

**ARTICLE V. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

**Issued: 06/03/03**

**Approved: 06/03/03**

**Section 1. Work Week**

The standard workweek for all employees of the various departments of the county, with the exception of law enforcement, emergency medical service personnel, communications and solid waste shall be from 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Department Heads shall work those hours necessary to ensure the satisfactory performance of their departments, but not less than forty (40) hours per week. When the activities of a particular department require some other schedule to meet work needs, the County Manager may authorize a deviation from the normal schedule.

**Section 2. Gifts and Favors**

No official or employee of the County shall accept any gift, whether in the form of a service, loan, thing, or promise from any person, firm, or corporation who, in the employee's knowledge, is interested directly or indirectly in any manner whatsoever in business dealings with the County.

No official or employee shall accept any gift, favor, or thing of value that may tend to influence that employee in the discharge of duties.

No official or employee shall grant, in the discharge of duties, any improper favor, service, or thing of value.

Gratuities shall be refused by all County officials and employees.

**Section 3. Political Activity Restricted.**

Every employee of Alexander County has a civic responsibility to support good government by every available means and in every appropriate manner. Any employee may join or affiliate with civic organizations of a partisan or political nature, may attend political meetings, and may advocate and support the principles or policies of civic or political organizations in accordance with the constitution and laws of the State of North Carolina and the constitution and laws of the United States of America. However, while on duty, no employee of Alexander County shall:

1. Engage in any political or partisan activity;
2. Use official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or a nomination for office;

3. Be required as a duty of employment or as a condition of employment, promotion, or tenure of office, to contribute funds for political or partisan purposes;
4. Coerce or compel contributions for political or partisan purposes by another employee of the County; or
5. Use funds, supplies, or equipment of the County for political or partisan purposes.

Employees subject to the Hatch Act may not be candidates for elected office in a partisan election.

Any violation of this section shall be deemed improper conduct and shall may subject the employee to immediate dismissal or other disciplinary action.

#### **Section 4. Expectation of Ethical Conduct**

The proper operation of County government requires that public officials and employees be independent, impartial, and responsible to the people; that governmental decisions and policy be made in the proper channels of the governmental structure; that public office not be used for personal gain; and that the public have confidence in the integrity of its government.

As stewards of public resources and holders of the public trust, County employees are expected to up hold the highest standards of ethical conduct while fulfilling their job duties and responsibilities.

#### **Section 5. Workplace Harassment**

The County opposes harassment by supervisors and coworkers in any form. Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability, or that of his or her relatives, friends, or associates.

Any employee who believes he or she may have a complaint of sexual harassment may file the complaint with their immediate supervisor, or if a supervisor is involved, directly with the County Manager. The County Manager will conduct an investigation into any allegation of sexual harassment and advise the employee and appropriate officials of the outcome of the investigation.

Employees witnessing harassment shall also report such conduct to an appropriate County official.

For further guidance concerning Workplace Harassment, refer to the County's standing policy "A Guide For Identifying and Preventing Unlawful Workplace Harassment."

### **Section 6. Outside Employment.**

The work of the County takes priority over other employment interests of employees. All outside employment for salaries, wages, or commission and all self-employment must be requested in advance to the employee's department head. The Department Head and the County Manager will determine whether the outside work would create a conflict of interest or otherwise be incompatible with County service, and approve or disapprove the secondary employment. The assumption of outside employment without prior approval by the County may be deemed improper conduct and subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

### **Section 7. Limitation on Employment of Relatives**

The County limits the hiring and employment of immediate family in regular positions within the same work unit. The County also *prohibits* the employment of any person into a regular position who is an immediate family member of individuals holding the following positions: Board Commissioners, County Manager, Clerk to the Board, or County Attorney. Otherwise, the County will consider employing family members or related persons in the service of the County, considering the following provisions:

No two members of an immediate family shall be employed within the same department if such employment will result in one supervising a member of his or her immediate family, or where one member occupies a position that has influence over the other's employment, promotion, pay administration, and other related management or personnel considerations.

The term "immediate family" means an employee's wife, husband, mother, father, guardian, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandchild, and grandparent, as well as the various combinations of half, step, in-law, and adopted relationships that can be derived from those family members named herein.

The Board of County Commissioners shall approve or disapprove the appointment by the Sheriff or the Register of Deeds of a relative by blood or marriage or kinship nearer than first cousin.

### **Section 8. Travel Expense and Reimbursement.**

Vehicles owned by the County will be provided for certain personnel for County business. County vehicles are not to be used for personal purposes.

Travel on official County business outside of the County must be authorized by the Department Head, or for Department Heads, approved by the County Manager. A written request for overnight travel must describe the travel requested: the purpose of the proposed trip, the distance and destination, and the period of time away from the County. County employees, traveling either inside or outside the County on official business, will be reimbursed for mileage at a rate established by the Board of County Commissioners in the annual budget. Also, reimbursement will be provided for lodging, meals, and expenses as established by the Board of County Commissioners. Employees and officials, traveling on a reimbursable basis for the County, will keep an accurate record of their expenses. No reimbursement will be paid without a written travel claim signed by the employee and approved by the department head and the County Manager. Receipts for the cost of hotels, meals, and related travel expenses must be attached to the written claim.

### **Section 9. Use of County Time, Equipment, Supplies, and Vehicles**

County supplies and equipment are to be used exclusively for the County's business. During working hours, an employee shall only conduct County business. Use of County time, supplies, or equipment for personal or other purposes not related to the employee's County duties and responsibilities is prohibited and subjects the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

All employees, who use County vehicles, are required to follow applicable motor vehicle and safety requirements. Violation or misuse of County vehicles also subjects the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

### **Section 10. Performance Evaluation**

Supervisors and/or Department Heads shall conduct Performance Evaluation conferences with each employee at least once a year. These performance evaluations shall be documented in writing and placed in the employee's personnel file. Procedures for the performance evaluation program are outlined in the Performance Evaluation Policy.

### **Section 11. Safety**

Safety is the responsibility of both county management and employees. It is the policy of the county to establish a safe work environment for employees. The county shall provide a safety program including policies and procedures regarding safety practices and precautions and training in safety methods. The county shall comply with all safety laws, ordinances and regulations. Employees will be instructed in the safety aspects and working methods of their job through training. Personal protective equipment and any other special equipment shall be provided to the employees for the protection against job hazards.

To carry out this policy, all members of management must cooperate and take an active part in the risk control program. The program includes:

- A safety organization, including a safety committee, to assure a continuing and improving program for accident prevention
- Safety education and training for all employees, including publication of safety rules and procedures necessary to control accidents
- Safety education and training specific to each department's needs
- Safety inspections to detect hazards and unsafe working conditions or procedures
- Thorough investigation of accidents to be sure corrective action is taken
- Emphasis on good housekeeping and cleanliness

All employees are expected to perform their jobs correctly and thus safely. Employees are expected to follow safety rules and regulations, report unsafe conditions and unsafe acts, which could cause accidents, and to report injuries and damage promptly. Employees who willfully violation safety rules or indulges in unsafe practices which could endanger self, fellow employees or county property shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **Section 12. Immigration Law Requirements**

All employees are required to furnish proof of citizenship or other required documents indicating a legal right to work in the United States. Copies of the completed I-9 form shall be retained in the Human Resources Office.

### **Section 13. Substance Abuse**

The County is firmly committed to maintaining a drug and alcohol free work environment in order to insure the safety and welfare of the general public and all County employees and to insure an efficient and effective work force. The County also seeks to aid employees experiencing substance abuse problems by offering rehabilitation opportunities. The County Manager has the authority to establish, administer, and enforce substance abuse processes and procedures within the County.