.

Testing shall be conducted in a manner to assure a high degree of accuracy and reliability using techniques, equipment, and laboratory facilities which have been approved by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and shall comport with the Procedures and Standards of 49 CFR Part 40, as amended, which is incorporated herein by reference. Peach County's alcohol and controlled substance testing program shall also comport with the Standards established by O.C.G. A 45-20-92 for employees in the classified service of the State Merit System of Personal Administration. The test will be considered positive if the amounts present are above the minimum thresholds established in 49 CFR Part 40, as amended. Peach County reserves the right to test for any illegal or illegally – or improperly-used drugs under Peach County's own authority using standard laboratory testing protocols.

Tests for breath alcohol concentration will be conducted utilizing a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) approved testing device operated by a training technician. If the initial test indicates an alcohol concentration of 0.02 or greater, a second test will be performed to confirm the results of the initial test. The confirmatory test will be performed using a NHTSA approved evidential breath testing device (EBT) operated by a trained breath alcohol technician (BAT). An employee who has a confirmed alcohol concentration of 0.02 or greater but less than 0.04 will be removed from duty for eight hours unless a retest results in a concentration measure of less than 0.02. An alcohol test with a result of 0.02 or greater, but less than 0.04 will be considered an unexcused absence subject to Peach County's disciplinary procedures. An alcohol concentration of 0.04 or greater will be considered a positive alcohol test and in violation of this policy for both safety-sensitive and non-safety-sensitive employees.

Any employee who has confirmed positive drug or alcohol test will be removed from his/her position, informed of educational and rehabilitation programs available and referred to a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) for assessment. A positive drug and/or alcohol test will also result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Peach County affirms the need to protect individual dignity, privacy, and performance of safety-sensitive and non-safety-sensitive job functions.

Drug tests may be performed any time a safety-sensitive employee is on duty and in the case of a non-safety-sensitive employee, when there is a reasonable suspicion of a violation of this policy.

#### 6.1 EMPLOYEE REQUESTED TESTING

Any employee who questions the results of a required drug test under paragraphs 6.2 through 6.7 of this policy may request that the spit sample be tested. This test must be conducted at a difference DHHS-certify laboratory. The test must be conducted on the split sample that was provided by the employee at the same time as the original sample. All costs for such testing are paid by the employee unless the result of the split sample test invalidate the results of the original test. The method of collecting, storing, and testing the split sample will be consistent with the procedures set forth in 49 CFR Part 40, as amended. The employee's request for a split sample test must be made to the Medical Review Officer (MRO) within 72 hours of notice of the original sample verified test result. Requests after 72 hours will only be accepted if the delay was due to documentable facts that were beyond the control of the employee. In the event a split sample test is requested, the MRO will choose the second lab to be used.

#### 6.2 PRE-EMPLOYMENT TESTING

All applicants for safety-sensitive positions shall undergo urine drug testing immediately following the offer of employment. Non-safety-sensitive employees will also be required to undergo urine drug testing before transferring into a safety-sensitive position. Receipt by Peach County of a negative drug test result is required prior to employment or transfer into a safety-sensitive position. Failure of a pre-employment drug test will disqualify an applicant for employment for a period of 120 days. Evidence of the absence of drug dependency from a Substance Abuse Professional that meets with the approval of Peach County and negative pre-employment drug tests will be required prior to further consideration for employment. The cost for assessment and any subsequent treatment will be the sole responsibility of the individual.

#### 6.3 REASONABLE SUSPICION TESTING

All employees may be subject to a fitness-for-duty evaluation, and urine and/or breath testing when there are reasons to believe that drug or alcohol use is adversely affecting job performance. A reasonable suspicion referral for testing will be made on this basis of documented objective facts and circumstances which are consistent with the short-term effects

of substance abuse or alcohol misuse. Examples of reasonable suspicion include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Physical signs and symptoms consistent with prohibited substance use or alcohol misuse.
2. Evidence of the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of controlled substances, drugs, alcohol, or other prohibited substances.
3. Occurrence of a serious or potentially serious accident that may have been caused by prohibited substance abuse or alcohol misuse.
4. Fights (to mean physical contact), assaults, and flagrant disregard or violations of established safety, security, or other operating procedures.

Reasonable suspicion referrals must be made by the Peach County Department Head or a supervisor who is trained to detect the signs and symptoms of drug and alcohol use and who reasonably concludes that an employee may be adversely affected or impaired in the employee's work performance due to possible prohibited substance abuse or alcohol misuse.

#### 6.4 POST-ACCIDENT TESTING

Any employee who is involved in an accident while driving a Peach County vehicle or who is involved in any accident or injury to any person, which may result in the need for medical attention from any licensed health care professional, shall report such accident to the said employee's immediate supervisor at the earliest possible time. The said employee may be required by the county to take an alcohol and/or controlled substances test if the employee is operating a Peach County vehicle or when there is a reasonable suspicion of substance abuse. This applies also to all surviving employees whose actions could have contributed to the accident.

Employees who were involved will be tested as soon as possible after such an accident, and such testing shall occur within eight hours of the accident for alcohol testing and within 32 hours of the accident for drug testing. Any employee involved in an accident must refrain from alcohol use for eight hours following the accident or until said employee has completed a post-accident alcohol test. Any safety-sensitive employee who leaves the scene of the accident without justifiable explanation prior to submission to drug and alcohol testing will be considered to have refused the test, and such employee's employment will be terminated. Employees tested under this provision will include not only the operations personnel, but any other covered employee whose performance could have contributed to the accident.

#### 6.5 RANDOM TESTING

Employees in safety-sensitive positions will be subjected to random, unannounced testing. The selection of safety-sensitive employees for random alcohol and controlled substance testing will be made using a scientifically valid method that ensure each covered employee that they will

have an equal chance of being selected each time selections are made. The random tests will be unannounced and may occur at any time.

#### 6.6 RETURN-TO-DUTY TESTING

All employees who previously tested positive on a drug or alcohol test must test negative on a return-to-duty test and must be evaluated and released to duty by the Substance Abuse Professional before returning to work.

#### 6.7 FOLLOW-UP TESTING

All employees who tested positive on a drug or alcohol test will be required to undergo frequent, unannounced urine and/or breath testing following their return to duty. The follow-up testing will be performed for a period of one to five years with a minimum of six tests to be performed the first year.

#### 7.0 EMPLOYMENT ASSESSMENT

Any employee who tests positive for the presence of alcohol or illegal drugs will be referred for evaluation by a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP). An SAP is a licensed or certified physician, psychologist, social worker, employee assistance professional, or addiction counselor with knowledge of and clinical experience in the diagnosis and treatment of alcohol-related disorders and the diagnosis and treatment of substance abuse. The SAP will evaluate each employee to determine what assistance, if any, the employee needs in resolving problems associated with prohibited drug use or alcohol misuse.

Assessment by an SAP or participating in the Healthcare Benefits Plan provided by Peach County does not shield an employee from disciplinary action or guarantee employment or reinstatement with Peach County. The Peach County disciplinary code should be consulted to determine the penalty for performance-based infractions and violation of policy provisions.

If a safety-sensitive or non-safety-sensitive employee is allowed to return to duty, such employee must properly follow the rehabilitation program prescribed by the SAP, must have a negative return-to-duty drug and alcohol test, and will be subject to unannounced follow-up testing for up to five years. The cost of any treatment or rehabilitation services will be paid directly by the employee or the employee's insurance provider.

Employees will be allowed to take accumulated sick leave and vacation leave to participate in the prescribed rehabilitation programs.

#### 8.0 RE-ENTRY CONTRACTS

Employees who re-enter the workforce must agree to a re-entry contract. That contract may include, but is not limited to;

1. A release to work statement from the Substance Abuse Professional.

2. A negative test for drugs and/or alcohol.
3. An agreement to unannounced, frequent follow-up testing for up to five years with at least six tests performed the first year.
4. A statement of work-related behaviors.
5. An agreement to follow specified aftercare requirements with the understanding that violation of the re-entry contract is grounds for termination.

#### 9.0 INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

1. Peach County shall release information regarding a covered employee's record as directed by specific written consent from the employee authorizing release of the information to an identified person.
2. A covered employee is entitled, upon written request, to obtain copies of any records pertaining to the said employee's own use of prohibited substances, including any records pertaining to test results.
3. Peach County may disclose information that is required to be maintained to the decision maker in a lawsuit, grievance, or other proceeding initiated by or on behalf of the employee tested.
4. When requested by the National Transportation Safety Board as part of an accident investigation, Peach County shall disclose information related to its administration of drug and alcohol tests following the accident investigation.
5. Records shall be made available to subsequent employees upon receipt of written request from the covered employee.
6. Peach County shall disclose the date for its drug and alcohol testing program and any other information pertaining to its anti-drug program, when requested by the Secretary of Transportation or any other DOT agency with regulatory authority over Peach County.

#### 10. CONTACTS

Questions regarding this policy or any other aspect of the drug-free and alcohol-free program should contact the following Peach County representative:

Program Manager  
Peach County Administrator  
Program Representative  
Peach County Benefits Coordinator





## **APPENDIX C**

### **CELL PHONE USAGE POLICY**

This document sets forth Peach County policies about cell phone usage and applies to all county employees. For purposes of this policy, the term “cell phone” is defined as any handheld electronic device with the ability to receive and/or transmit voice, text, or data messages without a cable connection (including, but not limited to, cellular telephones, digital wireless phones, radio-phones/walkie-talkies, telephone pagers, PDA’s (personal digital assistants with wireless communications capabilities, or RIM (“research in motion”) wireless devices).

The county reserves the right to modify or update these policies at any time.

#### **1. Use of Cell Phones or Similar Devices**

- a. **General Use at Work.** While at work employees are expected to exercise the same discretion in using personal cell phones as they use with county phones. Excessive personal calls during the workday, regardless of the phone used, can interfere with employee productive, and be distracting to others. Employees should restrict personal calls during work time and should use personal cell phones only during scheduled breaks or lunch periods in non-working areas. Other personal calls should be made during non-work time whenever possible, and employees should ensure that their friends and family members are instructed of this policy. The county is not liable for the loss of personal cell phone brought into the workplace.

To ensure the effectiveness of meetings, employees are asked to leave cell phones at their desk. On the unusual occasions of an emergency or anticipated emergency that requires immediate attention, the cell phone may be carried to the meeting in a silent mode.

- b. **Use of cell phones in unsafe work conditions.** Employees shall limit the use of all cell phones while operating heavy equipment, or while working in dangerous environments, such as construction sites.
- c. **Use of cell phones while operating a vehicle.** Cell phone use while driving is of course a necessity for most county employees, but extreme care should be used while operating a vehicle. In non-emergency situations, employees should limit phone calls and only use the cell phone when the vehicle is in park.

#### **2. Department Head/Supervisor Responsibilities**

- a. It is the responsibility of the department heads and supervisors to ensure that cellular devices are being used to efficiently manage the county’s business in conformance with this policy. The managers will determine which employees have a demonstrated need for a county-owned device and properly budget for the device.

- b. Department heads have the authority to set other department specific rules and procedures to ensure cellular devices are used in compliance with the goals of this policy.
- c. Any cellular devices/plan that could impact the county network infrastructure must meet the approval of the Board of Commissioners and the IT Department.

### **3. Employee Responsibilities**

- a. Employees issued cell phones will take every precaution to safeguard the cell phone. Should the cell phone be lost, the department head and the IT Manager should be notified immediately.
- b. **LIABILITY OF THE EMPLOYEE FOR LOST OR DAMAGED PHONES:** If an employee loses or damages more than one cell phone or mobile device during the contract period, the employee may be required to pay replacement costs for the mobile device after the first occurrence. Management will carefully review each instance of loss or damage of mobile devices.
- c. Employees shall notify the IT Manager before taking the phone to the service provider store. The store will not work on any phone owned by the county without the consent of the IT Manager.

### **4. IT Department Responsibilities**

- a. The IT Manager, at the direction of the Board of Commissioners, will be responsible for enforcing this Cell Phone Usage Policy.
- b. The IT Manager will order and issue, properly budgeted phones to employees who have been approved by their department heads.
- c. The IT Manager will monitor cell phone usage and adjust the pooled plan minutes and features to accommodate normal business use of county-owned phones. Employees that, in the opinion of management, abuse the pooled minutes plan or have overages of text or data may be required to reimburse the county for the overages.
- d. The IT Manager, with input from the Board of Commissioners, and department heads, will evaluate overall usage, quality of service, cell/data coverage, and plan cost comparisons on an annual basis and will work with the department heads to properly budget for the service.

### **5. Board of Commissioners Responsibilities**

- a. The Board of Commissioners will set the Cell Phone Usage Policy and enforce its goals and guidelines. The Board of Commissioners can at any time review and adjust

this policy. Sheriff's department employees, phones, and contracts will be administered by the Sheriff and/or his delegate.

### **Cell Phone Usage Policy – Acknowledgement Form**

I have received and understand the Cell Phone Usage Policy as adopted by the Peach County Board of Commissioners.

Specifically, I understand the following:

- This policy affects the use of my personal cell phone in the workplace.
- My department head can establish additional rules in the spirit of this policy.
- I understand the procedures of seeking repair service of county-owned devices.
- I understand that I may be responsible for charges incurred to replace or repair county-owned devices after the first instance in the contract period.

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Employee Signature

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Date

This signature page must be returned to the Human Resources Manager.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

As a government employer, Peach County provides essential services to its citizens and visitors. During periods of inclement weather, such as icy conditions and snowstorms, severe weather, tornadoes, etc., it becomes even more critical that the county deliver those services.

Under inclement weather circumstances and after receiving a recommendation from the EMA Director, the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners will make a decision regarding closure of county offices (to include partial days, such as delayed openings or early closings). The Chairman shall designate the beginning date and time of the closure event, and after conferring with the EMA Director, establish the ending date and time of the closure event once inclement weather conditions have improved sufficiently to allow safe travel to and from the workplace.

If questionable weather exists, but the county is open for business, employees should make their own independent safety determinations concerning travel to work. If the employee elects not to attend work due to safety concerns when the county is open for business, the employee's absence will be charged against any accrued annual leave or accrued compensatory time. If no such accrued leave exists, the employee will not be compensated. If hazardous weather exists and the county is closed during normal business hours, Inclement Weather Pay will be available. No Inclement Weather Pay will be available for hazardous weather situations that begin and/or end outside of normal, weekday business hours of 8:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday (e.g., an event that begins at 2:00 a.m. on a Saturday and ends 42 hours later at 8:00 p.m. on Sunday would not require the closure of county offices during normal weekday business hours and would not qualify for Inclement Weather Pay).

During a period of closure within normal business hours, non-essential personnel will receive an equal number of hours pay to correspond with the office closure exclusive of lunch breaks (e.g., a full day's closure = 8 hours pay, closure at 1 pm = 4 hours pay, etc.). Non-essential employees who voluntarily choose to report to work or stay at work during this time will not be paid as an essential employee. Any employees who are scheduled off work for any reason during the period of closure will not be eligible for Inclement Weather Pay.

Departments with essential personnel (any personnel deemed by the EMA Director as necessary to sustain and conduct emergency operations) will be expected to schedule and staff employees as needed. Employees of those departments must check with their supervisor for such purposes. When Inclement Weather Pay is invoked, essential personnel will be paid for all time physically worked in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act. In addition, essential personnel shall receive Inclement Weather Compensation, which will be paid hour-for-hour to coincide with the number of hours physically worked during the closure event for a maximum of eight hours within a 24-hour operation cycle.

For both essential and non-essential employees, only hours physically worked will be applied when determining overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Inclement Weather Pay is a special leave accrual and does not represent additional hours physically worked. Therefore, Inclement Weather Pay will not count toward overtime calculation. Additionally, Inclement Weather Pay will not be applied during scheduled holidays since employees will be compensated according to the Holiday Pay Policy.

## **APPENDIX E**

### **PAYROLL PROCEDURE**

To establish a unified payroll/timekeeping procedure to ensure all employees that timekeeping and payroll methods are accurate and reliable.

1. Positive reporting system. Employees should affirmatively attest to the hours of days they have actually worked and the dates on which they worked. This is in contrast to a negative payroll system, where employees report only periods, they were absent from work using vacation and sick leave.
2. Two attestations of hours worked. One attestation should be by the employee, and the other should be by the employee's supervisor or other appropriate person.
3. Employees will have to be verified by HR before the submission and approval of payroll claims; and provide documentation to the identity of the new employee.
4. Affirmation of carry-forward amounts. During each payroll cycle employees should affirm the carried-forward amounts of vacation and sick leave they have accrued.
5. Hold-back period. There is a hold-back period between the end of the pay period and the date of payment to allow for review, approval, and processing.
  - a. The current hold time is six days, the payroll period ends on a Wednesday; we pay off on the next Wednesday. This is only possible if all departments adhere to the timeline for submitting payroll as follows:
    - I. You must submit changes for your employees before the end of the payroll period; meaning any changes to your employee's profile will have to be submitted before or on the Wednesday that the payroll cycle is ending, that includes any new employees and terminations.
    - II. You must submit your time for your department by Friday noon after the end of the payroll cycle.
    - III. All changes to the employee profile will have to be completed by Friday noon after the end of the payroll cycle, any changes brought after the due date will have to wait until the next payroll cycle.
    - IV. You must submit your timesheets on the due date of Friday noon. You can fax, email, or bring them to the Commissioner's office.

The adoption of this basic payroll system will increase the accuracy and reliability of the payroll process for the Peach County Board of Commissioners employees.

## APPENDIX F

### BOC POOL VEHICLE USE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The following policies and procedures have been established in an effort to provide consistency in the management and usage of the BOC Pool Vehicle. The purpose of these policies and procedures is to establish a fair process for allocating vehicle usage time to meet the travel needs of the office staff of the Peach County Board of Commissioners and to monitor the use of the vehicle assigned to the BOC. All reference to "County" in this policy means Peach County. All reference to "BOC" in this policy means Board of Commissioners.

1. Use of any County-owned vehicle for personal use is prohibited.
2. Drivers must have and maintain a valid Georgia driver's license and maintain a driving history that is in compliance with the Peach County Driving Policy. A signed acknowledgement of having read and received a copy of the Peach County Driving Policy must be on record in the employee's personnel file. A signed and notarized consent form allowing periodic driver history checks during the term of the approved driver's Peach County employment must be on file in the employee's personnel file.
3. All employees authorized to drive a county vehicle will be required to have a clean drug screening on file and be subject to future random drug testing per County policy. A signed acknowledgement of having read and received a copy of the Peach County Substance Abuse Policy must be on record in the employee's personnel file.
4. Drivers must drive responsibly at all times and follow all traffic regulations, including the speed limit.
5. Requests to use the BOC Pool Vehicle will generally be honored on a first-come, first-served basis. However, the County Administrator will assign vehicle usage based on severity of need when requests for usage conflict.
6. The BOC Pool Vehicle is to be parked in the parking lot adjacent to the Office of the Peach County Board of Commissioners at 213 Person Street, Fort Valley, at the close of each working day. The vehicle will not be taken home with any employee except by express **advanced** approval from the County Administrator and only for a specified County business purpose. Usage of the BOC Pool Vehicle for approved out-of-town training or travel involving overnight stay should be reserved at least two weeks prior to the intended usage or as early as possible to prevent scheduling conflicts for other employees.
7. Vehicle key and fuel key are to be returned and placed in the drop box on the wall outside the rear door to the Purchasing Office (lobby area at E911 entrance) at the close of the business day.
8. Peach County Public Works will be responsible for providing periodic maintenance and upkeep of the vehicle. The vehicle is to be made available upon request by Public Works personnel to provide this service. The Public Works Office has provided a daily checklist to be completed at the beginning of each work day before the vehicle is driven. There is also a mileage log in the vehicle that must be completed to show the business locations and changes in the odometer reading over the course of the business day.



9. The fuel key is to remain with the vehicle key at all times. The vehicle is to be refueled only at the Five Points Services in Fort Valley unless an emergency occurs or when the driver is on approved out-of-town training or travel. Each approved driver will be issued a personal access code for refueling the vehicle. Approved drivers are to use no other access code but their own. Each approved driver is to take responsibility for ensuring that there is at least a half tank of fuel remaining in the vehicle at the time that the vehicle is parked for the day and the keys are returned. All mileage records and other requested vehicle information requested at fueling station must be provided at the time that the vehicle is refueled. In the event that the fuel must be purchased from another location due to emergency or out-of-town travel, the purchase is to be made with an approved Peach County credit card or be reimbursed off of a receipt documenting the purchase at an alternate location.
10. Any suspected problems with the vehicle should be reported immediately to the County Administrator and to the Public Works Office to schedule an evaluation of the suspected problem. The vehicle is not to be driven until the potential problem is resolved.
11. Upon returning the vehicle, all trash and debris is to be removed from the vehicle.
12. Any approved driver included in an accident or situation which has caused any amount of damage or injury while operating the BOC Pool Vehicle must immediately notify Peach County E911 at 478-822-9111 to report the occurrence and to begin the process and procedures outline in the Peach County Safety Policy for reporting accidents. A signed acknowledgement of having read and received a copy of the Peach County Safety Policy must be on record in the employee's personnel file.
13. A GPS system has been installed on the BOC Pool Vehicle to monitor the location of the vehicle to encourage proper usage of the vehicle and to provide added safety to all approved drivers and protection of the vehicle in case of theft. Tampering with the GPS System is prohibited.
14. All drivers and passengers will use seat belts in a manner consistent with the manufacturer's specification at all times that the vehicle is in operation.
15. Smoking in the BOC Pool Vehicle is prohibited.
16. Texting while operating any county vehicle is strictly prohibited.

## **APPENDIX G SAFETY POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The management of the Peach County Board of Commissioners has a sincere concern for the safety and welfare of all employees and the public they serve. With the goal of eliminating suffering and the cost of avoidable personal injury and vehicle accidents, the county safety committee has implemented the Safety Policy for the Peach County Government.

It is the county's policy to provide safe working conditions for all employees. Comprehensive Instructions covering safe work practices and special equipment to protect employees against particular hazards will be addressed by department heads according to the type of hazards in their areas. Most accidents are preventable. All county employees are responsible for promoting accident prevention by actively supporting the safety policy and observing the regulations.

Employees are expected to cooperate fully by observing the rules of safety and taking an active part in protecting themselves, their fellow workers and county facilities. The joint effort of employees and management toward observance of this policy will provide safe working conditions to the mutual advantage of all.

### **Safety Policy Statement**

It is the objective of the Peach County Government to conduct all operations as safely and efficiently as possible. To accomplish this, we are assigning the responsibility, authority, and accountability for safety to all department heads and supervisory personnel within their individual areas of operations. Each department may want to appoint an individual as their safety coordinator/officer. This individual would be responsible for the administration and coordination of the department's safety program to ensure the safety standards are met throughout the department.

All employees are responsible for performing their own work in a safe and efficient manner and for reporting unsafe conditions to their department head or supervisor for prompt corrections. In addition to this General Policy, each department is responsible for developing and maintaining any specific policies and procedure to ensure a safe work environment.

### **General Rules**

Safety means efficient performance. Safety must, therefore be a part of the planning for every job, equal in the importance to all operational considerations. Observing safety procedures will make all Peach County operations safer, for all employees must be on alert to the possibility of improvement. Employee suggestions for improvement of work conditions and work procedures are welcomed, in fact, invited.

Unsafe conditions and unsafe procedures must be identified before they can be corrected. Consequently, it is the responsibility of every employee to report these conditions immediately. All accidents should be reported, whether personal injury or property damage is involved or not.

Remember, the “near misses” are danger signals. The accident you prevent could be the incident that injured you!

The following general safety procedures apply:

- Report all personal injuries, no matter how minor, to your immediate supervisor as soon as possible. This must be done whether the injury resulted in lost time from work or required medical attention or not. Prompt reporting of accidents is a requirement under the Workers’ Compensation Law.
- This organization does not expect you to take any unnecessary chances. Learn the right way to do your job. That will be the safe way. If you are not sure you thoroughly understand the job, ask your supervisor for further instructions.
- Avoid horseplay and practical jokes on the job. Any employee participation in such activities will be subject to disciplinary action.
- Abuse of any substance (alcohol, medication, etc.) during working hours is prohibited. Any employee reporting to work under the influence of any substance during working hours shall be subject to disciplinary action.
- Work at a speed consistent with safety. “Foolish Hurry” such as running in passageways or on stairs is dangerous.
- Keep yourself in good physical condition to do a day’s work.
- Use the handrails on stairs or on elevated places.
- Jumping from an elevation, such as a table, bench, or platform can result in injury. “DON’T DO IT”.
- Always inspect tools and equipment before use. Report defects to supervisors and other potential users. Do not use tools and equipment that are defective to an unsafe degree.
- Remove splinters from work benches, tables, bins, shelves, or chairs before someone is injured.
- Remove, cut off, or hammer down protruding nails, staples, or steel straps.
- Work clear of suspended loads; if a load is moved above where you are working, stand aside until it has passed by.
- Obey warning tags and signs. They are posted to point out hazards.
- Operate only the machinery or equipment you have been authorized and trained to operate safely.
- Remove jewelry, such as rings, identification bracelet, etc., in works involving climbing, materials handling, or operating mechanical equipment.
- Never reach over moving parts of machinery or equipment.
- Never operate machinery or equipment with guards removed.
- Report to work in appropriate clothing suitable for the type of work you perform - this includes footwear.

- Avoid wearing loose clothing or personal equipment near machinery or equipment with moving parts.
- Wear protector equipment as required. Its use should be enforced.
- Common sense, along with health and sanitation rules, must be observed for the welfare and consideration of other employees.
- Repeat violators of safety rules and procedures may be subject to disciplinary action and/or dismissal.

## **Rules and Responsibilities**

### **A. County Administrator**

The County Administrator is responsible for the general oversight of the Safety Program by setting policy and making strategic planning decisions.

Under the direction of the County Administrator there is:

- An active Safety Committee, consisting of department heads or their designees, meeting on a regularly scheduled basis.
- A thorough and effective Accident Investigation, to include reporting and recording procedures, and a written report on actions taken to prevent recurrence of accidents, including actions taken against individual violators of safety rules and practices.
- A training program for employees and supervisory personnel directly related to avoiding a possible injury or illness in the area of designated operations.
- A periodic audit of all premises, equipment and materials so that recommendations can be developed to obtain compliance with established standards.
- A communications system established and maintained to ensure that all personnel responsible for safety matters are kept abreast of new standards or procedures published by the State Board of Workers' Compensation.
- Specific goals established for the safety program, with progress toward those goals measured on a quarterly basis.

### **B. Department Heads**

Department heads are responsible to the County Administrator for complying with the county's safety program and for maintaining safe and healthful working conditions and practices for the benefit of all personnel under their supervision.

Department heads will demonstrate support for the safety program through every visible means, including,

- Providing a safe and healthful workplace.
- Providing personal protective equipment, as well as machine guards and safety devices commensurate with the state of the art.
- Demonstrated support of the program through personal participation and through approval of necessary expenditures for such items as personal protective equipment

mechanical guards, good lighting, good ventilation, and other physical improvements to the working environment, as well as expenditures for safety training materials.

- Reviewing accident records and accomplishments of the safety program with the Safety Committee.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the safety program.
- Participating directly and/or indirectly in safety activities as may be required to maintain the enthusiasm and interest of all concerned.
- Abiding by safety rules and regulations when exposed to conditions governed by the rules.
- Directing that any flagrant disregard of safety rules and regulations by employees be grounds for discipline or dismissal as outlined in the Personnel Policy.

### C. Supervisor

Supervisors are charged with the responsibility of quality and quantity of production with the department, and therefore are responsible for the work conduct of the same. Supervisors should be afforded the necessary knowledge to carry out their duties with efficiency and safety.

Because of the close relationship with the employees and intimate knowledge of operating procedures, supervisors are key persons in the scheme of loss control.

Supervisors should

- Have a thorough knowledge of the safety policy.
- Provide instruction and training to workers so that they may fulfill their job in a safe manner.
- Make daily inspections of the department to ensure that no unsafe conditions or unsafe practices exist.
- Initiate immediate corrective action where unsafe conditions or practices are found.
- Properly complete incident report and investigate all accidents to determine what must be done to prevent recurrence of a similar accident. This should be completed and submitted to the Safety Committee Chair/Safety Officer in time that he/she can submit within three working days to the Georgia Board of Workers Compensation.
- Be familiar with all procedures that must be followed in the event of an emergency.
- Enforce safety rules and regulations of the county and each respective department.
- Provide a good example by safe work habits.

### D. Employees

To assist the employees in developing a keen “safety awareness,” the following responsibilities are assigned:

- To abide by the safety rules and regulations of the county and their respective departmental policies and procedures.

- To regard the safety of fellow workers at all times.
- To report unsafe conditions to the supervisor.
- To contribute ideas and suggestions for improving the safety of conditions or procedures to the supervisor.
- To use individual knowledge and influence to prevent accidents.
- To attend safety training sessions.
- To report accidents and injuries immediately.

#### E. Safety Committee Members

The committee team will help improve decision-making in vital areas of employee safety and well-being, public safety, and proper protection. This committee will develop and implement county safety policies, determine goals/objectives, promote employee safety communications, increase employee safety awareness, ensure safety activities are completed, and keep up with governmental regulations. The safety committee will report to the county manager.

The committee shall meet every other month. Its primary purpose is to assist the Safety Committee Chair in the formulation and implementation of the safety program. To accomplish this, the committee shall

- Draft safety rules and regulations and recommend approval for adoption by management.
- Devise methods of promoting safety among employees.
- Review accident records to discover trends and to gauge effectiveness of the safety program.
- Discuss difficult accident problems and make suggestions for preventative measures.

The following activities are the committee's responsibility and require periodic attention:

- Departmental self-inspection
- Maintenance of fire prevention and suppression equipment.
- Seasonal promotional activities.
- Safety regulations.
- An employee training program.
- Written reports of all committee meetings.

#### F. Safety Committee Chair

The Safety Committee Chair sets meeting dates, distributes meeting materials, conducts meetings, establishes sub-committees when necessary and determine committee action on items discussed.

Further responsibilities of the safety committee chair shall include the following:

- Make periodic inspections of all county buildings/operations to ensure compliance with safety regulations.
- Promote “safety awareness” in all employees through educational and training programs.
- Maintain contact with available sources of topical safety information, such as Local Government Risk Management and Georgia Board of Worker’s Compensation.
- Maintain minutes of all Safety Meetings.
- Safety Program status reports.

#### G. Reporting Requirements

The purpose of recordkeeping is to discover patterns trends of occurring accidents to direct risk control efforts in the right directions. The following recordkeeping procedures will be used:

- All accidents shall be reported immediately to the supervisor or department representative. A Peach County Government Risk Management form should be filled out completely and sent to the county Safety Committee Chair as soon as possible or within three working days.
- The accident should be investigated to determine what corrective action should be taken to members or the employee’s supervisor. If the investigation needs to be done by a safety committee member, contact the Safety Officer/Coordinator at 478-954-8242 who in turns contacts and schedules post-accident drug testing.
- It shall be the responsibility of the county Safety Committee Chair to maintain records as necessary to comply with laws and objectives of the safety program.

These records should include;

- Copy of the Peach County Risk Management From
- Peach county Accident Investigation Report
- Infection Exposure Form
- First Report of Injury Form
- Safety Officers Analysis Form

## **APPENDIX H TRAVEL POLICY**

**SECTION 1. APPLICABILITY.** The provisions of this policy shall apply to all officers, whether elected or appointed, and all other employees of Peach County, Georgia.

Specifically, not covered by these policies are the expenses of witnesses appearing in the courts of Peach County; and the expenses of individuals recruited and interviewing for employment with Peach County.

**SECTION 2. AUTHORIZED TRAVEL AND EXPENSES.** Travel and related expenses shall be authorized when an officer or employee is engaged in the conduct of official government business and shall include the following:

- a. **Travel to and from the location of a conference, seminar, school, or training program** held outside of Peach County for education or training purposes directly related to the operations of the government and its official functions. Advance payment or reimbursements of expenses for travel under this category shall require the prior written approval of the Department Director.
- b. **Travel to any location outside of Peach County to conduct operations of the Government.** Advance payment or reimbursements of expenses for travel under this category shall require the prior written approval of the Department Head.
- c. **Travel to any location outside of Peach County for any purpose, which is directly related to the functions and responsibilities of Peach County Government.** Such purposes may include economic development, legislative/governmental relations, and other activities directly related to Peach County Government. Advance payments or reimbursement of expenses for travel under this category shall require the prior written approval of the County Administrator.

**SECTION 3. TRAVEL ADVANCES.** A travel advance for travel-related expenses may be made upon a written request on such form as may be prescribed by the Finance Department. Such request should be made sufficiently (a minimum of 14 days) in advance to accommodate the government's accounts payable payment schedule. Travel advances are allowable only for meals and mileage. Travel advance payments will be made in the form of a check payable to the employee and will be available before two (2) working days prior to the scheduled date of departure. No advance will be made for less than \$25.00.

**SECTION 4. REGISTRATION, LODGING, AND TRAVEL PAYMENTS.** Registration fees and fares for common carrier transportation will be paid either by purchase order or request for payment. If



any combination of registration fees, room accommodations, and /or meals is to be paid to the same vendor, only one request for payment or purchase order shall be required for such combination. Advance payment to guarantee lodging accommodations shall be paid for by county check or credit card at the time of registration. The lodging accommodations cost shall be paid directly to the hotel/motel, not to the employee. The check can be taken by the employee at the time of travel if the reservation was made with a credit card to secure registration.

Local and state government employees are exempt from hotel/motel taxes under Georgia Code 48-13-51 while on official business in the state. Most hotels require an exemption form be provided before allowing exemptions. Employees and officials should use the attached form to gain this exemption.

**SECTION 4.1 TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS.** Each individual department will be responsible for making their own travel arrangements for lodging and transportation.

**SECTION 5. REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES.** A request for reimbursement of expense shall be submitted to the Finance Department within ten (10) calendar days following the date of return to work. Such request shall be made on such form as prescribed by the Finance Department. The request for reimbursement shall contain an itemized listing of all expenses incurred for such travel and must be approved and signed by the employee's department or division head; however, if an employee travels on a regular basis, a mileage form should be kept for a period of one month and a reimbursement will be made monthly instead of paying mileage reimbursement after each trip. If an employee fails to reconcile the account within the specified time period and an extension of time is not granted by the Finance Director, the Finance Director may void such reimbursement claim. With the approval of the County Administrator, the Finance Director shall be authorized to withhold any such cash advance or direct payment from the employee's paycheck.

**SECTION 6. DOCUMENTATION OF EXPENSES.** Receipts or other documentation shall be required for all expenses except for meals. Receipts for taxi or limousine services are not required when such receipts are not available.

**SECTION 7. ALLOWABILITY AND LIMITATIONS OF EXPENSES.** Payment by the government shall be limited to the actual, necessary, and reasonable expenses incurred for authorized activities provided for in this policy. The standard for "reasonable" may be determined by the geographic location and other circumstances, and the interpretation of this standard shall be made by the County Administrator.

**SECTION 8. MEAL EXPENSES FOR TRAVEL OUTSIDE PEACH COUNTY AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS.** Documentation for meal expenses is not required. The meal allowance for each full day is \$30 for all Peach County employees. Travel days both to and from a conference will be paid at ½ the per diem amount (\$15). Travelers must always avail themselves for any free or prepaid meals which are included in conference registration in order to save the

taxpayers' money. Alcoholic beverages shall not be considered for reimbursement. The request for reimbursement has to follow the guidelines as posted in Section 5, which includes making the request within (10) ten working days of the employees return to work.

Employees traveling outside of the State of Georgia must have the Board of Commissioners approval. Any employee who is approved for out of state travel will be responsible for travel accommodations to and from the destination. The county will pay the cost of the hotel and fees charged to attend training/educational classes or conferences. Meal expenses will be paid to the employee according to Section 8 of this travel policy.

Meals covered in registration fees will be deducted as in the above schedule of meal allowances. Tips and gratuities for meals allowed in Section 13 of this policy are included within the allowance(s) established above.

**SECTION 9. LODGING.** Reasonable expenses associated with room accommodations will be paid to a hotel or motel upon presentation of an itemized bill. Whenever special rates are included as part of the planned program, payment will be made only for the special rate as long as such accommodation is available. Payment shall be limited to the single room rate. If employees elect to share a room with another employee, then double room rates will be paid.

#### **SECTION 10. TRANSPORTATION.**

- a. **Mileage Reimbursement.** Mileage expenses for transportation in a personally-owned vehicle shall be based on the rate per mile as prescribed by the IRS Standard Mileage Rate. If a county vehicle is available and the employee chooses to use the personally-owned vehicle, the reimbursement rate will also be based on the IRS Standard Mileage Rate for "if government furnished vehicle is available" (currently .17 cents per mile). Mileage shall be computed and reported based on actual odometer readings. Employees who receive an automobile allowance for using their personal automobiles for government business will be limited to reimbursement for out-of-county destinations only. Any employee traveling in a county vehicle will not be paid mileage.

If two or more persons travel to the same location in the same vehicle, only one such payment shall be made. A personally-owned vehicle may be used for travel inside the State of Georgia, provided that the allowable expense is the vehicle mileage expense.

- b. **Common Carrier.** A common carrier shall be any scheduled train, or bus, and the rate shall be limited to the minimum fare available (economy or tourist). Roundtrip fares should be obtained whenever it will result in a cost savings and reservations should be made sufficiently in advance to take advantage of any special savings plans offered by the carrier.
- c. **Ground Transportation.** Ground transportation by taxi, bus, or limousine is an allowable expense when incurred in conjunction with common carrier transportation to and from

terminals, hotels, restaurants, and meeting locations, if necessary. Receipts for such transportation shall not be required; however, a complete point-to-point itemization of such charges shall be required. The most economical means of ground transportation should be used. The costs associated with any changes or deviations from the approved method of travel will be the responsibility of the traveler. Mileage to a destination shall be determined by MapQuest or other recognized map site and shall be used as a base mileage for the trip, including return. No more than 5 percent deviation from that mileage shall be paid unless explanation is provided and approved by the County Administrator. Reimbursements will be per mile at the current rate allowed by the Internal Revenue Service. The rates are set in accordance with the rate allowed by the Internal Revenue Service.

- d. **Points of Departure and Return.** The points of departure and return for travel status shall be either the office at which the employee carries out their duties or their residence, whichever is more practical under the circumstances.
- e. **Direct Route.** All travel should be by the most direct route. However, an expressway route which involves more total mileage may result in a savings in personnel time and, therefore would be considered the more direct route. Reason and good judgement should be exercised in this determination.

**SECTION 11. COMMUNICATIONS.** Telephone, Internet connection, and “FAX” messages directly pertaining to official government business shall be an allowable expense. Claims for payment of such charges shall be itemized and shall include the locations, the person contacted, and the justification for the communication. A personal telephone call to confirm the safe arrival of the individual shall be an allowable expense; however, any other personal communication shall not be allowable.

An employee who requires Internet access to conduct official government business while traveling should first verify with the hotel/motel to determine if Internet access is available and the costs involved. The county maintains two (2) air cards which are available to be signed out for the duration of the trip should Internet access not be available at the hotel/motel or if such service is only available with an additional cost. The air cards are to be used for official government business purposes only and should be returned promptly upon the employees return.

**SECTION 12. CREDIT CARDS.** Whenever allowable expenses are purchased or paid by the employee with a credit card, the receipt shall include an itemization of expenditures or separate receipts must be obtained for each expenditure. A credit card receipt showing only an aggregate of charges, unless itemized, shall not constitute sufficient documentation and shall not be allowable.

County credit cards will be issued to members of the Board of Commissioners and Department Heads for out-of-town travel. Non-county business charges are not allowed. The county credit card MUST be signed back in promptly upon return to work of the employee.

**SECTION 13. REGISTRATION FEES.** Registration fees for an authorized program as described in Section 2 shall be an allowable expense and payment shall be arranged no less than fourteen (14) days in advance of the program date either by purchase order or a request for payment. The employee shall be responsible for submitting the request for purchase order or request for payment in sufficient time for the payment to be processed and mailed prior to any registration deadline. Optional assessments such as special events or personal memberships, i.e., golf tournaments, fees for tours, or spousal trips, which are not included in the registration fees are not allowable expenses. Any part of a registration fee covering meals and/or lodging shall be identified separately and shall not otherwise be paid in addition to the registration fee. The registration fee of an official's or employee's spouse will not be an allowable expense.

**SECTION 14. TIPS AND GRATUITIES.** The meal allowance(s) established in Section 8 include all tips and gratuities for meal expense.

**SECTION 15. PARKING FEES.** Expenses for parking shall be allowable if documented by paid receipt, except however no payment shall be made for charges in connection with any illegal parking violation.

**SECTION 16. OTHER EXPENSES.** The Finance Director shall be authorized to pay other expenses which may be incurred in conjunction with an authorized travel or activity if they are determined to be reasonable and proper. A claim for payment of such other expenses shall include adequate documentation and justification to meet the purpose of this policy.

**SECTION 17. UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES.** The following expenses are specifically unallowable for payment:

- a. Expenses incurred by any person other than the employee unless otherwise provided for in this policy or prior written approval has been granted by the County Administrator.
- b. Expenses for entertainment.
- c. Laundry or valet service.
- d. Personal articles, toiletries, souvenirs, etc.
- e. Payments to friends or other individuals for costs of meals, lodging, or transportation not a part of the authorized activity or program.
- f. Direct expenses of operating a personal vehicle, such as gasoline, oil, parts, or repairs.
- g. Travel and related expense incurred from an employee's residence to his designated work site.
- h. Any expenses for meals or per diem allowances for meals that are not required to ensure the employee's performance of official government business. Scheduling or extending travel periods in order to increase meal reimbursements or per diem allowances is specifically not allowable.

- i. Any expenses incurred that are unrelated to official government business or activities as determined by the Finance Director.
- j. Alcoholic beverages are not considered for reimbursement.

**SECTION 18. LEAVE AMID OR ADJACENT TO TRAVEL.** An employee taking annual or sick leave while away on official travel status shall not be entitled to any payment of expense incurred during the period of such leave.

**SECTION 19. PETTY CASH.** All expenses paid or reimbursed from a petty cash fund shall be in accordance with all requirements and provisions of this policy.

**SECTION 20. DETERMINATION OF ALLOWABLE EXPENSES.** Economic conservatism and sound judgement must be exercised by all officials and employees in every expense incurred. In the event of a dispute of the allowability of an expense, the Finance Director shall be authorized to make such determination based on this policy, reasonableness, and sound fiscal judgement. In each such circumstance, the Finance Director shall make every attempt to resolve such dispute in the best interest of the employee and Peach County.

**SECTION 21. FINAL AUTHORITY.** The County Administrator has final authority for any interpretations or appeals related to this policy.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **CREDIT CARD POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

#### **1. Policy Statement**

This policy is to ensure effective controls, policies and procedures are in place with respect to the use of county credit cards.

#### **2. Principles**

- Ensure transparency in the Commissioners operations concerning the use of county credit cards.
- Ensure the Commissioners resources are managed with integrity and diligence.

#### **3. Objective**

- To adopt best practices in developing a clear and comprehensive policy on the use of county credit cards.
- To provide an economical business procedure to policy on the use of credit cards for travel, education, and emergency purchases.

#### **4. Use of Credit Cards**

- Purchases with the credit card should be restricted to purchases that cannot be made with a purchase order or a request for check, due to convenience.
- Purchases made with the county credit card should be infrequent and used primarily for education and training related expenses, such as reserving hotel rooms, renting vehicles, fuel purchases when traveling, for certain Internet purchases and purchases that cannot be made with a purchase order.
- All purchases made with the county credit card must be in compliance with the county's purchasing ordinance.
- Before an office/department can obtain a credit card for an authorized expenditure, approval must be obtained in writing from the Commissioners, County Administrator, and/or the department head, whichever authorization level is required. (See authorization level and authorized usage).
- Each elected official/department head is responsible for the liability incurred by using the credit card.
- Each elected official/department head is responsible for the use of the card by their department.
- Each use of the credit card requires a request for check or a purchase order to be issued for the amount charged to the card. The request for check can be obtained at the Purchasing Agent's office. The requisition for the purchase order must be entered into the system via the requisition process.

#### **5. Restrictions**

- County credit cards are not to be used for personal expenses under any circumstances.

- Cash advances on county credit cards are prohibited.
- Use of the county credit card for purchases over the Internet (if approved) should be restricted to trusted secure sites.
- The cardholder will be personally liable for expenditures that cannot be shown to be related to the business of the Peach County Board of Commissioners.
- If an official or employee, who is authorized on behalf of their office or department, has charges that are disallowed and are not repaid prior to the credit card billing date, the county shall place a lien on the employee's wages, including final pay.
- Failure to repay disallowed charges shall result in a penalty of 10 percent per annum from the date of default until repaid. The interest will be computed as simple interest on the outstanding balance. This penalty is payable to the county and is in addition to interest and penalty charges.
- Unauthorized charges will result in disciplinary action, including revocation of the right to use the credit and/or other disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment.
- A credit card voucher/approval form must be completed before each individual purchase. This form must be signed by the elected official and/or the department head before the credit card is issued to an individual employee.
- Split purchases are not allowed unless specifically approved by the County Administrator.
- It is the responsibility of the elected official/department head to ensure that funding in an appropriate account is available to cover the credit card purchase.

#### **6. Issuing of cards**

- The County Administrator will be responsible for the issue of a card and this will be recorded on a "Cardholder Approval and Acknowledgement Form". Each individual signing out the card will be required to sign this form on the receipt of the credit card and acknowledge these policies and procedures.
- The County Administrator will be responsible for maintaining a register of the individual credit cards, including name of person that signed the credit card out, date, time, purpose, vendor name, amount and general ledger account number.
- The County Administrator is also responsible for verifying the signature on the "Cardholder Approval and Acknowledgement Form".

#### **7. Payment of Monthly Account Balance**

- The balance of the monthly credit card statement shall be paid in full.

#### **8. Disputed Purchases**

- The Commissioner's Office is responsible for paying all accounts on the monthly credit card statement.
- An employee will be personally liable for expenditures that cannot be shown to be related to the business of the Peach County Board of Commissioners.

- The Commissioner's Office shall be notified of all disputed transactions. The employee must complete the "Disputed Transaction" form and include with their request for check or purchase order.
- When a dispute occurs, the employee should attempt to correct the situation with the merchant. In many cases, a simple phone call can clear up a problem without any delay. If unable to correct the situation, contact the Commissioner's Office. The Commissioner's Office will attempt to resolve the matter and may have to contact the bank for assistance.
- The bank can assist with resolving some disputes with merchants, particularly those involving duplicate charges, non-receipt of goods ordered, or credits not processed after refund vouchers have been issued.

**9. Reporting of Lost or Stolen Credit Card**

- If a card is stolen or lost, it is the employee's responsibility to immediately contact the Commissioner's Office to report the loss.
- The employee then must complete a "Lost or Stolen Cards" form and forward it to the Commissioner's Office.



**APPENDIX J**  
**LOST OR STOLEN COUNTY-ISSUED EQUIPMENT**

In the event of theft of Peach County issued equipment from the employee's home or vehicle, the county will issue an invoice to the employee for the cost of the replacement equipment. The invoice will be for insurance claim purposes only, and the employee will not be liable for the cost since the theft was out the of employee's control. The employee must file a claim with their insurance and remit any proceeds relevant to the stolen county property to Peach County Board of Commissioners.

In the event of the loss of Peach County issued equipment, where no third part is involved or liable, the employee will be charged the lesser of the current value of the equipment and the cost of the replacement equipment. The current value of the equipment will be determined using the following formula:

$$\text{Purchase price} + \text{Equipment Life (stated in months)} \times \text{Remaining Life (stated in months)} = \text{Current Value of Equipment}$$

The cost of the replacement equipment shall be determined by the actual cost of comparable equipment as determined by competitive quotations.

## **APPENDIX K**

### **WORKPLACE WELLNESS POLICY**

Peach County recognizes the benefits, to both employees and employers, of programs that promote and support workplace promotion and wellness. It is the goal of Peach County to provide every employee the tools they need to make positive and healthier lifestyle changes that result in better physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

Peach County intends to partake of the following actions: Hold annual health fair/wellness screenings, provide approved health education programs/activities and continually create awareness.

As part of Peach County's commitment to wellness, a Health Promotion leader has been appointed to provide educational information on wellness. The leader will continually work to achieve the goals of this policy through coordinating and implementing activities and programs.

## **APPENDIX L**

### **WORKERS' COMPENSATION POLICY**

This is to certify that I have reviewed the official notice of the Panel of Physicians.

I understand that when I am involved in an on-the-job injury and emergency treatment is not necessary, I must accept the services of a physician from the Panel. If I desire to obtain medical services from a physician not listed on the Panel, I may do; however, I will be liable for those medical expenses. The physician selected from the Panel may arrange for the appropriate consultations, referrals, and other specialized medical services as the nature of the injury requires. If I am dissatisfied with the physician selected, I may make one change without permission to a second physician also listed on the Panel. However, any further changes require the permission of the employer/insurer, self-insurer claims office, or the State Board of Workers' Compensation.

In the case of an emergency, I should be taken to the nearest emergency room. However, all follow-up care must, thereafter, be rendered by a physician from the Panel, or a Panel Physicians referral.

I further understand that I must notify my supervisor and the Peach County Human Resources Office or the Safety Officer as soon as the injury occurs, regardless of the extent of the injury. Delay in notification may result in denial of payment for medical services rendered.

#### Leave on the Day of a Workers' Compensation Injury or Illness

Employees will receive leave without pay on the day of the injury or illness for any treatment resulting in lost work time. Employees may supplement their leave with any balance of accrued sick, vacation, or comp time leave.

#### Follow-up Medical Visits for Workers' Compensation Injury or Illness

Employees requiring medical or therapy visits during regularly scheduled working hours to reach maximum medical improvement will receive leave without pay for the required treatment resulting in lost time. Employees may supplement their leave with any balance of accrued sick, vacation, or comp time leave.

#### Insurance Benefits during Workers' Compensation Leave

While on workers' compensation leave, an employee will continue to be covered under Peach County's insurance programs. The employee's share of premiums is to be paid directly by the employee unless the employee is using accrued sick, vacation, or comp time leave, in which case premiums will continue to be paid through payroll deduction.

If the workplace injury or illness results in additional (continuous) time away from work, the employee will be placed on Family and Medical Leave Act for their own serious health condition and will be subject to the Peach County FMLA policy as outline in the Peach County Personnel System, Article IV, and Section 10.

**Exception:** Employees on Family Medical Leave Act for a Peach County workplace injury or illness resulting in a serious health condition, have the option between choosing workers' compensation income benefits at 2/3 of their average weekly wages, up to a maximum of \$675.00 per week, **OR** using their balance of accrued leave. If the employee ceases to be eligible for or elects not to receive Workers' Compensation Income Benefits, it will be required that any remaining balance of the employee's accrued sick leave, accrued annual leave, and accrued compensatory time shall be used for any additional FMLA leave or other absences taken pursuant to the workplace injury or illness, either continuous or intermittent, until the conclusion of the FMLA Leave or until the employee is deemed eligible again for Workers' Compensation Income Benefits due to changes in medical condition and elects the change, in writing, from usage of accrued leave balance to Workers' Compensation Income Benefits.

If an employee elects to supplement their leave with sick, vacation, and compensatory time accruals in lieu of receiving Workers' Compensation Income Benefits from Peach County's Workers' Compensation carrier and later exhausts all available leave accruals but has not been released for returned to work, the employee may then elect, in writing, to receive Workers' Compensation Income Benefits from Peach County's Workers' Compensation carrier during the eligibility period as determined by the carrier.

As outlined under the Workers' Compensation Act, employees are entitled to receive weekly Temporary Total Disability Benefits if you miss more than seven days from work. The first seven-day period is considered a "waiting period," during which time you are not eligible to draw Workers' Compensation Income Benefits. If elected, you will be paid Workers' Compensation Income Benefits for any days that you miss in excess of seven days. If you are out longer than 21 consecutive days, you will be paid Workers' Compensation Income Benefits for your seven-day waiting period unless you received regular wages from Peach County.

## **APPENDIX M ON-CALL POLICY**

### **On-Call Policy**

#### **Purpose/Objective**

Employees of Peach County may be required to serve in an on-call capacity to respond to an unforeseen circumstance or emergency and, if such circumstance arises, to report to work in a timely manner.

#### **Procedures**

In order to ensure the department is responsive after normal working hours to address emergency or other adverse situations, it will be necessary to establish a weekly rotating duty roster for all employees on an on-call status. It will also require that the employee is made aware of such roster.

The employee must remain available by telephone or text and report in person in response to the on-call notification within one hour or less. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure all forms of contact are working properly. Employees who fail to respond when called are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Peach County Personnel Manual.

Any employee (non-exempt) who is called in to work will be paid a minimum of one hour of work in addition to actual hours worked by the employee. Employees should remain free of the influence of alcohol and will be expected to be in conformity with the drug free policy. However, employees are not required to restrict their activities while on call in any other manner.

Employees with questions regarding this policy should contact Human Resources.

## **APPENDIX N**

### **EMAIL USAGE POLICY**

**Purpose:** This policy applies to all persons using electronic mail operated by or on behalf of Peach County and defining the appropriate use for transmitting electronic messages.

E-mail accounts are provided to employees to conduct work- related business only. Employees of Peach County are required to use their assigned email account. Personal email accounts are not authorized to be used. All e-mail on Peach County information systems is subject to open records laws. Use of county email is a privilege that can be revoked if used inappropriately. Unacceptable e-mail practices include, but is not limited to the following:

1. Interference with others' work
2. Sending unsolicited and unauthorized mass email (spam). Please note that incoming inappropriate spam emails should be immediately deleted. Replying to or forwarding these types of emails is not authorized.
3. Use of offensive language
4. Threats
5. Distribution of obscene material
6. Harassment

Questions regarding the appropriate use of Peach County electronic mail should be directed to the information technology department. Any violations to this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions as stated in Article V Section 6 of the Personnel Manual.

## **APPENDIX O**

### **Leave Donation Policy**

#### **Policy Statement**

Peach County Board of Commissioners recognizes that employees may have a family medical emergency that may result in the need for additional time off in excess of their available sick time. To address this need, all eligible employees will be allowed to donate accrued sick leave hours to a co-worker in need of additional paid time off, in accordance with the policy outlined below. The use of this policy is strictly voluntary.

#### **Eligibility**

Employees must be employed with Peach County for a minimum of one year to be eligible to donate and/or receive donated sick time. An employee may donate accrued sick leave to another employee who has exhausted all available leave balances (annual, sick and compensatory) and who would otherwise need to take leave due to personal health conditions/injuries or similar health conditions/injuries affecting qualified family members.

#### **Guidelines**

Employees who would like to submit a donated sick leave request from their co-workers must follow the following criteria:

**Medical emergency**, defined as a medical condition of the employee or an immediate family member that will require the prolonged/extended absence of the employee from duty and will result in a loss of income to the employee due to the exhaustion of all paid leave available. An immediate family member is defined as a spouse, child or parent. Before applying for leave donation, the employee must have been approved by Human Resources to be on Family Medical Leave.

#### **Donation of sick leave time**

- Employees cannot borrow against future sick leave time to donate.
- Employees who are currently on an approved leave of absence cannot donate sick time.
- Employees wishing to donate hours must retain a minimum of 80 hours for their own personal use and an employee can only donate up to 24 hours of their accrued sick leave once a year.
- An employee who wishes to donate leave must be on an equal or greater pay grade than the recipient.
- Any employee who is in the process of retiring or who has put in a notice to resign is not eligible to donate sick leave.
- No solicitation to co-workers to donate time; all requests must go through Human Resources.

#### **Requesting donated sick leave**

Employees wishing to donate leave must submit a leave authorization form to Human Resources for review. The recipient of donated leave must be on approved medical leave in order to receive leave hours.

Employees who receive donated sick leave time may receive no more than 80 hours within a 12-month period.

Donated sick leave time may only be used for time off related to the approved request.

All employees who have requested leave will be notified by Human Resources the status of request within three business days.



## **APPENDIX P**

### **PROMOTION AND PAY POLICY**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines on promotion opportunities to positions of higher responsibility for existing staff members based on qualifications on experience, education and capabilities. Any employee in good standing is eligible for promotion consideration assuming he or she meets the minimum qualifications of the position.

#### **Eligibility**

Define as any employee who is not on disciplinary probation or suspension and those who are current and valid with all certifications/licenses required for the position to be filled.

#### **Procedures for promotion within same department or promotion to another department**

All job vacancies will be posted internally for at least five business days.

All eligible employees are welcome to apply to current opening and should provide complete job-related information indicating why they are the best qualified for the position.

Department supervisors who recommend an employee promotion due to job duty changes should review and revise the employees job description with Human Resources. All major changes in responsibilities should be noted for the recommendation.

#### **Pay Changes**

Pay changes will be consistent with Peach County's current pay scale. Employees who are promoted will be assigned the appropriate pay grade for the position. The employee will receive a minimum 10% pay increase for the promotion. All promotions will be justified by experience, longevity, certifications/education and will be notated by the department supervisor recommending the promotion. The department supervisor will submit the appropriate forms to human resources for review and the county administrator will make the decision on the promotion request.

## **APPENDIX Q TELECOMMUTE POLICY**

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this Policy is to establish requirements and guidelines for employees engaging in authorized teleworking or telecommuting. “Teleworking” or “Telecommuting” is a work flexibility arrangement under which an employee performs their work duties and responsibilities from an approved worksite.

### **Scope:**

This Policy applies to all employees specifically authorized by Peach County to perform teleworking or telecommuting. All requests to telework or telecommute shall be made by the employee and be authorized by the Department Head and the County Administrator. In addition, all requests are to have a beginning and ending date. This Policy is effective immediately until rescinded by the County. This Policy may be revoked, changed, or updated at any time.

### **Requirements:**

#### **(a) Location of Work**

1. The workspace must be safe and free from hazards.
2. The workspace must be reasonably free from interruptions and distractions that would affect work performance.
3. The workspace must allow the employee to preserve the confidentiality of sensitive or non-public information. Any County provided material or equipment shall not be removed from the workspace while the employee is teleworking.
4. For employees who must verbally communicate with others as part of their duties, the workspace must be quiet and allow for professional communications during those times.
5. Teleworking employees shall not conduct in-person, face to face meetings with the public or clients in their home office in any official capacity or connected with the County’s business. The County is not responsible for any injuries to family members, visitors, and others in the employee’s home.
6. The County is not responsible for any loss to the employee’s property, whether caused by physical damage or by computer virus attacks or other intrusions via the internet that is or is not related to the County or its equipment, systems, etc.
7. Employees utilizing County equipment while teleworking must protect the equipment from damage and follow the Computer and Internet Policy.
8. Reliable internet service is a requirement for teleworking. Consistent internet failures will result in loss of teleworking privileges.

- (b) Communication and Work Schedules: Employees are authorized to engage in teleworking during the scheduled workdays and hours pre-approved by their supervisor; employees must be reachable by the County during these days and times. If the employee becomes aware of

or anticipates any failure of technological communication or equipment that could prevent the employee from being reached by their supervisor and/or performing any of the employee's duties during their normal working hours, they are to immediately notify their supervisor. Employees may not work outside of their approved days and hours without prior supervisor approval. Supervisors reserve the right to phone or email employees at any time during working hours and may require employees to report productivity daily. Supervisors may also ask employees to perform duties outside their job descriptions in an effort to pull together as a team to ensure essential office duties are carried out in the absence of others. The primary mode for meetings for remote employees will take place virtually or telephonically; however, in-person meetings may be scheduled as needed, and the remote employee must attend if directed. At any time, employees may be required to physically report to work. Employees who require sick leave and/or wish to request vacation or comp time leave must follow the current Policy in place to request such leave and have it approved.

- (c) Security and Confidentiality: While working remotely, employees must take steps to preserve the security and confidentiality of County information. Employees must keep confidential documents and materials in secure locations. Employees must maintain password protection to the same extent as required at the workplace and keep confidential documents and records securely stored. Any suspected loss or theft of County documents, materials, or information, as well as any suspected malware, hacks, or breaches of security, must be reported to the County immediately.
- (d) Policies: This teleworking arrangement does not change the basic terms and conditions of employment, including the rate of pay and benefits. Employees are expected to comply with all County policies, procedures, and performance standards.
- (e) The County retains the right to investigate alleged abuse of this teleworking Policy and may cease or modify an employee's approval for telework at any time.

## **APPENDIX R**

### **Rehire Policy**

#### **Purpose**

It is the policy of Peach County Board of Commissioners to consider rehire of former employees who voluntarily left employment. This policy outlines the rules regarding eligibility for re-employment.

#### **Eligibility for Rehire**

Employees who resign in good standing will be eligible for reemployment for a period of up to six months from the last date of employment with no probationary period. All leave accruals will start over at the date of rehire along with other benefits provided by the county. Any employee rehired after six months will be treated as a new employee.

#### **Procedures**

When an employee applies for a position, the following procedures should be followed:

- The department supervisor will contact Human Resources to request an employee records review to decide whether the employee is eligible for rehire.
- If the employee is eligible, hiring managers decide whether the employee is qualified for a particular position. If they aren't eligible. Human Resources will inform employee.
- If the former employee is qualified, the hiring manager shall submit a personnel action form to Human Resources along with interview questions and/or tests. All paperwork will be submitted to county administrator for approval. Once approved Human Resources will request a drug and background screen. If screens are satisfactory, Human Resources will send the employee a job offer letter.

## **APPENDIX S**

### **WEAPON FREE WORKPLACE Policy**

#### **Purpose**

Peach County employees are its most valuable resources and, for that reason, their health and safety are of paramount concern. The purpose and intent of this policy are to promote safe and secure working environments for all Peach County's employees.

#### **Covered Individuals**

All Peach County workers (except for Law Enforcement Personnel) are subject to this policy, including contract workers and temporary employees, as well as visitors and customers on Peach County property. A license to carry a weapon does not supersede this policy. Any employee in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

#### **Weapon Defined**

"Dangerous weapons" include firearms, explosives, knives, and other weapons that might be considered dangerous or that could cause harm. Employees are responsible for making sure that any item possessed is not prohibited by this policy.

The term "weapon" does not include any tool provided or approved for an employee's use by Peach County; provided, however, that the use or threatened use of any such tool as a weapon shall be considered to be a violation of this policy.

#### **Prohibited Conduct**

No employee (Except for Law Enforcement) shall carry, posses, or transport a weapon inside any Peach County building, on the grounds of any Peach County property, or in a Peach County vehicle, while on-duty/off duty or otherwise acting in the course of his or her employment.

#### **Searches of Weapons**

Peach County reserves the right at any time and at its discretion to search all county-owned vehicles and other areas for the purpose of determining whether any weapon is being, or has been, brought onto the property or premises in violation of this policy. Employees who fail or refuse to promptly permit a search under this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

## **APPENDIX T**

### **Reasonable Accommodations for Pregnant Workers Policy**

#### **Purpose**

As required by the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA), Peach County Board of Commissioners will provide reasonable accommodations to employees and applicants with limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, unless the accommodation will cause undue hardship to Peach County Board of Commissioners operations.

#### **Policy**

An employee or applicant may request an accommodation due to pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition by submitting the request in writing to Human Resources. The accommodation request should include an explanation of the pregnancy-related limitations, the accommodation needed and any alternative accommodation(s) that might be reasonable. Depending on the nature of the accommodation, the individual may be requested to submit a statement from a health care provider substantiating the need for the accommodation.

Upon receipt of a request for accommodation, HR will contact the employee or applicant to discuss the request and determine if an accommodation is reasonable and can be provided without significant difficulty or expense, i.e., undue hardship.

While the reasonableness of each accommodation request will be individually assessed, possible accommodations include allowing the individual to:

- Sit while working.
- Drink water during the workday.
- Receive closer-in parking.
- Have flexible hours.
- Receive appropriately sized uniforms and safety apparel.
- Receive additional break time to use the bathroom, eat and rest.
- Take time off to recover from childbirth.
- Be excused from strenuous activities and/or activities that involve exposure to compounds deemed unsafe during pregnancy.

An employee may request any available vacation/ sick leave or unpaid leave as a reasonable accommodation under this policy; however, Peach County Board of Commissioners will not require an employee to take time off if another reasonable accommodation can be provided that will allow the employee to continue to work.

## **APPENDIX U**

### **Office Pet Policy**

Peach County is responsible for assuring the health and safety of all employees. Some animals may pose a threat of infection and may cause allergic reactions in other employees. Some employees may feel threatened or be distracted by the presence of animals. In addition, Peach County wishes to prevent pets from fouling or damaging the county buildings. Therefore, no pets are allowed in any Peach County buildings except for service dogs.

As defined under Title III of the Ada (28 CFR 36.104), a service animal, is “any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained, or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability.”

An employee who needs the assistance of a service animal must submit documentation to Human Resources. The employee will be completely and solely liable for any injuries or any damage to personal property caused by the animal. Any repair of cleaning/maintenance costs incurred by the animal will be charged in full to the owner. All dogs must be on a leash and in physical presence of the owner.

Peach County shall not be liable for loss of, or injury to, any animal brought into county buildings.