Amendments to Boone County Personnel Policy Manual

- Amendment adding the option of rolling sick time hours, up to the maximum allowed, to IMRF for employees who retire with 20 or more years of service (approved by the County Board on February 14, 2007)

- Amendment to Section 12. Personal and Sick Leave for Group B-1 employees (approved by the County Board on May 9, 2007)

- Amendment adding Section 22. Snow and Related Emergency Compensation Policy (approved by the County Board on April 9, 2008)

- Amendment to Section 12. Personal and Sick Leave increasing the maximum Sick Leave carry over to 720 hours from 570 hours (approved by the County Board on October 16, 2013)

- Amendment to Section 11. Vacations (approved by the County Board on January 21, 2015)

- Amendment to Section 20. Dress Code, No Smoking, and Policy Against Workplace Harassment updating the County’s prohibition against Sexual Harassment (approved by the County Board on December 20, 2017)

- Amendment to Section 14. Employee Expenses, Mileage, Meals, Eye Care establishing the mileage reimbursement rate equal to the IRS rate effective January 1 of each year (approved by the County Board on June 20, 2018)

- Amendment to Section 12. Personal and Sick Leave changing Sick Leave accrual to monthly from quarterly (approved by the County Board on November 14, 2018)

- Amendment adding Section 23. COBRA Premium Subsidy Due to the Death of an Employee While Actively Employed (approved by the County Board on May 15, 2019)

- Amendment to Section 13. Extraordinary Leaves of Absence updating the County Disability policy (approved by the County Board on November 20, 2019)
Employee Receipt and Acceptance

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the Boone County Employee Personnel Policy Handbook. I understand that it is my continuing responsibility to read and know its contents. I also understand and agree that the Employee Personnel Policy Handbook is not an employment contract for any specific period of employment or for continuing or long-term employment. Therefore, I acknowledge and understand that unless I have a written employment agreement with the County of Boone that has been approved by my employer and provides otherwise, I have the right to resign from my employment with the County of Boone at any time with or without notice and with or without cause, and that the County of Boone has the right to terminate my employment at any time with or without notice and with or without cause. I have read, understand and agree to all of the above. I have also read and understand the County of Boone Employee Personnel Policy Handbook. I agree to return the Employee Personnel Policy Handbook upon termination of my employment.

Signature: ________________________________

Print Name: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________
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SECTION 1. JURISDICTION
The personnel policies herein shall apply only to those Departments or employees under the
direct jurisdiction of the County Board. The personnel policies shall not apply to Departments
managed by Elected Officials unless they so choose to adopt any or all of its provisions. The
personnel policies shall not apply to employees represented by a Union, and covered by existing
collective bargaining agreements. This manual does not create, and shall not be construed as
creating, any contract or offer of employment with Boone County. No property or tenure rights
in employment with the County shall be created by this manual. All provisions of this manual are
subject to change at the sole discretion of the County Board. No policy, benefit or procedure set
forth in the manual implies or may be construed to imply that it or any portion thereof is an
employment contract.

SECTION 2. EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES
For purposes of efficient administration, employees are included in one of the following
categories:

Group A - Elected Officials of the County:
   A-1: Sheriff, Treasurer, County Clerk, Circuit Clerk, State’s Attorney
   A-2: The Coroner or other part-time Elected Officials, and
   A-3: County Board members.

Group B - Appointed Officials:
   B-1: Full and part-time appointed professional, executive, and managerial officials, and
   B-2: Part-time professional, executive, and managerial appointed officials.

Group C - Full-time Employees:
   C-1: Full-time employees who are paid on an hourly basis.
   C-2: Full-time professional employees who are paid on a salary basis.

Group D - Part-time Employees:
   D-1: Regularly scheduled part-time employees, that work less than thirty-seven and
        one-half (37.5) hours per week.
   D-2: Occasional, seasonal part-time employees

Group E - Temporary Employees:
   E-1: Full or part-time professional or hourly employees with an expectation of
temporary status and a known date of employment termination.
All Department Heads shall have the authority to author and/or modify job descriptions of employees to reflect differences in work assignments.

SECTION 3. LABOR/MANAGEMENT MEETINGS
Department Heads shall have the option, in the interest of efficient management and harmonious employee relations, to hold meetings with employees as often as needed.

It is expressly understood and agreed that such meeting shall be exclusive of any established Departmental grievance procedure. The agenda for such meetings shall be established by the Employer and the employees, and shall provide for “new business”. Such meetings shall be chaired by the Employer.

The Employer shall comply with all laws applicable to its operations concerning the safety of employees covered by this manual. All employees shall comply with all safety rules and regulations established by their supervisors and may be subject to discipline for violations therefrom.

Employees who reasonably and justifiably believe that their safety and health are in danger due to an alleged unsafe working condition or equipment shall immediately inform their supervisor. Supervisors and Department Heads shall have the responsibility to determine what action, if any, should be taken, to remedy an immediate unsafe working condition.

Each Department may establish a written grievance procedure to resolve Employer/Employee work issues.

SECTION 4. PERSONNEL FILES
The Department Head shall keep a central personnel file for each employee. The Department Head is free to keep working files but material not maintained in the central personnel file may not provide the basis for disciplinary or other action against an employee.

Upon written request of an employee, the Department Head shall reasonably permit an employee to inspect his/her personnel file subject to the following:

a) Such inspection shall occur no longer than seven (7) business days following receipt of the request and each employee shall be limited to no more than two inspections each year;

b) Such inspection may occur during employee’s working hours upon reasonable written request;

c) The employee shall not be permitted to remove any part of the personnel file from the premises but may obtain copies of any information contained therein upon payment for the cost of copying;

d) If an employee disagrees with any information contained in the personnel file, the employee may submit a written statement of his/her position which shall become an
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integral part of that portion of the file over which disagreement exists, until such portion is permanently removed from such file;

e) Pre-employment information, such as reference reports, credit checks or information provided to the Employer with a specific request that it remain confidential shall not be subject to inspection or copying.

Employees shall be given notice by Employer when a formal, written warning or other disciplinary documentation is permanently placed in their personnel file.

SECTION 5. HIRING PROCEDURES AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The following procedure for hiring of employees shall generally be followed by Department Heads:

a) Advertise the position in a newspaper of general circulation in Boone County.

b) All candidates shall complete an application and furnish information relative to residence, training, experience, references, and other information as required. The application shall be the initial test of qualifications and may serve as sufficient basis for rejection. False statements in an employment application may be grounds for termination;

c) When appropriate, applicants may be scheduled for employment testing. Any testing shall be fair and non-discriminatory;

d) Interviews shall be conducted by the Department Head or their designee(s);

e) When the duties of a position require, applicants for employment may be given a physical test or medical examination at the employer’s expense, to determine if they are able to perform the essential job functions of the position. Satisfactory completion of such tests and examinations shall be a condition of hiring. Physical tests or examinations shall be conducted after a conditional offer of employment has been made.

In an effort to improve the professionalism and effectiveness of the County, employment standards may be updated from time to time. All employment and promotional standards will be based on Equal Employment Opportunity without regard to race, religion, age, sex, national origin, marital status, political affiliation, disability, or sexual orientation.
SECTION 6. DISCIPLINE
Employees of Boone County are “at will” employees and may be removed at any time, with or without cause. The parties recognize the authority of the Employer to reprimand verbally and/or, in writing, suspend, demote, discharge or take other corrective action against an employee. Discipline, when invoked, will normally be progressive in nature such as: verbal reprimand, written reprimand, suspension(s), and discharge. However, the Employer shall have the right to invoke any penalty, or bypass any steps listed. Disciplinary action should be supported by a timely and accurate investigation.

In the event disciplinary action is taken against an employee, other than oral discipline, the Department Head shall promptly furnish written notice to the employee which shall state the reasons for such discipline. A copy of such written notice shall be maintained in the employee’s personnel file.

It is understood that absenteeism, tardiness, or the abuse of sick leave constitutes reasons for discipline. An employee who misses three (3) consecutive work days due to illness may be required, upon the Department Head’s request, to submit a physician’s statement documenting the illness and certifying that they are able to return to work.

SECTION 7. RESIGNATION AND EXIT INTERVIEWS
Any employee leaving County employment shall file with the Department Head, no less than two (2) weeks prior to their final day of employment, a written resignation, stating the date it shall be effective. Upon submission of the resignation to the respective Department Head, it shall be irrevocable. All employees voluntarily terminating employment with the County shall be given the opportunity for an Exit Interview.
SECTION 8. HOURS OF WORK, OVERTIME, TRAINING, EVALUATIONS, TRANSFERS FROM ONE CLASSIFICATION TO ANOTHER

The regular hours of work each day shall be consecutive, except that they may be interrupted by: one (1) 20 minute paid break period, and one (1) 60 minute unpaid meal period for Group C-1, D, and E employees paid on an hourly basis. The scheduling of the above stated meal/rest periods shall be at the discretion of the Department Head. The Employer maintains the right to reschedule these meal and rest periods due to emergency operational requirements.

Department Heads shall establish hours of work that shall be uniform within an employment classification, determined in accordance with the workforce requirements of the Department and the needs of the public. Hours may be increased or reduced on an as-needed basis by the Department Head. The work day for C-1 and C-2, or E-1 (if applicable), employees shall be set by the Department Head provided it consists of not less than seven and one-half (7.5) consecutive hours including meal time and rest periods. The work day for D-1 and D-2 employees shall be set by the Department Head provided that such employees are regularly scheduled to work less than 37.5 hours per week.

To effectively serve the public, no County offices will be closed on Monday through Friday except on paid holidays as designated by the Board. Notices of days that individual County offices will be closed shall be posted conspicuously at the entrances to all County buildings. Whenever practical, County offices which serve the public shall be open throughout the noon hour.

Group C-1, D, and E employees paid on an hourly basis and who work more than eight (8) hours in a 24 hour period of time shall have the option, contingent on the Department Head’s concurrence, of receiving overtime at a rate of one and one-half (1.5) times the regular rate of pay for each hour actually worked beyond eight (8) hours, or compensatory time on the same formula. Employees shall only work overtime if approved in advance by the Department Head. The Department Head shall attempt to make an equal distribution of overtime assignments among employees. If no employee accepts an overtime assignment, the Department Head shall have the authority to require an employee on duty to accept such assignment. Overtime compensation shall not be paid more than once for the same hours under any provision of this Agreement. Time off for personal days, sick leave or other leaves of absence periods granted shall not be counted as time worked for purposes of computing overtime compensation. Subject to the Department Head’s ability to schedule, and need to control operations, compensatory time may be accumulated to a maximum of forty (40) straight-time hours each year. Requests for compensatory time shall be in minimum blocks of (1/2) hour of time with a 24-hour notice given to the Department Head. Compensatory time may not accumulate from year to year.

Although it is not a practice to work holidays, when directed by Management to do so employees shall be compensated for their holiday, and each hour actually worked at their regular hourly rate of pay.
Mandatory training shall occur at the discretion of each respective Department Head. Employees are expected to attend all training meetings or classes. Absenteeism or tardiness from training meetings or classes may constitute reasons for discipline.

It is recognized by each respective Department Head that employees are entitled to feedback relative to their respective performance. Evaluations shall occur on an annual basis between the Department Head and the employee. Employees shall be given copies of written documents used for said evaluations.

Any employee seeking to transfer from one County Department to another shall be permitted to do so only after proper posting of a vacancy and approval by the Department Heads affected by the transfer.

The starting rate of pay for the (transferred to) new position shall ordinarily be determined by using the starting rate of pay for that classification and adding to it the most recent budgeted across-the-board raise granted by the County.

SECTION 9. LAYOFF AND RECALL

The Employer shall determine whether layoffs are necessary. A two week written notice shall be given to employees who will be laid off.

Although not limited to the following, layoffs shall ordinarily be for lack of work and/or lack of appropriated funds. If it is determined that layoffs are necessary, employees shall be laid off in the following order within the specific job classification wherein layoff is being experienced:

a) Temporary employees; seasonal employees;
b) Part-time employees;
c) Probationary employees; and,
d) In the event of further reductions in the labor force, employees shall be laid off from the affected classification in accordance with their seniority and their ability to perform the remaining work available without further training. Seniority for purposes of layoff and recall shall be determined by the employee’s initial date of hire with the County.

Employees who are laid off shall be placed on a recall list for a period of two (2) years. If there is a recall, employees who are still on the recall list shall be recalled, in the inverse order of their layoff, provided they are presently qualified to perform the work in the job classification to which they are recalled without substantial further training. It is the obligation of any employee whose name is on the recall list to provide the County with a current address and phone number. If an employee is recalled to a position in a lower rated job classification, he/she shall have the right to return to the job classification he/she held prior to being laid off in the event it subsequently becomes available. If an employee is recalled to a lower rated job classification, the employee shall have the right to refuse the recall.
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SECTION 10. HOLIDAYS
Group B-1 (full-time only) and Group C employees are granted twelve (12) paid holidays during each year. An employee must be employed for a period of more than ninety (90) days to be eligible to receive a paid holiday. Employees categorized as D-1 are entitled only to those holidays that fall on the days they are regularly scheduled to work.

The official Boone County holidays shall be as follows:

- New Year’s Day
- Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Washington’s Birthday
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veteran’s Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day following Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Break
- Christmas Day

SECTION 11. VACATIONS
The following vacation schedule applies to Group B-1 (full-time only) and Group C employees only.

Vacation time granted per duration of employment:

- Up to 1 year: No vacation
- 1 year (first anniversary) - 4 years: 10 days vacation per year
- 5 years (fifth anniversary) - 15 years: 15 days vacation per year
- 16 years (sixteenth anniversary) and over: 20 days vacation per year

Employees are required to exercise their vacation benefit. However, at the Department Head’s discretion, employees may be allowed to carry over five (5) days of vacation per year. Vacation days carried over must be used within six (6) months of the employee’s anniversary date. Any vacation not used at the end of the carryover period will be forfeited. Any unused vacation not carried over due to scheduling or operational needs will be paid to the employee at his/her regular rate of pay during the year it is accrued. This provision shall only apply if budgeted funds exist.

All vacation requests must be approved by the Department Head. In approving such schedules, the Department Head must consider the needs of their office and wishes of the employee.
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Vacations shall be used only after it is earned and taken in increments of not less than one-half (0.5) day at a time. If an employee is terminated, quits, is laid off, or retires, he/she shall receive payment for any accrued unused vacation for that year only. In case of a death, unused accrued vacation will be paid to the employee’s spouse or estate. Group D and E employees are not entitled to vacation time.

Part-time employees averaging 20 to 37.5 hours each week, and after having completed three (3) continuous years of employment shall be entitled to vacation on a pro-rata basis as follows:

After completion of three (3) years employment: 10 working days, pro-rata ()

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Hours Worked</th>
<th>Days Accrued</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>9 working days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.5 hours</td>
<td>10 working days</td>
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</tbody>
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SECTION 12. PERSONAL AND SICK LEAVE
Personal leave with pay may be granted to an employee who has been employed by the County for a period of no less than ninety (90) calendar days. Group B-1 (full-time only) and Group C employees are granted three (3) days of personal leave on December 1st of each year. Group D-1 employees are granted two (2) days of personal leave (fifteen hours) on their anniversary date. Personal leave may not be accumulated from one year to the next and payment in lieu of personal leave, under any circumstances, including termination or resignation, is not granted. Except in an emergency situation, employees shall consult their Department Head three (3) working days in advance of a planned personal leave.

All Group B-1 (full-time only) and Group C employees shall accrue paid sick leave on a monthly basis, for a total of nine (9) days per fiscal year. Employees shall be allowed to accumulate unused paid sick leave. Such accrual shall be carried over annually and shall not be terminated at the end of each year up to a maximum of seven-hundred twenty (720) hours, with any amounts over seven-hundred twenty (720) being lost and not carried over into the next year.

Accumulated sick leave shall be paid to employees who are laid off, retire, and/or permanently and totally disabled pursuant to an order issued under the Illinois Workers’ Compensation Act; and payouts for laid off and retired employees will be paid pursuant to the “one for four” formula set forth in this section; disabled employees will be paid on a 1 for 1 basis. The maximum hours to be paid out to employees laid off or retired shall not exceed 1/4 of 720 hours. Accumulated sick leave accrued will be paid at three for every four hours upon retirement after twenty (20)
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years, up to a maximum of 427.5 hours. Group C employees seeking to convert accrued sick leave to IMRF service credits shall receive up to seven-hundred twenty (720) hours. Upon retirement, Group B-1 (full time only) employees shall receive any payout in the form of IMRF service credits up to seven-hundred twenty (720) hours.

For Group C employees, any hours in excess of 720 will be purchased back at the rate of one for four at the end of each year. Sick leave shall accrue provided the employee is compensated for at least seventy-five (75) hours pay per month. Employees off work because of a work related injury or illness shall continue to accrue sick leave, but may not take any sick leave earned during this period until he/she returns to work.

Accumulated paid sick leave may be used for illness, disability, or injury of the employee, appointments with professional medical practitioners, chiropractors, psychologists, or mental therapists, and in the event of illness, disability, or injury of a member of the employee’s immediate family. Immediate family shall be defined as the spouse, children, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, step-parents, step-children, mother, father, brother, and sister-in-law of any employee.

Accumulated paid sick leave shall be used in increments of no less than one (1) hour at a time. While the Department Head shall not discipline employees for legitimate use of such, the Department Head may require evidence of use of sick time for the purposes contained within this section if reasonable grounds exist to suggest abuse. However, an employee who calls in sick and uses such sick leave in excess of three (3) consecutive days may be required to produce a written statement by a physician verifying the illness. Department Heads may ask for such documentation after one (1) day if circumstances so warrant.
SECTION 13. EXTRAORDINARY LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Bereavement Leave:

Employees categorized as Group C or D-1 may be compensated for the time actually lost from regularly scheduled work on the death of a member of the employee’s immediate family as defined in Section 12, and the days following the death, but not to exceed three (3) work days. Employees shall be granted an additional two (2) work days leave when the death occurs of their respective mother, father, spouse, or children.

Family and Medical Leave:

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides for up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave to an employee who has been employed for at least twelve (12) months by the County and who has performed at least 1,250 hours of work during the previous twelve (12) month period. If it is possible for the County to leave the position of a person on FMLA leave open and available for that person to return to, the position will be reserved for the employee on leave.

Application. An eligible employee shall be entitled to a total of twelve (12) work weeks of unpaid leave for one or more of the following:

1. Because of the birth of a son or daughter of the employee and in order to care for such son or daughter (must be taken before the child’s first birthday);
2. Because of the placement of son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care (within one year of placement);
3. In order to care for the spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee if such spouse, son, daughter, or parent has a serious health problem; or
4. Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the position of such employee.

In addition, other family medical situations may entitle an employee to FMLA leave.

Requesting a Leave. When the anticipated leave is foreseeable, the employee shall provide not less than thirty (30) days notice to the Department Head that the person is seeking leave. If the leave is not foreseeable, notice of a request for the leave shall be provided as soon as practicable to the Department Head.

Substitution of Paid Leave. All paid leave will run concurrently with an employee’s FMLA leave. An employee must use any accrued vacation, sick, or other paid personal leave and any Workers’ Compensation or available disability leave before unpaid FMLA leave begins. If benefits from a disability or workers’ compensation plan expire, the employee must use any accrued vacation, sick, or other paid personal leave before unpaid FMLA leave begins. If any FMLA leave is also taken pursuant to a disability or workers’ compensation plan, the disability or workman’s compensation leave will run concurrently with the employee’s FMLA leave.

Status of Benefits. The County will maintain and pay for an eligible employee’s group health insurance coverage (including dependent coverage) during the period of a FMLA leave, under
the same terms and conditions as if the employee had continued to work, unless and until the employee informs the Department Head that he or she will not return to work following the leave. If the employee normally pays a portion of the premiums for health insurance, these payments by the employee shall continue during the FMLA leave. If payment is not timely made, the employee’s health insurance may be cancelled. An employee is required to inform the Department Head every two weeks of his or her status and intent to return to work. An employee shall not take a longer FMLA leave than is necessary to resolve the circumstances that precipitated the need for the leave. If the circumstances of a FMLA leave change and the employee is able to return to work, the employee is required to notify the Department Head at least two working days prior the employee’s intent to report for work. If an employee fails return to work, the County may seek recovery of premiums paid during the FMLA leave.

Employees on FMLA will not continue to accrue seniority, vacation or other benefits during the period of the leave. In addition, employees will not be paid for holidays that occur during the FMLA leave.

Medical Certification. The Department Head will require that a request for FMLA leave for a serious health condition be supported by a certification by the health care provider of the eligible employee or of the son, daughter, spouse, or parent of the employee, as appropriate. The employee shall provide, in a timely manner, a copy of such certification to the Department Head who may require recertification, at the County’s expense, a second opinion. In case of conflicting opinions, the County may require, at its expense, a third opinion from a health care provider approved by the Department Head and employee, which shall be binding. If the employee fails to provide the required medical certification, the Department Head may delay or deny the FMLA leave.

Key Employees. The County may deny FMLA leave and/or restoration of employment of “key employees” on the grounds that such leave or restoration will cause substantial and grievous economic injury to the operations of the Department but only following notice to such employee of the possibility of this determination and its potential consequences with respect to reinstatement and maintenance of benefits.

Fitness-for-duty. Where the leave is based upon the employee’s own serious health condition, the employee must provide at his or her expense medical certification that the employee is able to return to work before the employee will be permitted to return to work. This provision does not apply when the employee takes an intermittent leave.

Prohibitions. The following employee conduct is strictly prohibited in relation to an FMLA leave:

1. Engaging in fraud, misrepresentation, or providing false information to the Department Head or health care provider.
2. Failure to comply with the employee’s obligations under this policy.
3. Failure to timely return from the leave.
An employee who engages in such conduct will be subject to loss of benefits, denial or termination of leave, and discipline, including but not limited to, discharge and recovery of health care payments.

Jury Duty:
Group B-1 and Group C employees shall be granted leave for time spent in jury and grand jury service. Evening and night shift employees will be granted leave for jury and grand jury service, even though such service occurs during the daytime, if reporting to work would impose unreasonable hardship to the employee. Such employee shall sign their jury duty check(s) over to the County Treasurer, where upon the Employer shall compensate such employee, at their regular rate of pay, for each hour actually on jury duty.

Military Leave:
An employee who is a member of the Reserves or National Guard, when ordered for active duty or training, may be granted special leave of no more than thirty (30) calendar days per calendar year. Military leave and leave due to enrollment in the military reserves and emergency call-ups (including U. S. and Illinois military programs), shall be granted in accordance with present practices and procedures and current state and federal laws. The Department Head shall compare the employee’s County hourly rate to the military pay hourly rate, the difference, if a positive number, shall be paid to the employee. The hourly rate difference shall be multiplied by their regular work day hours, then by the number of work days missed from County service. Documentation of military compensation shall be filed with the appropriate payroll record in the office of the County Clerk.

Disability Leave:

a) Upon certification by a licensed physician and approval by the Department Head, a full-time employee who has been employed by Boone County for a period of no less than 180 calendar days and who is disabled due to an accident or illness not arising out of nor in the course of employment may be granted a one-time disability leave of absence with sixty (60) percent of average regular pay for a period not to exceed thirty (30) calendar days.

b) If approved, sixty percent (60%) payment of regular wages or salary shall begin after the employee has exhausted all sick leave. Payment shall be based upon sixty percent (60%) of the average weekly earnings of the employee during the six (6) month period prior to the first day the employee was unable to work due to the disability.

c) To initiate the process of applying for an approved disability leave, the employee or his/her representative shall provide his/her Department Head with certification from a physician and the County approved application form. Such certification shall include the
following information: nature of the accident or illness, date of first day of disability, probable length of disability and probable cause in the case of an accident.

d) The County as the employer has the right at all times, including but not limited to the application period and the disability period, to require that the employee seeking disability leave or on disability leave be examined by a physician or physicians selected and paid by the County.

SECTION 14. EMPLOYEE EXPENSES, MILEAGE, MEALS, EYE CARE
Employees shall be reimbursed at a rate from time to time established by the County Board for authorized use of their private automobiles in the performance of their job-related duties. Effective June 20, 2018, the County will utilize the IRS standard mileage rate for business use effective January 1 of each year. The Department Head shall allow for reimbursement to employees for meals consumed due to work-related travel or attendance at pre-approved training programs. Each respective meal shall be reimbursed up to $25.00 upon submission of a receipt, however, the total reimbursement each day for each employee shall not exceed $50.00. No alcoholic beverages shall be subject to reimbursement. Conference or seminar meal expenses, in which the attendee or has no choice over the cost, shall be reimbursed in full. No reimbursement for retirement or social events is permitted.

Each full-time employee shall be eligible to receive up to $400.00 every three years beginning December 1, 2004, from the County for eye care services performed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist. Employees shall pay for such services first, then receive a reimbursement from the County upon submission of a receipt to their respective Department Head.

Employees shall reimburse the County for use of County-owned telephones when used for personal long-distance calls.

SECTION 15. INSURANCE RETIREMENT BENEFITS
Group Medical and Life Insurance:

   a) Full-time Group C employees who have employed for at least ninety (90) calendar days are eligible for paid group medical insurance, on a participating basis, according to the group policy in effect at the time. Group A-1, B-1, and Assistant State’s Attorney’s are eligible for paid group health insurance upon the first day of a term of office or employment. Employees eligible for health insurance are also eligible for paid term life insurance according the County Group Plan.

   b) All employees selecting the health insurance benefit shall contribute the appropriate single or family monthly contribution which shall be determined by the employer.
Workers’ Compensation:

All County employees are covered by Workers’ Compensation. Any employee is eligible to receive Workers’ Compensation benefits in the event they have suffered an injury due to an accident that arises out of or in the course of employment. Employees must report on-the-job accidents or injuries immediately to their Department Head. Failure to do so may result in a denial of Workers’ Compensation benefits.

Retirement Programs:

a) Full-time County employees are required to participate in two retirement programs: Social Security and the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF). The County contributes financially to Social Security and IMRF for each eligible employee.

b) Early retirement, except for Sheriff’s Deputies, occurs when an employee voluntarily ceases employment, is at least age fifty-five (55) and has no less than eight (8) years of qualifying retirement service with the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund. Retirement with respect to the Sheriff’s Deputies occurs when an employee voluntarily ceases employment, is at least age fifty (50) and has no less than twenty (20) years of qualifying service with the police pension programs.

c) No compulsory retirement age exists for Boone County employees. However, a medical examination may be requested of the employee, at the expense of the employer, to determine the employee’s fitness to continue employment in that classification.

SECTION 16. PROBATIONARY PERIODS

Department Heads shall establish probationary periods of no less than one-hundred eighty (180) days for all new employees. No matter concerning the discipline, layoff, or termination of a probationary employee shall be subject to any Departmental grievance procedure.

SECTION 17. PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Board encourages equitable and amicable treatment of Boone County citizens and others who have occasion to visit the various County facilities. All courtesies should be extended to the public. However, it is the policy of the Board that employees have the right to be treated with respect by the public, and shall not have to subject themselves to verbal abuse, including profanity, or incidents that threaten their personal safety.
SECTION 18. RISK MANAGEMENT
It is the policy of the Boone County Government to adopt risk management policies and procedures. No loss of life or major personal injury to employees or members of the public is acceptable. It is the goal of the Boone County Board to minimize risk by good effective management practices. A Safety Committee composed of selected Department Heads shall be created, as needed, for the purpose of:

- Creating risk management objectives.
- Ensuring that objectives are implemented.
- Creating work safety rules and procedures for accident investigation, payment of claims and other similar administrative necessities.
- Maintaining adequate documentation of Risk Management Safety Committee meetings, and ensuring that Department Heads maintain other necessary records.

Department Heads shall identify employees that use personal vehicles for County business on a regular basis as part of their job duties. Department Heads may request a proof of insurance from employees who seek mileage reimbursement on a regular basis. When hiring new employees for classifications that use personal vehicles as part of their job duties, the Department Head shall request a motor vehicle report from the Secretary of State’s Office in Springfield. Any employee required to operate a vehicle, whether personal or County owned during the course of their employment duties shall maintain a valid driver’s license.

SECTION 19. INFORMATION (INTERNET) USE POLICY
The purpose of this policy is to implement guidelines for the use of Boone County’s information network resources, the Internet, and on-line information services.

Information network resources, the Internet, and on-line services are made available to County staff to improve communications and information exchange with citizens and others and to provide an information and research resource. While the County encourages the use of information network resources and the Internet to improve communications, certain restrictions are necessary to avoid improprieties and ensure that established standards are met. These restrictions are used to reduce potential liability, the risk of inappropriate use, and possible adverse public perceptions. The information network resources, including the Internet are not to be used for entertainment, illegal, harassing, or obscene purposes during or outside of County business hours. Personal communications (e-mail) may be used provided they are not illegal, harassing, or obscene.
SECTION 20. DRESS CODE, NO SMOKING, AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Dress Code:

Employees shall dress in a neat, clean, presentable, and professional manner. No blue jeans or shorts shall be worn.

No Smoking Policy:

Smoking is prohibited in any part of the Courthouse Building, the Public Safety Building, the Highway Department office, buildings, and vehicles, and inside any additional County-owned buildings.

Sexual Harassment Policy:

I. Prohibition on Sexual Harassment

It is unlawful to harass a person because of that person’s sex. The courts have determined that sexual harassment is a form of discrimination under Title VII of the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991. All persons have a right to work in an environment free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unacceptable misconduct which affects individuals of all genders and sexual orientations. It is a policy of Boone County to prohibit harassment of any person by any County official, County agent, County employee or County agency or office on the basis of sex or gender. All County officials, County agents, County employees and County agencies or offices are prohibited from sexually harassing any person, regardless of any employment relationship or lack thereof.

II. Definition of Sexual Harassment

This policy adopts the definition of sexual harassment as stated in the Illinois Human Rights Act, which currently defines sexual harassment as:

Any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature when:

1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment,
2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or
3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Conduct which may constitute sexual harassment includes:
Verbal: Sexual innuendos, suggestive comments, insults, humor, and jokes about sex, anatomy or gender-specific traits, sexual propositions, threats, repeated requests for dates, or statements about other employees, even outside of their presence, of a sexual nature.

Non-verbal: Suggestive or insulting sounds (whistling), leering, obscene gestures, sexually suggestive bodily gestures, “catcalls”, “smacking” or “kissing” noises.

Visual: Posters, signs, pin-ups or slogans of a sexual nature, viewing pornographic material or websites.

Physical: Touching, unwelcome hugging or kissing, pinching, brushing the body, any coerced sexual act or actual assault.

Textual/Electronic: “Sexting” (electronically sending messages with sexual content, including pictures and video), the use of sexually explicit language, harassment, cyber stalking and threats via all forms of electronic communication (e-mail, text/picture/video messages, intranet/on-line postings, blogs, instant messages and social network websites like Facebook and Twitter).

The most severe and overt forms of sexual harassment are easier to determine. On the other end of the spectrum, some sexual harassment is more subtle and depends, to some extent, on individual perception and interpretation. The courts will assess sexual harassment by a standard of what would offend a “reasonable person.”

III. Procedure for Reporting an Allegation of Sexual Harassment

An employee who either observes sexual harassment or believes herself/himself to be the object of sexual harassment should deal with the incident(s) as directly and firmly as possible by clearly communicating her/his position to the offending employee, and her/his immediate supervisor. It is not necessary for sexual harassment to be directed at the person making the report.

Any employee may report conduct which is believed to be sexual harassment, including the following:

• Electronic/Direct Communication. If there is sexual harassing behavior in the workplace, the harassed employee should directly and clearly express her/his objection that the conduct is unwelcome and request that the offending behavior stop. The initial message may be verbal. If subsequent messages are needed, they should be put in writing in a note or a memo.

• Contact with Supervisory Personnel. At the same time direct communication is undertaken, or in the event the employee feels threatened or intimidated by the situation, the problem must be promptly reported to the immediate supervisor of the person making the report, a Department Head, the director of human resources, the County administrator, or the County board chairperson.
The employee experiencing what he or she believes to be sexual harassment must not assume that the employer is aware of the conduct. If there are no witnesses and the victim fails to notify a supervisor or other responsible officer, the County will not be presumed to have knowledge of the harassment.

- Resolution Outside County. The purpose of this policy is to establish prompt, thorough and effective procedures for responding to every report and incident so that problems can be identified and remedied by the County. However, all County employees have the right to contact the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) for information regarding filing a formal complaint with those entities. An IDHR complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged incident(s) unless it is a continuing offense. A complaint with the EEOC must be filed within 300 days.

Documentation of any incident may be submitted with any report (what was said or done, the date, the time and the place), including, but not limited to, written records such as letters, notes, memos and telephone messages.

All allegations, including anonymous reports, will be accepted and investigated regardless of how the matter comes to the attention of the County. However, because of the serious implications of sexual harassment charges and the difficulties associated with their investigation and the questions of credibility involved, the claimant’s willing cooperation is a vital component of an effective inquiry and an appropriate outcome.

IV. Prohibition on Retaliation for Reporting Sexual Harassment Allegations

No County official, County agency, County employee or County office shall take any retaliatory action against any County employee due to a County employee’s:

1) Disclosure or threatened disclosure of any violation of this policy,
2) The provision of information related to or testimony before any public body conducting an investigation, hearing or inquiry into any violation of this policy, or
3) Assistance or participation in a proceeding to enforce the provisions of this policy.

For the purposes of this policy, retaliatory action means the reprimand, discharge, suspension, demotion, denial of promotion or transfer, or change in the terms of conditions of employment of any County employee that is taken in retaliation for a County employee’s involvement in protected activity pursuant to this policy.

No individual making a report will be retaliated against even if a report made in good faith is not substantiated. In addition, any witness will be protected from retaliation.

Similar to the prohibition against retaliation contained herein, the State Official and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/15-10) provides whistleblower protection from retaliatory action such
as reprimand, discharge, suspension, demotion, or denial of promotion or transfers that occurs in retaliation for an employee who does any of the following:

1) Discloses or threatens to disclose to a supervisor or to a public body an activity, policy or practice of any officer, member, State agency, or other State employee that the State employee reasonably believes is in violation of a law, rule or regulation,

2) Provides information to or testifies before any public body conducting an investigation, hearing or inquiry into any violation of a law, rule, or regulation by any officer, member, State agency or other State employee, or

3) Assists or participates in a proceeding to enforce the provisions of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

Pursuant to the Whistleblower Act (740 ILCS 174/15 (a)), an employer may not retaliate against an employee who discloses information in a court, an administrative hearing, or before a legislative commission or committee, or in any other proceeding, where the employee has reasonable cause to believe that the information discloses a violation of a State or federal law, rule, or regulation. In addition, an employer may not retaliate against an employee for disclosing information to a government or law enforcement agency, where the employee has reasonable cause to believe that the information discloses a violation of a State or federal law, rule, or regulation. (740 ILCS 174/15(b)).

According to the Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/6-101), it is a civil rights violation for a person, or for two or more people to conspire, to retaliate against a person because he/she has opposed that which he/she reasonably and in good faith believes to be sexual harassment in employment, because he/she has made a charge, filed a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under the Illinois Human Rights Act.

An employee who is suddenly transferred to a lower paying job or passed over for a promotion after filing a complaint with IDHR or EEOC, may file a retaliation charge - due within 180 days (IDHR) or 300 days (EEOC) of the alleged retaliation.

V. Consequences of a Violation of the Prohibition on Sexual Harassment

In addition to any and all other discipline that may be applicable pursuant to County policies, employment agreements, procedures, employee handbooks and/or collective bargaining agreement, any person who violates this policy or the Prohibition on Sexual Harassment contained in 5 ILCS 430/5- 65, may be subject to a fine of up to $5,000 per offense, applicable discipline or discharge by the County and any applicable fines and penalties established pursuant to local ordinance, State law or Federal law. Each violation may constitute a separate offense. Any discipline imposed by the County shall be separate and distinct from any penalty imposed by an ethics commission and any fines or penalties imposed by a court of law or a State or Federal agency.
VI. Consequences for Knowingly Making a False Report

A false report is a report of sexual harassment made by an accuser using the sexual harassment report to accomplish some end other than stopping sexual harassment or retaliation for reporting sexual harassment. A false report is not a report made in good faith which cannot be proven. Given the seriousness of the consequences for the accused, a false or frivolous report is a severe offense that can itself result in disciplinary action. Any person who intentionally makes a false report alleging a violation of any provision of this policy shall be subject to discipline or discharge pursuant to applicable County policies, employment agreements, procedures, employee handbooks and/or collective bargaining agreements.

In addition, any person who intentionally makes a false report alleging a violation of any provision of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act to an ethics commission, an Inspector General, the State Police, a State’s Attorney, the Attorney General, or any other law enforcement official is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor. An ethics commission may levy an administrative fine of up to $5,000 against any person who intentionally makes a false, frivolous or bad faith allegation.

21. SEVERABILITY
If any provisions of these personnel policies, or the application thereof, is held to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such ruling shall not affect any other provision of the personnel policies not specifically included in such ruling or which can be given effect without the unconstitutional or invalid provisions or application; and to this end, the provisions of these personnel policies are declared severable.

SECTION 22. SNOW AND RELATED EMERGENCY COMPENSATION POLICY
The Boone County Chairman, in consultation with the Sheriff and presiding Judge (or Chief Judge of the 17th Circuit) will determine whether or not to close those County Departments that can be closed during snow and other emergencies. The presiding Judge, or Chief Judge of the 17th Circuit, will determine whether or not to close essential Court, Circuit Clerk, and Probation Departments. The Sheriff will determine whether or not to close buildings under his authority.

Personnel deemed essential to County operations wherever possible should report to work on such snow and other emergency days and will be compensated at a straight time rate for their services.

Non-essential personnel scheduled to work may choose to forego reporting to work on such snow or related emergency days, however they will be compensated at a straight time hourly rate and have corresponding amount deducted for accrued vacation, or personal, time.
SECTION 23. COBRA PREMIUM SUBSIDY
The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) contains provisions giving former employees, retirees, spouses and dependent children the right to temporary continuation of health coverage at group rates. In the event of a loss of coverage due to the death of an employee while actively employed, the County shall subsidize any COBRA coverage premium payment for the surviving spouse and/or dependent children for up to three (3) full calendar months after the date of the qualifying event. The subsidy shall result in the COBRA coverage premium payment being equal to the required employee deduction for the elected coverage tier. After the subsidy period, the surviving spouse and/or dependent children must pay the entire COBRA coverage premium, including the part that was formerly paid by the employer, with an additional 2 percent administration fee added to the premium. COBRA coverage for the surviving spouse and/or dependent children lasts for 36 months. If COBRA coverage is not elected, or if COBRA coverage is terminated at any time, the surviving spouse and/or dependent children will be responsible for arranging coverage in lieu of COBRA coverage. This provision will expire if other insurance coverage is obtained during the three (3) month subsidy period.