

Policies and Procedures  
Columbia Health Care Center  
Columbia County, Wisconsin



*The employees of Columbia County, the Columbia County Board of Supervisors and the committees appointed by the Board, are responsible for delivering services to the citizens of the County in a cost effective and efficient manner. Of particular concern are the ill, the aged, the youth and those whose social conditions render them most vulnerable. We will measure our success against those considerations, ever mindful of the fiscal restrictions imposed by our tax levy.*

## Table of Contents

Standards of Care for Residents.....	5
Introduction.....	5
Equal Employment Opportunity .....	6
Employee Classifications at the CHCC .....	6
Trial or Probationary Periods.....	6
Your Work Week.....	7
Weekend Work Schedules .....	7
Overtime and How You Are Paid.....	7
Mandated Overtime Hours.....	8
Compensatory Time Off .....	8
Your Pay .....	8
Pay Days .....	8
Direct Deposit Notification.....	9
Your Employee Benefits.....	10
Health Insurance.....	10
Life Insurance.....	10
Unemployment Compensation.....	10
Workers' Compensation.....	10
Retirement .....	10
Post Retirement Health Insurance Benefits.....	11
Prorated Payment Toward Retiree Health Insurance in the Year of Retirement .....	11
Holidays, Vacations and Other Time Off .....	11
Holidays .....	11
Vacation .....	12
Jury Duty .....	13
Subpoenas.....	13
Other Time Off .....	13
Bereavement Leave .....	13
Sick Leave .....	14
Donated Sick Leave .....	14
Sick Leave Incentive Holiday .....	14
Leaves of Absence .....	15
Family Medical Leave.....	15
Military Leaves of Absence .....	15

Personal Leaves of Absence.....	15
Standards of Conduct.....	16
Absences.....	16
Misuse of Sick Leave.....	16
Tardiness.....	17
Scheduled Hours.....	17
Maintaining a Safe and Comfortable Workplace.....	18
Drug and Alcohol Abuse and Screening.....	18
Testing for Controlled Substances.....	19
Prescription Drug Usage.....	20
Confidentiality of Records.....	20
Prohibited Conduct.....	21
Reporting Prohibited Conduct.....	22
Penalties for Misconduct.....	23
Injuries While At Work.....	23
Personnel Records.....	23
Employment Verifications, Reference or Credit Checks.....	24
Job Opportunities Within the County.....	24
Loss of Necessary Licensure or Certification.....	24
Personal Use of County Property and Resources.....	25
Speaking of Cell Phones.....	25
Technology in the Workplace.....	25
Telework.....	25
Personnel Sanctions for Noncompliance of Information Systems Technology Policies.....	26
What Shall I Wear Today?.....	26
The Columbia County Grievance Procedure.....	26
Procedure.....	27
Timelines.....	28
Exclusive Remedy.....	29
I Don't Have a Grievance (as it is defined above) but I Do Have a Problem - What Can I Do? .	29
The Definition of a "Problem".....	29
The Procedure to Resolve that Problem or Issue.....	29
Performance Evaluations.....	30
Performance Improvement Plans.....	30
Other Things Employees Need to Know.....	31
Accommodation for Religious Beliefs.....	31

Employment of Relatives/Family Ties.....	31
Intellectual Property Policy.....	31
Changes in an Employee’s Status .....	31
Mileage Reimbursement for County Business.....	32
Reimbursement for Loss of Personal Items .....	32
County Organization Chart.....	33
Appendix.....	34
Exhibits .....	34
Index .....	35

## **Standards of Care for Residents**

The dedication and cooperation of each and every staff member at the Columbia Health Care Center is necessary to ensure that its residents enjoy a safe and comfortable environment in an atmosphere of warmth and friendliness.

Each of the residents will be treated with honor, dignity and respect, and the staff will work together to meet the physical, emotional, spiritual and psychological needs of those entrusted to the care of the Columbia Health Care Center. Each employee is responsible for protecting and improving the quality of care and life of those who have chosen to live with us.

Any employee who fails to adhere to these standards of service and care will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

## **Introduction**

The handbook provides a general explanation of the Columbia Health Care Center's current personnel policies, procedures and benefits. It is not, however, a contract or a guarantee of employment either expressed or implied. Each employee is subject to the County's business requirements and to the County's rules and policies. No oral or written representations to the contrary create an enforceable contract of employment, expressed or implied.

In addition to this handbook, the CHCC has its own policies and procedures with which you must become familiar. A copy of that is given to each employee and reviewed during the annual orientation session. (See Exhibit A in the Appendix.)

The Columbia County Board of Supervisors has the sole discretion to amend, add to or revoke any or all of these policies, procedures or benefits at any time and without prior notice. Columbia County reserves the right to: revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of the handbook as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion. However, in the event that changes are made, every effort will be made to communicate them to employees in a timely manner.

This handbook replaces any prior such handbook(s), and applies to current employees (except as noted) and those hired after the effective date of these policies January 1, 2012.

Should any provision of this handbook be found to be unenforceable and invalid, such finding does not invalidate the entire handbook, but only that particular provision. In any case where any section of this handbook is in conflict with applicable federal, state or local law the applicable federal, state or local law shall prevail.

Throughout this handbook, "County" shall designate Columbia County, "CHCC" shall designate the Columbia Health Care Center, and the term "department" shall designate any or all of the departments within the Columbia Health Care Center.

**Equal Employment Opportunity**

The County and the CHCC assure equal employment opportunity and affirmative action in the application of its personnel administration policies. Discrimination against any person in recruitment, appointment, training, promotion, retention, discipline because of race, sexual orientation, age, political or religious beliefs or affiliations is strictly prohibited.

Discrimination on the basis of age, sex, sexual orientation or physical disability is prohibited except where specific age, sex or physical requirements constitute a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to perform the essential duties of any given position within the County.

The County and the CHCC adheres to and supports the principles set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as all regulations of the State of Wisconsin that pertain to employment practices.

**Employee Classifications at the CHCC**

There are four (4) different classifications of employees at the CHCC:

**Management:** The Administrator of the Health Care Center and the CHCC department managers:

- |                                  |                        |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Accounting Supervisor            | Activity Director      |
| Director of Facility Engineering | Director of Nursing    |
| Environmental Services Manager   | Food Services Director |
| Social Services Director         |                        |

**Regular Full Time Employees:** Individuals who work 40 hours a week; regular full-time employees are eligible for all benefit of any regular full-time employee of the County.

**Regular Part Time Employees:** Individuals who are scheduled to work 832 or more hours annually in a permanent position. Regular part time employees receive benefits on a prorated basis; the proration is based on the number of total paid hours worked in relationship to 2080 hours per year (the number of scheduled work hours for full time employees).

**Casual Employees:** Individuals who are on call or on standby to replace regular employees who are unavailable to work, or when there is insufficient staff on a shift. Casual employees commit to working every other weekend, two shifts per weekend. In addition, Casual employees commit to work two holidays per year, one of which must be Christmas or Thanksgiving as assigned by the Director of Nursing.

**Trial or Probationary Periods**

Whenever an individual begins a new job, whether he or she has just been hired by the County or has assumed a new position as the result of an internal transfer, there will be a “trial” or probationary period. The length of that period is determined by the complexities of the position, and may vary from six (6) to eighteen (18) months. The length of the trial period for

your specific position will be explained at the time a job offer is made. During the trial period, the employee will receive formal performance evaluations every six months (or more frequently if needed). An employee who is not able to meet the expected standards of performance within that trial period will be terminated. If the employee transferred from one position to another one within the County or within the CHCC, he/she will not be able to return to her/his former position within the County or the CHCC if the employee is dissatisfied with the new position or is unable to successfully complete the probationary period.

### **Your Work Week**

Regular full time employees at the CHCC have a work week of 40.0 hours per week (8.0 hours per day). Some C.N.A. positions will work twelve (12) hours per day. Shift hours will be set by management. The twelve (12) hour full time positions will be paid at straight time only. Vacation, holiday and sick pay is based on the number of hours the employee is regularly scheduled to work on that shift. Individual work schedules are determined by department management.

Part time work schedules vary by assignment and department. Part time and Casual employees' schedules are subject to change; however, any changes will be discussed with the employee prior to implementation.

### **Weekend Work Schedules**

Regular full time, part-time and casual employees who do not report to work on scheduled weekends must make up the missed weekends on a subsequent weekend as assigned, regardless of whether or not the employee would thereby work more than three (3) consecutive weekends. Make-up weekends will be scheduled so no overtime hours are necessary. Friday and Saturday are considered weekends off duty for employees who work the 11:00 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. shift.

### **Overtime and How You Are Paid**

Upon occasion, management may find it necessary to extend the work day of CHCC employees. Only your supervisor can authorize overtime hours. Your hourly rate of pay will apply to each hour worked to a maximum of 40 hours per week, unless you are in a twelve (12) hour position. Any hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours in any given week will be compensated at time and one-half. Twelve (12) hour positions will be compensated at time and one-half for any hours worked in excess of eighty (80) hours in a pay period. This compensation may come in the form of compensatory time off or in pay, as determined by department management.

In lieu of holiday pay, employees have the option of receiving compensatory time off on a straight-time basis.

### **Mandated Overtime Hours**

Anyone on the staff of CHCC can be mandated to work the overtime hours required to meet the needs of the residents. Employees can be mandated to work up to eight (8) hours following his/her regular shift. Mandating will be based on the employees' length of service with the County. Staff will be given the opportunity to work additional hours and have those hours count toward mandating, when working those hours will prevent the mandating of other employees. Providing this opportunity will allow the staff to better anticipate when she/he might be mandated to work, and will allow employees some degree of control to prevent potential conflicts with their personal schedule. Refusing to work the mandated hours may result in immediate termination.

### **Compensatory Time Off**

Compensatory time off, earned as explained in the above paragraph, must be approved by department management and cannot be taken on a weekend. A maximum of forty (40) hours of compensatory time may be "banked" in an employee's account to be used at a later time.

Compensatory time may be taken in any increments up to the allowed maximum of forty (40) hours, but as with all time off, compensatory time off must be approved by the department head. Compensatory time off may be used in conjunction with other paid time off, with the approval of department management.

Management has the right to direct employees to use accumulated compensatory time.

### **Your Pay**


Columbia County's compensation plan is based on a schedule of pay ranges that consist of a minimum and maximum rate of pay for all positions within the county. Each job title's pay range is determined by the complexities of the position and the experience and qualifications necessary to perform the job. Your supervisor will explain the ways in which salary increases may be earned.

### **Pay Days**

You will be paid every other Friday by direct deposit to the bank of your choice. If a scheduled pay day falls on a County recognized holiday, the deposit will be made the day before. On the day the deposit is made, your supervisor will provide you with a notice that provides the details of your earnings for that pay period. The notification is non-negotiable, and provides information regarding the rate of pay, the hours worked in the current pay period, benefit deductions, State and Federal deductions, sick leave, vacation time, holidays and voluntary deductions. An example of the direct deposit notification is on the next page.



## Direct Deposit Notification



(A)		(B)		
Employee Name	Employee Number	Check Date	Pay Period Ending	Deposit Number
Employee, Test	7053	5/20/2011	5/13/2011	0000018

Hours & Earnings					Gross Wages & Deductions		
Earnings Description	Hours	Rate of Pay	Current Earnings	YTD Earnings	Description	Current	YTD
Regular	40.00	15.125	605.01	3,219.15	Gross Wages	1,255.40	5,277.19
Overtime 1.5	2.00	22.588	45.18	45.39	Federal Income Tax	36.12	276.28
Sick Pay-B				603.28	Federal FICA Withheld	44.00	204.18
Vacation-B	40.00	15.125	605.00	1,007.19	Federal Medicare Withheld	15.19	70.49
Holiday Pay				201.09	WI Department of Revenue	42.84	229.14
Pt Holiday				201.09	Life Ins.	19.29	13.44
					Disability Ins.	19.29	79.33
					DeferredComp	25.00	629.00
					TestPension	72.81	72.81
					Hth Fam FT	207.92	415.84

Leave Available				County Paid Benefits		
Description	Hours Used Current Pay Period	Hours Earned Current Pay Period	Current Balance	Description	Current Pay Period	Year to Date
Vac Avail	40.00		80.00	Hth Fam FT	1,877.32	5,742.04
Sick Avail 0		4.00	141.75	Life-Prsm		3.36
Period Avail			16.00	Life-AddPrsm		0.67
FHRSAvail			9.00	Pension	72.81	536.35

Total Hours	Gross Wages	Taxes	Other Deductions	<b>NET PAY</b>
82.00	1,255.40	137.88	325.02	<b>782.53</b>

(G)

(A) **Employee Information:**

- i. Employee name
- ii. Employee number

(B) **Pay Period Information:**

- i. Check date
- ii. Pay period ending date
- iii. Check number

(C) **Hours, Earnings & Hourly Rate of Pay (Current Pay Period & Year to Date (YTD) Earnings)**

- i. Pay type (regular, overtime, sick, vacation, etc.)
- ii. Number of hours per pay type
- iii. Current hourly rate of pay
- iv. Gross earnings per pay type for current pay period and YTD

(D) **Gross Wages, Taxes & Deductions:**

- i. Current pay period and YTD gross wages
- ii. Taxes withheld for current pay period and YTD (Federal, Soc. Sec. (FICA & Medicare), State)
- iii. Benefit deductions for current pay period and YTD

(E) **Leave Available:**

- i. Benefit available (description)
- ii. Benefit hours used for current pay period
- iii. Benefit hours earned for current pay period
- iv. Benefit hours remaining to be used (balance)

(F) **County Paid Benefits:**

- i. County paid benefit (description)
- ii. Current pay period County paid benefit
- iii. Year to date benefits paid by the County

(G) **Current Pay Period Summary:**

- i. Total hours paid (regular, overtime, sick, vacation, etc.)
- ii. Current pay period gross wages
- iii. Current pay period taxes withheld (Federal, Social Security, and State)
- iv. Other current pay period deductions (excluding taxes)
- v. Current pay period net pay

## **Your Employee Benefits**

### **Health Insurance**

The County provides health insurance to its employees, with a percentage of the cost paid by the employee at a cost determined by the County Board. The County will not provide duplicate family insurance coverage in the event that a husband and wife are employed concurrently by the County. In that situation, both spouses may opt for individual single plan coverage or one family plan for both unless one spouse has different dependents than the other; in that case, two family plans must be selected. All employees who average at last thirty (30) hours per week will receive health insurance on the same basis as full time employees. Employees who average a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week but less than thirty (30) hours will receive benefits on a pro-rata basis; the average hours will reviewed every calendar quarter.

### **Life Insurance**

The County participates in the State group life insurance plan and pays for life insurance equal to one years' earnings for each employee. Employees may opt to purchase additional life insurance for themselves or dependents through this plan by payroll deduction.

### **Unemployment Compensation**

Regular full time and regular part time CHCC employees are covered by Wisconsin Unemployment Compensation laws.

### **Workers' Compensation**

All County employees are subject to the Wisconsin Workers' Compensation laws. In the event of an injury at work or on the county's premises, the employee must notify his/her supervisor immediately, and an injury report must be completed and submitted to the CHCC Human Resources Department within 24 hours. (Exhibit D – Appendix.)

When an employee seeks medical attention for the injury, he or she must provide the attending physician with a copy of the Attending Physician's Return to Work Recommendation Record (obtained from the Human Resources Department) and a copy of his or her job description (obtained from the Human Resources Department or the employee's supervisor). The employee must return the attending physician's paperwork to CHCC Human Resources Department immediately after his/her appointment with the physician or a licensed medical practitioner.

### **Retirement**

County employees are participants in the Wisconsin Retirement Fund. A regular full time or part time employee may be vested in the Wisconsin Retirement Plan after five (5) years of continuous employment with the County. Casual employees at CHCC are entitled to retirement benefits after he/she has worked 1200 hours in a calendar year.

## **Post Retirement Health Insurance Benefits**

Individuals who retire from the County prior to reaching Medicare eligibility may continue to participate in the County's group health insurance plan by paying the full premium at the rate established by the insurer.

The County will pay the following amounts toward the health insurance premium for employees who retire between the ages of sixty (60) and the age of Medicare eligibility, and who have a minimum of twenty (20) years of continuous service with the County:

- Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) in 2012;
  - Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000.00) in 2013;
  - Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000.00) in 2014;
- and eliminated in 2015.

### **Prorated Payment Toward Retiree Health Insurance in the Year of Retirement**

In the year of retirement, individuals who retire from the County will receive a percentage of the amount listed above. This prorated payment will be based on the total annual hours for the position less the total number of hours paid prior to retirement.

### **Holidays, Vacations and Other Time Off**

Time off with pay comes in the form of sick leave, holidays, vacations and compensatory time.

#### **Holidays**

Since the CHCC is an around-the-clock operation, it has a different holiday schedule than the rest of the County.

Paid holidays for regular full time CHCC employees are as follows:

New Year's Day	Independence Day
Memorial Day	Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day	Christmas Day
Five (5) Personal Holidays	

An employee who is required to work on any of the designated holidays named above will be paid time and one-half for hours worked, and shall be granted, at the employee's option, holiday pay or holiday time off.

In the event that one of the designated holidays falls on an employee's day off or during an employee's vacation, another day off with pay shall be granted in lieu of said holiday, and scheduled with the approval of department management.

For employees who regularly never work a holiday, if a designated holiday falls on a Saturday, CHCC will recognize that holiday on the preceding Friday; Sunday holidays will be recognized on the following Monday. If consecutive holidays (such as Christmas Eve Day and Christmas Day) fall on a Friday and Saturday or a Sunday and Monday (as they will in 2021 and 2022 respectively) the County Board will determine and announce the applicable holiday schedule by October 1 of the year preceding the year in which the first three holidays (Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day and New Year’s Eve Day) will be recognized.

Regular part time employees receive paid holiday benefits on a pro-rata basis, determined by the percentage of hours they work in relation to a full year’s work schedule of 2080 hours.

Personal Holidays must be approved by department management and scheduled in advance.

### **Vacation**

Vacation pay is equal to the pay that the employee would have received while working his/her normal schedule for the week. A vacation week is equal to seven (7) days off, five (5) of which are considered to be paid vacation days.

Accrual: Employees earn paid vacations based on his/her anniversary date in accordance with the following schedule:

<u>Full Years of Continuous Employment</u>	<u>Weeks of Vacation</u>
6 months	1 (5 days)
1	1 (5 days)
2-4	2 (10 days)
5-11	3 (15 days)
12-17	4 (20 days)
18+	4 weeks (20 days)
18+ (For employees hired before 12/31/2011)	4 weeks (20 days) + one additional day for each additional year of service to a maximum of 30 days of vacation per year

Vacation periods may be split in the following way:

- One (1) week may be taken in two (2) weekends\*; (4 days)
- Two (2) weeks may be taken in three (3) weekends\*; (6 days)
- Three (3) weeks may be taken in five (5) weekends\*; (10 days)

“Weekend” is defined as a Saturday and a Sunday for those on the day shifts; and Friday and Saturday for those on the night shift.

Earned vacation will be used in the anniversary year following that in which it was earned. Vacation not used within the anniversary year after which it has been earned will

automatically be carried over into the next anniversary year, but that vacation must be used within 90 days of the day it is carried over. If it is not used within ninety (90) days, the vacation will be lost.

Vacation scheduling is done between November 15 and December 31 for the following year. Department management is responsible for scheduling vacations and personal holidays for the department's staff and for them to ensure the most efficient operation of the department. Length of employment shall not be used to schedule vacations or personal holidays in such a way that advantages some employees over others.

By work area or unit, each CHCC employee will be given the opportunity to schedule his/her first week of vacation, with the selection being based on each employee's length of service. When every employee has scheduled his/her first week of vacation, the second week will be scheduled in the same manner, and so on with those eligible for additional vacation. Personal holidays will be scheduled in the same manner.

### **Jury Duty**

If an employee receives a summons for jury duty, his or her supervisor should be notified immediately. Time off will be granted, and the employee will continue to receive his/her County pay if the jury duty pay is turned over to the County. Employees are entitled to keep the portion of the check that covers mileage, however. Should an employee choose to use benefit time to serve on a jury, he/she may keep both the mileage and the jury service portions of the check received for their service. Notice of selection for jury duty must be presented to department management at least a week before the scheduled date of the jury duty.

### **Subpoenas**

If an employee is subpoenaed to appear in Court as a result of his/her employment with the County, that time off will be handled just as jury duty is handled. However, if an employee is subpoenaed as a witness for any reason other than a work-related incident in which he/she was involved or which the employee as a result of his/her employment, the employee must take vacation or compensatory time to comply with the subpoena.

### **Other Time Off**

#### **Bereavement Leave**

Paid time off is granted to an employee in the event of a death in his/her family. The length of time off is specified in the Bereavement Policy (Exhibit A in the Appendix.)

With management approval, compensatory time, if available, holiday, vacation time or sick leave may be used to extend bereavement leave.

## **Sick Leave**

Eligible county employees earn sick leave at the rate of one (1) work day per month, or major fraction of each month worked, up to an accumulated one hundred twenty (120) days. To be eligible for sick leave, employees must be classified as full-time or regular part-time. This accumulation begins on the employee's first day of employment.

When an employee is going to be absent from work for any reason, he/she is to notify his/her supervisor as early on the first day of absence as possible. This is necessary so that arrangements can be made to ensure that the tasks that the employee is responsible for will be completed as required. Sick leave will be granted when an employee must be absent for work for the following reasons:

- The illness or disability of the employee, employee's dependent child, or a family member for whom the employee has caregiving responsibilities, including maternity;
- Reasonable medical or dental attention of the employee, employee's dependent child, or a family member for whom the employee has caregiving responsibilities, that cannot be scheduled during non-work hours;
- In conformance with Federal and State Family Medical Leave laws.

An employee who uses three (3) or more days of consecutive sick leave is required to submit a written statement issued by a licensed medical practitioner to substantiate the medical reason for the absence. An employee who has been hospitalized for any reason or who has undergone a surgical procedure is required to submit a release from a licensed medical practitioner that indicates the employee is able to return to work. This is required if the employee is cleared to return to work on either a full-time or part-time basis; and the statement must indicate the terms under which the employee is able to resume his or her duties.

Unused sick time will accumulate from year to year in an employee's sick leave account to a maximum of one hundred twenty (120) days. Ninety percent (90%) of the sick time balance will be paid to the employee at the time of retirement or to the employee's estate in the event of death.

## **Donated Sick Leave**

With the approval of the department head and the Human Resources Committee, an employee may donate up to five (5) unused sick leave days to a fellow employee who has exhausted all other benefits including Family and Medical Leave.

## **Sick Leave Incentive Holiday**

Employees who use no sick leave allowance in a calendar year will earn one personal holiday (a sick leave incentive holiday) to be taken in the following calendar year and scheduled as are all other personal holidays.

For additional information regarding the CHCC policies on the use of sick leave, refer to Standards of Conduct – Absences, Tardiness, etc.

### **Leaves of Absence**

#### **Family Medical Leave**

In the Appendix there is a three-page chart that provides a detailed explanation of the Family Medical Leave Act (FLMA) (Exhibit E - Appendix), as well as an application for a Family Medical Leave (Exhibit F). Questions you may have about this policy should be directed to your supervisor or to the Human Resources Department. If an employee does not qualify for FMLA, he/she may request a Personal Leave of Absence as explained in the following section.

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

Employees who are called for Military Duty will be granted a Military Leave of Absence. Where the salary paid to the employee for such Military Duty is less than an employee's County salary, the County shall reimburse the employee for the loss occasioned by such difference in pay. The employee's position will be available for him/her upon return from military service, provided that the employee is still able to perform the duties of his/her position. The employee who has been on a Military Leave of Absence will be returned to a position that is similar in responsibilities, status and pay, with the understanding that salary advancement will not be interrupted by the military leave of absence. The employee must return to work at the County within 90 days of discharge, or as agreed upon by the employee and department management.

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

In the event an employee has an extended illness and has exhausted all his/her sick leave, family medical leave (or is ineligible for family medical leave), comp time and vacation, department management may authorize a thirty (30) day unpaid personal leave of absence. That leave may be extended for an additional six (6) months if the need is verified by a physician's statement and upon the approval of both department management and the County's Human Resource Committee. Employees on Personal Leaves of Absence will not accumulate any benefit time (such as vacation time, sick time, comp time) and will be responsible for paying the full costs of any County-sponsored benefits in which the employee participates (such as, but not restricted to, group health insurance, AFLAC, group life insurance, etc.). Before returning to work, on either a limited basis or to full-time work, a release from a qualified medical practitioner will be required.

Personal leaves for other reasons may be requested, but will be granted only in very unusual circumstances, and in those cases, it must be realized that re-employment is not guaranteed.

## **Standards of Conduct**

### **Absences**

The CHCC maintains an attendance standard for all employees, and employee attendance records are reviewed on a quarterly basis to ensure that employees are in compliance with the facility standard of less than 6 (six) occurrences of absence in a twelve (12) month period. An “occurrence” might be a one day absence for the flu, or an absence of several consecutive days for a more serious condition. Failure to meet the standard will result in progressive disciplinary action.

Absences which are the result of an injury at work which is covered by Worker’s Compensation and approved leaves of absence are exempt from this attendance standard.

Employees on the AM shift must call his/her supervisor or the supervisor’s designee no later than one hour before the start of his/her shift that he/she will be absent from work for any reason. Employees on other shifts must notify supervision of his/her absence at least two hours prior to the scheduled start of his/her shift. Along with his/her name, the employee is to provide the scheduled hours of work, the area in which he/she works and the reason for the absence, as well as the medical symptoms that are responsible for the absence. Unless department management has been provided with a statement from a licensed medical practitioner to explain the medical reason for the absence and an anticipated date of return to work, the employee must call in each day of absence and shall indicate to his/her supervisor if he/she will return to work on the next scheduled work day.

An employee who uses three or more days of consecutive sick leave is required to submit a written statement issued by a licensed medical practitioner to substantiate the medical reason for the absence. An employee who has been hospitalized for any reason or who has undergone a surgical procedure is required to submit a release from a licensed medical practitioner that indicates the employee is able to return to work with no restrictions.

### **Misuse of Sick Leave**

If an employee has established an irregular pattern of attendance, the topic will be discussed with the employee by his/her supervisor so that the employee clearly understands his/her responsibility to serve the needs of the residents of the CHCC. Once the employee has been counseled regarding this concern, he/she should be aware that a statement from a physician or a licensed medical practitioner may be required for any absence, including those of less than three days.

Failure to comply with this absence/sick leave policy will result in the denial of sick pay benefits. Two “no call/no show” occurrences will result in the employee’s immediate termination.



## **Tardiness**

Employees are not to report to work more than 15 minutes before the start of their scheduled shift. However, all employees are expected to report for work by that scheduled shift start.

An excused tardiness is one in which the employee has informed his/her supervisor that he/she will be late. An unexcused tardiness is one in which an employee does not give notice that he/she will be late, and the employee punches in three (3) or more minutes after his/her designated start time.

Employees must call their supervisor or the supervisor's designee as soon as the employee realizes, but no later than the scheduled start of his/her shift, to report that he/she will be reporting to work late. When calling, the employee is to provide his/her name, scheduled hours of work, work area, the reason for the tardiness and his/her expected time of arrival.

When the tardy employee arrives at work, he/she is to punch in and notify the supervisor that he/she has arrived for work. The employee and the supervisor must determine how the lost time is to be recorded: personal holiday time, vacation time or compensatory time. Sick time may not be used when employees are tardy. Failure to arrive at the expected time shall result in a "no call/no show" status. Two "no call/no show" occurrences will result in immediate termination.

Employees' attendance records are reviewed on a quarterly basis to ensure that employees are in compliance with the CHCC's standard of no more than one (1) incident of excused tardiness per quarter and not more than one (1) incident of unexcused tardiness per quarter. Failure to meet the standard will result in progressive disciplinary action.

## **Scheduled Hours**

Employees will report promptly at the starting time of his/her shift and shall not leave the premises before the ending time of his/her shift without the approval of his/her supervisor.

Employees who work six (6) or more hours per day are granted a meal break of thirty (30) minutes; that time period is excluded from work hours. There are also two (2) fifteen (15) minute rest periods in an eight (8) hour day; these are scheduled at the discretion of the supervisor in such a manner to provide the most efficient and continuous service provided by each employee. Employees who work less than a six (6) hour shift shall be entitled to one (1) fifteen (15) minute break.

If an employee wants to leave the building during the unpaid meal break, he/she must inform his/her supervisor that he/she is leaving and also report back to the supervisor when he/she returns. In that case, the employee shall punch out at the time of departure and punch back in at the time of return.

Employees who are required to leave the premises in conjunction with work responsibilities and who desire to complete those duties in conjunction with a meal break are not required to punch out or in, provided that his/her supervisor has been notified and has given his/her approval to the employee.

Employees who do not punch in or out will be in violation of the County's work rules.

All employees must observe the time limits and scheduling of meal and rest breaks.

### **Maintaining a Safe and Comfortable Workplace**

Columbia County employees will maintain standards of conduct which enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the services they deliver to the County's citizens and taxpayers. Columbia County is committed to maintaining a workplace that is free from discrimination and any form of harassment or retaliation. Federal and State laws prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religious or political beliefs, creed, age, sex, disability, national origin or sexual preference. Among these prohibitions is the harassment of fellow employees.

No employee will be subjected to behavior that is personally offensive, and all employees are responsible for maintaining a workplace that is free from harassment, intimidation, retaliation or threats of any kind.

County employees are required to dress appropriately for their profession and the public and to always maintain a professional attitude while carrying out their duties.

Columbia County is a drug, alcohol and smoke-free workplace. Using drugs, alcohol or tobacco in or on County premises is strictly forbidden and may result in immediate termination.

### **Drug and Alcohol Abuse and Screening**

It is the policy of the County to maintain a drug and alcohol-free workplace for its employees. Drug and alcohol use both on and off the job can threaten an employee's personal well-being and safety as well as the safety of other County employees and the public. Employees must report to work free from any substances that could inhibit his/her ability to perform his/her duties. ***Failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.***

The County prohibits the use or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs or any controlled substance other than the employee's own prescription medications on County time or on or in County property. ***Possession, use of, or being under the influence of any of the above on County time or premises is grounds for immediate dismissal.***

If management determines that an employee has exhibited behavior that may be associated with a person under the influence of alcohol, or if the employee has been involved in an on-the-job accident or other work related incident in which drug or alcohol abuse may be a

contributing factor, the County reserves the right to require an employee to undergo a blood test and/or urinalysis to determine the presence or absence of alcohol or drugs in his/her system. The screening will be done in conformance with established Federal guidelines. ***Refusal to cooperate with this policy will be grounds for immediate dismissal.***

An employee who is required to undergo such screening will receive, in writing, a full explanation of the drug and alcohol screening protocol that will be followed. ***Failure of the employee to acknowledge the receipt of such information will also be subject to immediate dismissal.***

As required by the Drug Free Workplace Act, Public Law 100-690, Title V, Subtitle D, employees are hereby notified that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance, alcohol or drug paraphernalia is strictly prohibited in the workplace. Furthermore, this law makes it a condition of employment that employees abide by the Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace Policy and notify the County (your immediate supervisor, department head or the Human Resources Director) of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) days after such conviction.

**Note:** An employee who voluntarily admits a problem and requests assistance with a drug and/or alcohol rehabilitation program prior to the County identifying a drug or alcohol problem on the job will be granted any necessary leave of absence (without pay) to participate in such a program. Such leave of absence will be available to an employee only one (1) time and will be conditional on the employee's full compliance with the terms of the rehabilitation program. No disciplinary action will be taken for an employee's use of drug or alcohol when the employee comes forward prior to the County identifying a drug or alcohol problem on the job. However, employees may be disciplined for drug or alcohol related conduct.

Employees who do request such assistance will be given, in writing, a complete explanation of the process the County will use to aid in the employees' recovery and to determine his/her ability to return to employment with the County. ***Failure to acknowledge the receipt of such information will negate the employee's expectation of a leave of absence to participate in a rehabilitation program.***

### **Testing for Controlled Substances**

For purpose of this policy and the Federal Regulations, Columbia County will utilize a minimum of a five panel drug screen consisting of the following drugs:

- Tetrahydrocannabinol (Marijuana drug)
- Cocaine
- Amphetamines
- Opiates (including heroin)
- Phencyclidine (PCP)

In the instance where there is reason to believe an employee is abusing a substance other than the five drugs listed above, the County reserves the right to test for additional drugs under the County's own authority using standard laboratory testing protocols.

### **Prescription Drug Usage**

If an employee whose position affects public safety where the inability or impaired ability to perform essential functions will result in a significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of the individual or others is taking any legally prescribed medication, therapeutic drug, or any non-prescription drug which contains any measurable amount of alcohol or which carries a warning label that indicates the employee's mental functioning, motor skills or judgment may be adversely affected by the use of this medication, he or she must notify his/her supervisor before performing any work related duties. A written report of this notification is to be filed by the supervisor with the department head. It is the responsibility of the employee to inform his/her physician of any types of safety-sensitive functions that he/she performs in order that the physician may determine if the prescribed substance could interfere with the safe and effective performance of the employee's duties or the operation of County equipment. However, as required by the Federal Regulations, any employee who uses or possesses medication containing alcohol while on duty or who tests positive for alcohol will be removed from his/her position and subject to the provision of this policy, even though the reason for the positive alcohol test is the fact that the employee's prescription or nonprescription medication contains alcohol.

A legally prescribed drug is one where the employee has a prescription or other written approval from a physician for the use of the drug in the course of medical treatment. The prescription 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 County business is prohibited by County policy.

### **Confidentiality of Records**

The County respects the confidentiality and privacy rights of all of its employees. Accordingly, the results of any test administered under this policy and the identity of any employee participating in the County's EAP or other assessment or treatment program will not be revealed by the County to anyone except as required by law. The County will release an employee's records as directed by the express written consent of the employee authorizing release to an identified person. In addition, the County will ensure that any lab or agency used to conduct testing under this policy will maintain the confidentiality of employee test records. However, the lab or testing agency will disclose information related to a positive drug or alcohol test of an individual to the department head or Human Resources Director. The department head or Human Resources Director may disclose this information to the employee or to the decision maker in a lawsuit, grievance or other proceeding by or on behalf of the individual which arises from any action taken in response to a positive drug or alcohol test; or as required by law, including court orders or subpoenas.

## Prohibited Conduct

- **Harassment** is defined as engaging in persistent, repetitive, hostile and unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or which creates a hostile work environment; such conduct is strictly forbidden.
- **Discrimination** or treating people inequitably or with bias because of the individual's age, race, sex, religious or sexual preferences, ethnicity or cultural background is illegal and will not be tolerated.
- **Physical Contact of a Degrading, Demeaning or Sexual Nature.** Punching, hitting, slapping, rape, battery, molestation or attempts to commit any such assaults; intentional physical conduct that is offensive or sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another's body, or poking another's body.
- **Unwanted Sexual Advances.** Sexually oriented gestures, remarks, noises, jokes or comments; preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment in exchange for sexual favors; subjecting, or threatening to subject anyone to unwelcome sexual attention; displaying or distributing materials that are offensive to others because they may be viewed as being sexually suggestive, demeaning or pornographic; bringing into the workplace or possessing any such material to read, display or view at work, except as required by the criminal justice system.
- **Assault.**
- **Propositions or Other Sexual Comments.**
- **Possessing alcohol or drugs** (other than those prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner) in the workplace or bringing weapons into the work place, except as required by the criminal justice system.
- **Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.** Under these circumstances, the County reserves the right to require drug or alcohol testing.
- **Creating a hostile work environment** by intimidating, harshly criticizing, refusing to cooperate or deliberately withholding information necessary for another employee to accomplish the duties assigned to that employee; or evaluating or criticizing the work of an employee not under his or her supervision.
- **Retaliation.** Any type of retaliation, including, but not limited to, disciplining, changing work assignments, providing inaccurate information or refusing to cooperate with any employee because that individual has complained about or has resisted harassment, or intentionally pressuring another employee, falsely denying, lying about or otherwise covering up or attempting to cover up any such conduct as outlined above is strictly prohibited and any employee at any level who engages in such conduct will bear the full responsibility of such unlawful conduct.
- **Misappropriation of County funds or property.**
- **Use of County property or resources for personal gain.** All records of the County's business, its income/receipts, expenditures/outlay, operations, projects, plans and employees are the property of the County and cannot be removed from County-owned or leased property.
- **Falsification of County Records or causing County records to be falsified.**
- **Conduct unbecoming of a County employee while on or off duty.**
- **Disclosure of confidential records or information.**
- **Willful misconduct or insubordination.**

- Hindrance of the regular operation of his/her department because of excessive or unauthorized absence or tardiness.
- Violations of State laws.
- Refusing to take a required drug and/or alcohol test, or providing false information in connection with such a test of falsifying test results through tampering, contamination, adulteration or substitution.
- Fraudulent use of sick leave benefits.
- Failure to notify his/her supervisor or manager of absence or tardiness.
- Taking for personal use a fee, gift or other thing of value in connection with his/her job responsibilities.
- Theft of goods from any other employee or client with whom the employee has contact.
- Endangering his or her own safety or that of others through non-compliance with established safety procedures or carelessness in the performance of his/her job responsibilities.
- Abusive behavior toward other employees or the public.
- Willful misconduct or refusing to carry out the work assignments or instructions given by the work unit supervisor, department head or a County official who has lawful authority over the employee.
- Providing incorrect or fraudulent information on any County forms, including (but not limited to) all those associated with employment, Workers' Compensation reports, or medical/dental information that may result in unwarranted benefit payments.
- Drinking intoxicating beverages, using controlled substances or engaging in illegal gambling while on the job or on County property.
- Destruction or waste of County property, either intentionally or as the result of engaging in unlawful or hazardous activity.
- Aiding or abetting another employee who engages in any form of prohibited conducted.

*The above is not all-inclusive, and other behaviors which suggest hostility toward any employee is considered to be a form of harassment; other behaviors that indicate fraudulent or unauthorized activity will also be considered as prohibited behaviors.*

### **Reporting Prohibited Conduct**

If any employee feels he or she has been subjected to any type of prohibited conduct, or has witnessed such conduct the employee must report the incident immediately to management. This policy applies even if it was not directed toward the employee herself or himself. If the complaint is against the employee's immediate supervisor, the incident must be reported at once to the Human Resources Director, or another member of management in whom the employee has confidence. Anyone who is aware of an incident of harassment or discrimination is responsible for reporting it to the Human Resources Director, who will investigate it immediately. If such conduct is not reported by either the employee who was subjected to it or an employee who witnessed such conduct both /all parties will be disciplined.

Records of oral counseling with or written warnings to an employee will become a permanent part of his/her personnel file and will be removed only upon termination, retirement or death.

### **Penalties for Misconduct**

Any employee who is proven to have assaulted or proven to have threatened to assault another individual, whether or not that assault is of a sexual nature, will be dismissed immediately.

Other acts of harassment or retaliation or which create a hostile work environment will result in non-disciplinary oral counseling for an alleged first offense.

A written warning or suspension or discharge will be imposed on any employee for the first proven act of harassment or retaliation or creating a hostile work environment; the severity of the discipline will depend on the nature and severity of the misconduct. The second proven incident of any type of harassment will result in suspension or discharge, based on the nature and severity of the misconduct.

An employee who brings alcohol, drugs (other than those prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner) or weapons in to the workplace (except as required by the criminal justice system) will be suspended immediately without pay and an investigation into the circumstances will be conducted. Unless there are extenuating circumstances the employee will be discharged for misconduct.

An employee who is in possession of, uses or is under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or any controlled substance other than his/her own prescription medication on county time or premises (except as required by the criminal justice system) will face immediate dismissal.

### **Injuries While At Work**

If you suffer any type of injury while at work or while on County property, you are required to report it immediately (by the end of that work day) to your supervisor. State regulations mandate that all injuries, no matter their severity, be reported. The County's Workers Compensation Insurance carrier will investigate the cause of the injury and work with injured employees and his/her medical providers to provide the best possible outcome for you.

### **Personnel Records**

The Columbia Health Care Center (CHCC) maintains the records of its employees at its business location. The files include:

- Application for Employment
- Performance Evaluations
- Applications for various benefits such as health insurance
- Payroll and tax information

- Disciplinary records

Employees may, upon written request, review her/his personnel file on an annual basis.

### **Employment Verifications, Reference or Credit Checks**

All requests for employment information or verification of employment, whether made by telephone or in writing, must be referred to the Human Resources Department. This policy applies to inquiries regarding both present and former employees.

It is the County's policy to release only the individual's dates of employment and job title. No information regarding performance evaluations or reasons for termination (if applicable) will be made available.

If a current or former employee wishes to have additional information regarding his/her employment history released, he/she must submit an authorization to that effect, in writing, to the Human Resources Department.

### **Job Opportunities Within the County**

Positions which have been approved to be filled will be noticed across the County. Current employees who have completed their trial period of employment are welcome to apply for those positions. External recruiting for those positions will also be conducted. All qualified applicants will undergo the same hiring process which will include:

- The submission of an application or resume
- Interviews
- Applicable testing
- Background/reference checks

If an internal candidate is selected for the position and accepts the job, it is with the understanding that there will be a trial period of employment in the new position, and that there will be no option of returning to the employee's former position. The length of the trial period is based on the complexities of the position, and will be the same for whoever is selected for the position.

### **Loss of Necessary Licensure or Certification**

Some jobs within CHCC may require that the employee maintain a valid Wisconsin driver's license in order to perform all the essential functions of the position. If, for any reason, that driver's license is revoked, it must be understood that the employee is no longer legally able to perform those functions, and, unless a position is available in his or her unit that does not require a valid driver's license, the employee will be terminated. Upon reinstatement of his or her license, the individual may re-apply for a position with the County, however, re-employment is not guaranteed.



In other cases, professional licensure or certification may be required. If an employee no longer qualifies for such licensure or certification, it is understood that the employee is no longer legally able to perform the requirements of her or his position and employment will be terminated immediately, as outlined in the preceding paragraph.

### **Personal Use of County Property and Resources**

The County is responsible for providing its employees with the tools necessary to perform his or her job. Use of those tools for personal advantage is strictly prohibited. However, incidental use of County-provided computers (while an employee is on break, lunch or before or after work hours for which he or she is not being paid) is acceptable. In addition, County-issued cell phones may be used by employees in emergency situations. Employees must understand that computer usage may be tracked and that excessive use of the County's cell phones may be subject to investigation.

### **Speaking of Cell Phones**

It is recognized that the majority of the County employees have their own, personal, non-County issued cell phones. In most cases, it is not appropriate to engage in personal telephone calls while at work. However, management in each department is responsible for setting appropriate guidelines for use of personal cell and business telephones. It is recognized that in many departments, cell phone usage is integral to the conduct of County business. Refer also to the CHCC's Personal Hand Held Devices policy.

### **Technology in the Workplace**

The use of technology in many departments within the County has simplified processes and increased the efficiency and productivity of its employees. All employees are expected to become familiar with the resources available to them, and to participate in internally offered training courses which will enhance their skills and job performance.

For specific policies regarding access to the County's computer system, internet access and electronic mail and telework refer to Exhibits G, H, I, J and K in the Appendix.

### **Telework**

At the discretion of the department head and with the approval of the Human Resources Department, an employee may work remotely, such as from home, with the following limitations:

- Any telework engagement must be in the best interest of Columbia County.
- The work performed must be information based.
- The employee must be able to work with limited direct supervision.
- The remote site must have access to high speed internet.
- The remote location must be a safe environment conducive to telework.

- All parties must indicate agreement with the telework restrictions by signing the Telework Agreement Form (see Exhibit K) and filed with the Human Resources Department.
- Department Heads and employees should reference the Telework – Best Practices (see Exhibit J) when considering a telework engagement.
- The telework agreement may be terminated at any time by the department head, the employee or the Human Resources Department without prior notice.

### **Personnel Sanctions for Noncompliance of Information Systems Technology Policies**

All County employees are required to adhere to the County's information technology policies published on the County's intranet, located at the following link: <http://ccweb/countyintranet/mis/Customercare/CountyInformationTechnologyPolicies.aspx>

Any County employee violating these policies while using the County's information systems network shall be subject to loss of network privileges and any other disciplinary actions deemed appropriate by the Human Resources Department and governing committees, possibly including termination and criminal and/or civil prosecution. Any user who is aware of violations of any of the policies defined within this document is required to report such violations to either the Human Resources or the MIS Department.

### **What Shall I Wear Today?**

CHCC employees are expected to dress appropriately for their positions as health care professionals. If an employee is wearing clothing that supervision deems inappropriate, he/she will be sent home (unpaid) to change clothes or will be offered donated clothing to wear. Clothing must be clean, correctly sized for the individual, modest and not adorned with any logos, symbols or phrases that may be derogatory, offensive or insulting to others.

Blue jeans, as long as they are not baggy, dirty, ripped or torn will be considered appropriate. Walking shorts and capris may be worn. T-shirts or tops with sayings that may be considered offensive to others because of sexual innuendos or political or ethnic connotations will not be tolerated. While sandals are considered appropriate in a business setting, flip-flops, which may also cause injury, should not be worn.

### **The Columbia County Grievance Procedure**

A grievance is a dispute regarding an employee's discipline or termination of employment, or a dispute concerning workplace safety. No grievance shall be processed under this procedure unless it is in writing and contains all of the following:

- A. The name and position of the grievant;
- B. A clear and concise statement of the grievance;
- C. The issue involved;
- D. The relief sought;
- E. The date the incident or alleged violation took place;

F. The specific section of County policy or workplace safety rule alleged to have been violated; and

G. The signature of the grievant and the date.

1. The term “days” means all calendar days, Sunday through Saturday, including weekends and holidays regardless of whether the employee is scheduled to work. The time within which an act is to be done under this procedure shall be computed by excluding the first day and including the last day.

2. A “grievant” is an employee as defined by Wisconsin Statutes governing this grievance procedure. A grievant shall personally present his or her case at each stage of this procedure. A grievant may select one (1) other person to assist in processing a grievance.

3. “Workplace safety” means those conditions related to physical health and safety of employees enforceable under Federal or State law, or County rule related to: Safety of the physical work environment; Safe operation of workplace equipment and tools; Provision of protective equipment, training and warning requirements; Workplace violence and accident risk.

4. “Discipline” means suspension or demotion resulting in loss of pay or benefits. Discipline does not include oral or written reprimands, performance reviews, work plans or other employment action that does not result in loss of pay or benefits.

5. “Termination” means discharge from employment. Layoffs (reduction in force) are not considered terminations and are not subject to this procedure.

### **Procedure**

Filing a Grievance. Within ten (10) days after the facts upon which a grievance is based are known or should have reasonably become known, an employee shall present a written grievance to the County Human Resources (“HR”) Department on the required County grievance form. (Exhibit B – Appendix.)

The County HR Department shall determine if the grievance is timely, if the subject matter of the grievance is within the scope of this procedure and if the grievance has been otherwise properly processed.

HR Committee Review. A grievance that the County HR Department determines to be properly and timely filed will be reviewed by the HR Committee of the Columbia County Board of Supervisors during a regularly scheduled monthly HR Committee meeting. Grievances shall be scheduled at the discretion of the HR Committee Chair. The grievant may request that the Human Resources Committee review the grievance in a closed session. The Human Resources Committee has the discretion to grant or deny that request. If the grievance is reviewed in a closed session, the Committee’s decision will be made in open session. The Human Resources Committee may take one of three actions:

- Uphold the action taken by department management;
- Reverse the decision made by department management; or
- Refer the grievance to the department’s governing committee for review. That committee’s recommendation will be referred back to the Human Resources Committee for final action.

The HR Committee's decision concerning a grievance will be recorded in the HR Committee meeting minutes.

Review by Impartial Hearing Officer ("IHO"). Five (5) days following the final approval of the HR Committee meeting minutes containing a grievance decision, a grievant may file a written request with the County HR Department seeking an Independent Hearing Officer ("IHO") review of the grievance.

An IHO shall be appointed by the County Board Chair or designee. Any costs incurred by the IHO will be paid by the grievant. The IHO will convene a hearing at a date and time mutually convenient to all parties. The IHO may require the parties to submit grievance documents and witness lists in advance of the hearing to expedite the hearing. The grievant shall have the burden of proof in all cases. The IHO may apply relaxed standards for the admission of evidence, including allowing the admission of hearsay. The IHO shall provide the parties with a written decision within thirty (30) days following the hearing.

The IHO may only consider the matter presented in the initial grievance filed by the employee. The IHO shall have no power to add to, subtract from or modify the terms of any County policy, statute, or work rule. The IHO shall deny the grievance if a rational basis exists for the County's action.

Appeal to the County Board. Either party may appeal an adverse determination by an IHO to the Columbia County Board of Supervisors. A written notice appealing an IHO's decision shall be filed in the County Clerk's Office within ten (10) days following the date of the IHO's written decision. The IHO's decision shall be reviewed at a regular monthly County Board meeting, which will be scheduled at the discretion of the County Board Chair.

The County Board will consider grievance appeals in open session and will make its decision based on the written decision of the IHO. The County Board will not conduct a new hearing or examine the records, evidence and testimony that were produced at the hearing before the IHO. The County Board shall decide the appeal by a simple majority vote of the members present, either affirming or reversing the IHO's written decision. The County Board's decision concerning an appeal will be recorded in the monthly Proceedings of the County Board and shall be binding on all parties.

### **Timelines**

A grievant's failure to process a grievance within the time limits set forth in this procedure shall constitute waiver of the grievance which will then be considered resolved. To encourage that grievances are addressed in a prompt manner, the time limits set by this procedure are intended to be strictly observed and may not be extended without the express written consent of the County Board Chair.

## **Exclusive Remedy**

This procedure constitutes the exclusive process for the redress of any employee grievances as defined herein. However, nothing in this grievance procedure prevents County employees from addressing concerns regarding matters not subject to the grievance procedure with County managers and elected officials.

## **I Don't Have a Grievance (as it is defined above) but I Do Have a Problem - What Can I Do?**

### **The Definition of a "Problem"**

It must be understood that, subject to applicable law, the County has the right to determine the number of employees, the duties of each employee, the nature and place of their work, and all other matters pertaining to the management and operation of the County, including the hiring, promoting, transferring, demoting, suspending or discharging for just cause an employee. This also includes the right to assign and direct employees, to schedule work and to establish and enforce policies and procedures.

That notwithstanding, the County also recognizes that employees should have a process available to resolve any issues that he/she may have in conjunction with his/her job. To address that, a complaint procedure has been established that provides employees with an avenue to resolve any issues which impede his/her ability to perform his/her job duties. This process does not include situations involving harassment, discrimination, retaliation or other prohibited conduct which were discussed earlier and for which another process has been established.

### **The Procedure to Resolve that Problem or Issue**

The County has established a complaint procedure that provides employees with an avenue to resolve any issues they may have (not to include harassment, discrimination or retaliation which were discussed earlier, and for which another process has been established).

An employee who has a complaint about any aspect of his/her employment, should schedule a meeting with department management to explain the problem, and to define what measurements need to be taken to resolve the issue. The problem and the employee's recommendation for solving the concern should be put in writing before that meeting. If the complaint involves the immediate supervisor or department head, the employee's first step is to schedule a meeting with the Human Resources Director. Either department management or the Human Resources Director may find that the complaint has no merit. In that event, the employee may request that the complaint be heard by the department's governing committee. Both the employee and the Human Resources Director or his/her designee will attend that meeting. The employee may request that this hearing be held in a Closed Session. The governing committee has the option of agreeing with the request or denying it. If the complaint is not resolved at that level, the employee, accompanied if he or she chooses, by a mentor of his or her own selection, will meet with the Human Resources Committee. The employee may, once again, request that this be held in a Closed Session. The Human Resources Committee may agree with that request

or deny it. If the Human Resources Committee also rejects the complaint, the employee can file for a “Peer/Supervisory” review. That review will be conducted by the Human Resources Director. Included in the panel will be the employee, two peers of his/her choosing, two peers chosen by the Human Resources Committee, the employee’s immediate supervisor, and a member of the Executive Committee of the County Board of Supervisors. This review is scheduled with the understanding that the decision of this panel will be final. The employee may, once again, request that this be held in a Closed Session. The members of this Peer/Supervisory review panel may agree with that request or deny it. A written summary of the findings and basis of the decisions of each of the committee reviews will be provided and will be made available to the Supervisory/Peer Review Panel.

All of the reviews must all be scheduled within sixty (60) days of the filing of the complaint and resolved within ninety (90) days.

### **Performance Evaluations**

During an employee’s trial period, his/her performance will be evaluated every six months or more frequently if needed. After the trial period has been successfully passed, employee performance is evaluated on an annual basis in the month of his/her service anniversary with the County. Employees will be evaluated on:

*Reliability and Dependability*  
*Initiative/Creativity*  
*Working Relationships*  
*Productivity*  
*Abilities*  
*Safety Record*

*Attendance*  
*Adherence to County Policies*  
*Quality of Work*  
*Knowledge of Job*  
*Skills*

The evaluation process is designed to help each employee improve her/his performance by focusing on the individual’s knowledge, skills and abilities, and to identify opportunity areas for enhanced effectiveness. The evaluation process also provides a chance for employees to discuss with supervision her/his career goals and additional training that would be beneficial.

### **Performance Improvement Plans**

If an employee is unable to meet the expected level of performance for his or her position, management will take an active role in helping the employee meet the standards of the job by implementing a performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for the employee.

The steps that must be taken to correct the performance problem(s) will be identified, including the assistance that will be provided to the employee as well as the employee’s responsibilities for correcting his/her performance will be clearly spelled out, and time frames for improvement agreed upon. The time frame for the correction will be fair, and progress up-dates will be prepared and communicated on a schedule agreed upon between the employee and his/her supervisor, or on an as-needed basis.

If the PIP process has been followed and properly documented and the employee is unable or unwilling to meet the standards set by the PIP, he/she will be terminated. If the employee has successfully completed the Performance Improvement Program, the documentation will remain in the employee's personnel file to illustrate the ability of the employee to respond to corrective action and improve his/her contributions to the department.

There may also be instances in which an employee's ability to perform his or her job duties is compromised by other factors, such as poor attendance. Management is not in a position to correct attendance or attitude problems, but those issues will be communicated to the employee so he/she can take the necessary measures to conform with the expectations of the department. The same process as outlined above will be used under those circumstances; however, management's role in the process will be only one of advice and counsel, since the employee is the only one who can rectify the situation.

### **Other Things Employees Need to Know**

#### **Accommodation for Religious Beliefs**

The County will endeavor to make reasonable accommodations for an employee to observe conscientious religious beliefs. The employee should notify the Department Head in a timely manner, preferably at least fifteen (15) days in advance, of such religious observance, in order to ensure that the employee's duties will be covered in his/her absence. This accommodation will be without pay unless compensatory time is used.

#### **Employment of Relatives/Family Ties**

No one will be employed, promoted or transferred to any department, division or job where the employee would be directly supervised by or would supervise a relative, including: spouse, parents, children, siblings, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, grandparents, grandchildren, father- and/or mother-in-law, step children, stepparents or any person sharing the employee's residence.

#### **Intellectual Property Policy**

County employees are encouraged to use creative skills to develop work products and procedures that contribute to the efficiency of the department in which he/she works and enhance the services provided to the community. However, those products and procedures remain the property of the County. (Exhibit C - Appendix.)

#### **Changes in an Employee's Status**

It is the responsibility of the employee to inform the Human Resources Department of any changes in address, marital status, number of dependents, telephone number or insurance information. These changes must be recorded within thirty (30) days of the effective date to ensure that changes are made to insurance records as applicable, and that items mailed to the employee by the County are deliverable.

## **Mileage Reimbursement for County Business**

As a part of their jobs, some County employees are required to meet with clients outside of the workplace or to attend training sessions and conferences in various off-site locations. While an employee may choose to use his/her personal vehicle for such travel, mileage for that travel will not be reimbursed if a County-owned vehicle is available, or if a County-owned vehicle could be shared by others attending the same function. If a County-owned vehicle is not available, and up to four employees are attending the same off-site meeting or function, one employee will receive mileage reimbursement for providing transportation for up to three other employees. Travel arrangements for such meetings or functions must be approved by department management prior to participation.

## **Reimbursement for Loss of Personal Items**

The County will not normally reimburse, in any manner or form, personnel employed by the County, for any personal objects, possessions or clothing which are lost or damaged either while on duty or off duty, as an employee of the County, unless the employee can prove liability rests with the County, or the items are covered by the County's insurance. Personal objects, possessions and clothes are items purchased and maintained by the employee and not purchased or maintained by the County.

In order that all employee requests might be processed in accordance with the foregoing policy, the following procedures shall be used:

1. The employee shall submit to his/her supervisor a request for reimbursement along with a full description of what contributed to the loss and the extent to which the County or one of its employees was liable or responsible for the loss sustained.
2. The supervisor will review the incident and the facts, consult the County's insurance contract, and present to the Human Resources Committee a report and recommendation on disposition of the claim.
3. The Human Resources Committee will review the case and either declare the claim invalid and so advise the employee, or authorize reimbursement in part or full. The decision of the Human Resources Committee is final and shall be communicated in writing to the employee.



## **County Organization Chart**

**Appendix**

**Exhibits**

<b><u>Title</u></b>	<b><u>Exhibit</u></b>
<a href="#"><u>Bereavement Leave Chart</u></a>	A
<a href="#"><u>County Grievance Process Filing Form</u></a>	B
<a href="#"><u>Intellectual Property Policy</u></a>	C
<a href="#"><u>Injury Report Form (Workers' Compensation)</u></a>	D
<a href="#"><u>Family Medical Leave (FLMA) Chart</u></a>	E
<a href="#"><u>Family Medical Leave (FLMA) Application</u></a>	F
<a href="#"><u>Access to County Computers &amp; Networks</u></a>	G
<a href="#"><u>Internet Access</u></a>	H
<a href="#"><u>Electronic Mail</u></a>	I
<a href="#"><u>Telework Best Practices</u></a>	J
<a href="#"><u>Telework Agreement Form</u></a>	K

## Index

- Absences, 16
- Accommodation for Religious Beliefs, 31
- Appendix, 34
- Bereavement Leave, 13
- Changes in an Employee's Status, 31
- Compensatory Time Off, 8
- Confidentiality of Records, 20
- County Organization Chart, 33
- Direct Deposit Notification, 9
- Donated Sick Leave, 14
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse and Screening, 18
- Employee Classifications at the CHCC, 6
- Employment of Relatives/Family Ties, 31
- Employment Verifications, Reference or Credit Checks, 24
- Equal Employment Opportunity, 6
- Exhibits, 34
- Family Medical Leave, 15
- Grievance Procedure, 27
- Grievance Remedy, 29
- Grievance Timelines, 28
- Health Insurance, 10
- Holidays, 11
- Holidays, Vacations and Other Time Off, 11
- I Don't Have a Grievance but I Do Have a Problem - What Can I Do, 29
- Injuries While At Work, 23
- Intellectual Property Policy, 31
- Introduction, 5
- Job Opportunities Within the County, 24
- Jury Duty, 13
- Leaves of Absence, 15
- Life Insurance, 10
- Loss of Necessary Licensure or Certification, 24
- Maintaining a Safe and Comfortable Workplace, 18
- Mandated Overtime Hours, 8
- Mileage Reimbursement for County Business, 32
- Military Leaves of Absence, 15
- Misuse of Sick Leave, 16
- Other Things Employees Need to Know, 31
- Other Time Off, 13
- Overtime and How You Are Paid, 7
- Pay Days, 8
- Penalties for Misconduct, 23
- Performance Evaluations, 30
- Performance Improvement Plans, 30
- Personal Leaves of Absence, 15
- Personal Use of County Property and Resources, 25
- Personnel Records, 23
- Personnel Sanctions for Noncompliance of Information Systems Technology Policies, 26
- Post Retirement Health Insurance Benefits, 11
- Prescription Drug Usage, 20
- Prohibited Conduct, 21
- Prorated Payment Toward Retiree Health Insurance in the Year of Retirement, 11
- Reimbursement for Loss of Personal Items, 32
- Reporting Prohibited Conduct, 22
- Retirement, 10
- Scheduled Hours, 17
- Sick Leave, 14
- Sick Leave Incentive Holiday, 14
- Speaking of Cell Phones, 25
- Standards of Care for Residents, 5
- Standards of Conduct, 16
- Subpoenas, 13
- Tardiness, 17
- Technology in the Workplace, 25
- Telework, 25
- Testing for Controlled Substances, 19
- The Columbia County Grievance Procedure, 26
- The Definition of a "Problem", 29
- The Procedure to Resolve that Problem, 29
- Trial or Probationary Periods, 6
- Unemployment Compensation, 10
- Vacation, 12
- Weekend Work Schedules, 7
- What Shall I Wear Today, 26
- Workers' Compensation, 10
- Your Employee Benefits, 10

Your Pay, 8

Your Work Week, 7