



MASON COUNTY
MICHIGAN

304 E. Ludington Ave., Ludington, MI 49431
masoncounty.net



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EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

Welcome new employee!

On behalf of your colleagues, we welcome you to Mason County and wish you every success here.

We believe that each employee contributes directly to the county's growth and success, and we hope you will take pride in being a member of our team.

This handbook was developed to describe some of the expectations of our employees and to outline the policies, programs, and benefits available to eligible employees. Employees should familiarize themselves with the contents of the employee handbook as soon as possible, for it will answer many questions about employment with the county.

We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable, and rewarding. Again, welcome!

Sincerely,

Board of Commissioners

County of Mason

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with county and provide you with information about working conditions, employee benefits, and some of the policies affecting your employment. You should read, understand, and comply with all provisions of the handbook. It describes many of your responsibilities as an employee and outlines the programs developed by the county to benefit employees. One of our objectives is to provide a work environment that is conducive to both personal and professional growth.

No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. As the county continues to grow, the need may arise and the county reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portions of the handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion. Employees will, of course, be notified of such changes to the handbook as they occur.

The term "county" when used in the context of the employer shall be defined as the respective elected official and the County Board of Commissioners.

It is in this context of co-employer that the Board of Commissioners and the Elected Officials agree to use this handbook as a basis for communicating with their employees the Personnel Policies of the County of Mason.

District #1 Commissioner

District #2 Commissioner

District #3 Commissioner

District #4 Commissioner

District #5 Commissioner

District #6 Commissioner

District #7 Commissioner

Clerk

Treasurer

Drain Commissioner

Prosecuting Attorney

Register of Deeds

Sheriff

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

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

Since the information, policies, and benefits described here are necessarily subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur from time to time. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the Board of Commissioners of the county has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE

DATE

EMPLOYEE'S NAME (TYPED OR PRINTED)

EMPLOYMENT

101 | Nature of Employment

- A. Employment with the county is entered into voluntarily, and the employee is free to resign at will at any time, with or without cause. Similarly, the county may terminate the employment relationship at will at any time, with or without notice or cause, provided there is no violation of applicable federal or state law.
- B. Policies set forth in this handbook are not intended to create a contract, nor are they to be construed to constitute contractual obligations of any kind or a contract of employment between the county and any of its employees. The provisions of the handbook have been developed at the discretion of management and, except for its policy of employment at will, may be amended or canceled at any time, at the county's sole discretion.
- C. These provisions supersede all existing policies and practices and may not be amended or supplemented without the express written approval of the County Board of Commissioners.

103 | Employee Relations

- A. The county believes that the work conditions, wages, and benefits it offers to its employees are competitive with those provided by other employers in this area and industry.
 - 1. If employees have concerns about work conditions or compensation, they are strongly encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly to their elected officials or department heads.
 - 2. Our experience has shown that when employees deal openly and directly with elected officials or department heads, the work environment can be excellent, communications can be clear, and attitudes can be positive.
 - 3. We believe that the county amply demonstrates its commitment to employees by responding effectively to employee concerns.

105 | Equal Employment Opportunity

- A. In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at the county will be based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. The county does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- B. The county will make reasonable accommodation(s) for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship. This policy governs all aspects of employment,

including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training.

- C. Any employee with questions or concerns about any discrimination in the workplace is encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their immediate elected official, department head, or the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee.
 - 1. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal.
 - 2. Anyone found to be engaging in any unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

107 | Hiring of Relatives

- A. The employment of relatives in the same area of an organization can cause serious conflicts and problems, including favoritism and issues with employee morale. In addition to claims of partiality in treatment at work, personal conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried into day-to-day working relationships.
- B. Relatives of persons currently employed by the county may be hired only if they will not be working directly for or supervising a relative of the county employee. County employees cannot be transferred into such a reporting relationship.
- C. In other cases where a conflict or potential conflict arises, even if no supervisory relationship is involved, the parties may be separated by reassignment or termination of employment.
- D. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is defined as the employee's spouse, parent, child, or sibling; the employee's spouse's parent, child, or sibling; the employee's child's spouse; grandparents or grandchildren.

109 | Employee Medical Examinations

- A. To help ensure that employees can perform their duties safely, medical examinations will be required.
- B. After an offer has been made to an applicant entering a designated job category, a medical examination will be performed at the county's expense by a health professional of the county's choice.
 - 1. The offer of employment and assignment to duties is contingent upon satisfactory completion of the exam.
- C. Information regarding an employee's medical condition or history will be kept separate from other employee information and maintained confidentially. Access to this information will be limited to those who have a legitimate need to know.

111 | Immigration Law Compliance

- A. The county is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States and does not unlawfully discriminate based on citizenship or national origin.
- B. In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation that establishes their identity and employment eligibility.
 - 1. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 with the county within the past three years, or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid.
- C. Employees with questions or seeking more information on immigration law issues are encouraged to contact the administrator's office.
 - 1. Employees may raise questions or complaints about immigration law compliance without fear of reprisal.

113 | Conflicts of Interest

- A. Employees, department heads, elected officials, and county commissioners have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. This policy establishes only the framework within which the county wishes the business to operate. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general direction, allowing employees to seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. Contact the county administrator for more information or to address any questions about conflicts of interest.
- B. An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee, Department Head, Elected Official, or Commissioner is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee, Department Head, Elected Official, Commissioner, or for a relative as a result of the county's business dealings. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.
- C. **Examples of Potential Conflicts**
 - 1. Personal gain may result not only in cases where an employee, department head, elected official, Commissioner, or relative has a significant ownership in a firm with which the county does business, but also when an employee, department head, elected official, commissioner, or relative receives any kickback, bribe, substantial gift, or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving the county.
 - 2. Transactions with outside firms must be conducted within a framework established and controlled by the Mason County Board of Commissioners. Business dealings with outside firms

should not result in unusual gains for those firms. Unusual gain refers to bribes, product bonuses, special fringe benefits, unusual price breaks, and other windfalls designed to ultimately benefit either the employer, the employee, or both. Promotional plans that could be interpreted as involving unusual gains require specific approval.

- D. No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if employees, Department Heads, Elected Officials, or Commissioners have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, they must disclose to the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee of the county as soon as possible the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.
- E. A member of the Board of Commissioners shall not be interested directly or indirectly in any contract or other business transaction with the county, or a board, office, or commission thereof, during the time for which (s)he is elected or appointed, nor for one year thereafter unless the contract or transaction has been approved by three-quarters (3/4) of the members of the Board of Commissioners and so shown on the minutes of the Board together with a showing that the board is cognizant of the member's interest. Public Acts of 1975, No. 206 (MCLA 46.30).

115 | Prior Employment Experience

- A. The salary or wage of all employees will be established in accordance with the County of Mason Salary and Wage Schedule.
- B. **New Employees:**
 - 1. New employees with no previous governmental work experience in a similar job classification will be paid based on the starting salary and wage.
 - 2. In the case of a new employee with previous governmental work experience in a similar job classification, the Elected Official or Department Head may request that the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee consider the previous governmental work experience in establishing the salary or wage for the new employee.
 - a. The Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee, upon a request by the elected official or department head of the prospective employee, shall have the right to start the new employee at the "start" rate, the "after one year of service" rate, the "after two years of service" rate, the "after three (3) years of service" rate, or the "after four (4) years of service" rate.
- C. **Internal Transfers:**
 - 1. In the case of an internal transfer of a current employee from one job classification to another job classification, the employee's salary or wage will be set at the "start" rate.
 - 2. An employee making an internal transfer to a similar job classification will retain their salary or wage rate.

117 | Outside Employment

- A. Although an employee may hold a job with another organization as long as they satisfactorily perform their job responsibilities with the county, this practice is not encouraged. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to the county's scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements.
- B. If the county determines that an employee's outside work interferes with their performance or ability to meet the county's requirements as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if they wish to remain with the county.
- C. Outside employment will present a conflict of interest if it has an adverse impact on the county.

119 | Mission Statement

- A. The mission of the Mason County government is to assist in supporting the quality of life by providing a range of services relating to the safety, health, social, and economic well-being of county residents. The county carries out this responsibility in the following manner:
 - 1. providing services directly to county residents;
 - 2. cooperating with federal, state, and other local governments; and
 - 3. linking with private organizations.
- B. Mason County government has a leadership role in advancing an organizational and financial framework for fostering and maintaining services which address individual, family, and community needs.
- C. Mason County government, in serving its residents, strives for excellence within the context of available resources. The county is dedicated to making services accessible to residents without regard to ethnic origin, creed, gender, or personal situations.
- D. Mason County government is dedicated to serving residents in a timely and competent manner, while maintaining its commitment to honesty, integrity, and accountability to the general public.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS & RECORDS

201 | Employment Categories

- A. The county intends to clarify the definitions of employment classifications to ensure that employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period.
- B. Each employee is designated as either **NONEXEMPT** or **EXEMPT** from federal and state wage and hour laws. **NONEXEMPT** employees are entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of federal and state laws. **EXEMPT** employees are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws. An employee's **EXEMPT** or **NONEXEMPT** classification may be changed only upon written notification by the County Board of Commissioners. Overtime must be either provided for in the budget or approved by the County Board of Commissioners.
- C. In addition to the above categories, each employee will belong to one other employment category:
 - 1. **REGULAR FULL-TIME** employees are those who are not in a temporary or introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work the county's full-time schedule. Generally, they are eligible for the county's benefit package, subject to each benefit program's terms, conditions, and limitations.
 - 2. **REGULAR PART-TIME** employees are those who are not assigned to a temporary or introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than the full-time work schedule, but at least thirty (30) hours per week. Regular part-time employees are eligible for some benefits sponsored by the county, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.
 - 3. **PART-TIME** employees are not assigned to a temporary or introductory status and are regularly scheduled to work less than thirty (30) hours per week. While they do receive all legally mandated benefits (such as Social Security and workers' compensation insurance), they are ineligible for all of the county's other benefit programs, except for a pro-rata amount of holiday pay and earned sick time leave.
 - 4. **INTRODUCTORY** employees are those whose performance is being evaluated to determine whether further employment in a specific position or with the county is appropriate. Employees who satisfactorily complete the introductory period will be notified of their new employment classification.
 - 5. **TEMPORARY** employees are those who are hired as interim replacements, to supplement the workforce temporarily, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment assignments in this category are of a limited duration. Employment beyond the initially stated period does not imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees retain that status

unless and until they are notified of a change. All legally mandated benefits (such as Social Security and workers' compensation insurance) are provided to temporary employees. Some other county-sponsored benefits may also be available, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

6. **CASUAL** employees are those who have established an employment relationship with the county but who are assigned to work on an intermittent and/or unpredictable basis. While they receive all legally mandated benefits (such as workers' compensation insurance and Social Security), they are ineligible for all of the county's other benefit programs.

203 | Access to Personnel Files

- A. Elected Officials and Department Heads shall establish a personnel file for all department employees. The file shall contain the employee's application and any disciplinary action reports as necessary. As required by law or policy, some records, such as medical information and internal investigations, can be maintained in separate files. This personnel file shall remain in the department but shall be made available for inspection in the department by the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee.
 1. The required employment physical report and employment background check report shall remain in the payroll files maintained by the payroll office.

Employees or their authorized representatives may request access to their personnel file by submitting a written request. Upon receipt of the written request, the parties will schedule an appointment to view the file during normal office hours. Documents are not permitted to be removed from the personnel file, but employees may provide a written response to any document in their personnel file. Written responses will be attached to the original document in the personnel file.

2. Employees may also request copies of documents in their personnel file. Requests for copies must be made in writing.
- B. It shall be forbidden for any employee to inspect the file of another employee.

205 | Post-Employment Reference Checks

- A. The county administrator and the related elected official or department head will respond in writing only to those post-employment reference check inquiries submitted in writing.
- B. Responses to such inquiries will confirm only dates of employment, wage rates, and position(s) held.
- C. No employment data will be released without written authorization and a release signed by the individual who is the subject of the inquiry.

207 | Payroll Data Changes

- A. It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify the payroll clerk of any changes in payroll data.
 - 1. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, names and numbers of dependents, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times.
- B. If any payroll data has changed, notify the payroll office in writing within twenty-five (25) days of the event.
 - 1. Employees must confirm any changes to payroll data in person with the payroll clerk.

209 | Introductory Period

- A. The introductory period is intended to allow new employees to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. The county uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance.
- B. All new and rehired employees work on an introductory basis for the first six (6) months after their date of hire.
 - 1. Employees who are promoted or transferred within the county must complete a secondary introductory period of the same length with each reassignment to a new position.
 - 2. Any significant absence will automatically extend the introductory period by the length of the absence.
 - 3. If the county determines that the designated introductory period does not allow sufficient time to evaluate the employee's performance thoroughly, the introductory period may be extended for a specified period.
- C. In cases of promotions or transfers within the county, an employee who, in the sole judgment of management, is not successful in the new position can be removed from that position at any time during the secondary introductory period. If this occurs, the employee may be allowed to return to their former job or a comparable job for which they are qualified, depending on the availability of such positions and the county's needs.
- D. Upon satisfactory completion of the initial introductory period, employees enter the "regular" employment classification.
- E. Employment status is not changed during the secondary introductory period following a promotion or transfer within the county.

211 | Employment Applications

- A. The county relies upon the accuracy of the information contained in the employment application and other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Background checks of previous employment, education, experience, and, where appropriate, driving record(s) are routinely conducted.
- B. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the county's exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

213 | Performance Evaluation

- A. Elected officials/department heads and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis.
- B. Formal performance evaluations may be conducted at the end of an employee's initial period in any new position. This period, known as the introductory period, allows the elected official or department head and the employee to discuss the job responsibilities, standards, and performance requirements of the new position.
- C. Additional formal performance evaluations may be conducted to provide both elected officials or department heads and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals.

215 | Background Checks

- A. **Purpose:** To establish policies and procedures for conducting background checks on staff members of the County of Mason to ensure the safety of customers and fellow staff members.
- B. **Application:** Background record checks apply to all staff members, including employees, students, volunteers, interns, independent contractors, and providers representing the county, as well as employment candidates.
- C. **Definitions:**
 - 1. Background Check – Including, but not limited to, reference, work records, education, professional licenses, driver's record, criminal felony background, etc.
 - 2. Staff Members – All employees, students, volunteers, interns, and independent contract workers while providing service to Mason County.
 - 3. Candidate – Any person seeking, having made an application for, or being considered for employment, volunteering, internships, and independent contracting at Mason County.
 - 4. MVR – Motor vehicle record check.

5. Primary Verification – The process of verifying credentials by telephone or mail directly through the primary source (e.g., the State Licensing Office).
6. Driving Probation – If an employee is on driving probation, the Department Head or Elected Official will check the employee's driving record every three months for violations.
7. Driving Suspension – A suspension, revocation or termination of driving privileges, for any reason, by the State of Michigan or any of its agencies. If an employee is on a driving suspension, the employee will not be allowed to drive county vehicles or personal vehicles when performing county business travel. This could lead to termination of employment if the employee's job requires substantial travel or driving county vehicles. An employee on driving suspension must immediately notify their elected officials or department head and the county administrator acting on behalf of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee.

D. Policy: Mason County will conduct background checks on all candidates before allowing them to work for Mason County.

E. Procedures:

1. Elected officials or department heads and the county administrator shall ensure compliance with this policy.
2. All criminal background, MVR, and primary verification checks will be conducted and processed under the provisions of the Michigan Freedom of Information Act, P.A. 442 of 1976.
3. Background checks will be conducted on all candidates offered a position with Mason County. All candidates will be informed that they are subject to a background check upon offer of employment and must fill out an "Authorization to Obtain Information and General Release" form.
4. The appropriate elected official or department head will review the results for job-relatedness and forward them to the county administrator acting on behalf of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee for review. Mason County may obtain the advice of a labor attorney to analyze the results of questionable background checks to determine the most appropriate action.
5. Criminal background checks and/or MVR checks that show convictions and/or primary verification checks that show complaints may result in the withdrawal of a job offer to a candidate. Mason County reserves the right to act on the results of such inquiries to serve its best interest and those of the people it serves.
6. The county administrator shall maintain copies of the background check results in the payroll office.

F. Sources:

1. Background checks will be conducted through the Michigan State Police or the Mason County Sheriff.
2. Mason County shall subscribe to the Record Hookup Unit Program through the Michigan Department of State, Bureau of Driver and Vehicle Records, Customer Services Division, to automatically notify of motor vehicle violations.
3. Current professional licenses and registrations shall be verified, and any complaints registered with the State of Michigan Licensing Office shall be noted.
4. Original transcripts must be sent directly to the elected official or department head from educational institutions for new degrees.

G. Criminal Background Checks:

1. The county may deny employment/placement to any candidate and may suspend and/or terminate the employment/placement of any staff member if a felony conviction of such staff or such candidate involves:
 - a. Sexual misconduct of any kind, including, but not limited to, criminal sexual conduct in any degree, sexual abuse, prostitution, solicitation, indecent exposure, gross indecency, and/or the attempt of any such defenses; or
 - b. Acts of violence, aggression of any kind, including, but not limited to, assault, arson, child abuse, vulnerable adult abuse, homicide, kidnapping, robbery, riot, stalking, and/or the attempt of any such offense.
2. All other conviction types will be reviewed for job-relatedness and, if necessary, by a labor attorney.

H. Driver's Record Checks:

1. Staff members and candidates who are expected to drive to perform defined position responsibilities must provide a copy of a valid driver's license to their elected official or department head and must provide updated copies as their driver's license is renewed during their employment.
2. Mason County reserves the right to decline a candidate if his/her driver's license is unacceptable (as determined by this policy and in consultation with Mason County's labor attorney).
3. All staff members who are expected to drive in order to perform defined position responsibilities will be subject to corrective action steps if their driving record is unacceptable. At any time when a staff member is unable to perform their defined position responsibilities, disciplinary action will be taken consistent with other county policies and procedures.
4. A driver's record check will be obtained as incidents occur on all applicable employees.

5. The driver's record check will be reviewed by the county administrator acting on behalf of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee to determine if any corrective/remedial action or training is necessary.
6. Corrective action will be initiated to bring about improvement in employee performance to avoid future accidents/incidents and to assist the employees in becoming a more defensive driver.
7. The Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) will be reviewed with the employee by his/her immediate supervisor if corrective action is required. The MVR will become a part of the employee's personnel file.
8. The guideline that follows are some of the driving offenses that may result in the withdrawal of a job offer to a candidate, or probation or suspension of driving privileges and/or discipline up to and including termination of staff members:
 - a. Any criminal offenses, driving while impaired or other alcohol/drug-related offenses, upon conviction, may result in removal from driving duties for a period of at least (1) year and/or disciplinary action. If no additional violations occur during this period, reinstatement on a probationary basis may occur.
 - b. Three (3) moving violations within a one (1) year period may result in being placed on "driving probation" for one (1) year and/or disciplinary action. Removing from probation can be considered if there are no additional infractions during this period.
 - c. Four (4) moving violations within a two (2) year period may indicate removal from driving for one (1) year and/or disciplinary action. Reinstatement may occur if no violations occur during the one (1) year suspension.
 - d. Revocation or suspension of a driver's license immediately suspends the employee from driving for the term of the suspension or revocation and will result in disciplinary action.
- i. The above is a guideline and does not remove the employer's discretion in all situations. Any disciplinary action will define, in writing, all future expectations and corrective actions will become necessary to maintain employment. This document will become part of the employee's personnel file.

217 | Employee Processing (In / Out)

- A. **Purpose:** This policy aims to define a procedure for the orderly processing of employees as they start and finish their employment with the County.
- B. **Scope:** This policy applies to all County employees.
- C. **Procedure (In Processing):**

1. The elected official or department head, or their designee should send the payroll office and the computer network administrator a “notice of employment” as soon as a contingent offer of employment has been accepted. This notice should include the date of hire, classification, rate of pay, and authorized level of computer access.

The elected official or department head or their designee may request that the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee recognize the new employee at a different step on the Wages and Salary Schedule as defined in Policy 115.

The payroll clerk is responsible for providing the employee with a copy of this notice, which will be used during the following procedure.

2. Department heads will coordinate with the payroll clerk to ensure that all necessary paperwork is provided to the new employee. The new employee will be directed to the online benefits application to review options, including, but not limited to, healthcare plans, life insurance, and other benefits.
3. After completing the hiring process and being notified of employment, all new employees shall first report to the Mason County payroll clerk for in-processing.
4. Elected officials or department heads, or their designees are responsible for issuing key to new employees working at the Mason County Courthouse or Jail. Conversely, they are also responsible for recovering key during the out-processing phase.
5. The payroll office will start a personnel file for the employee and have the employee fill out all the required paperwork. This should include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Social Security withholding forms
 - b. Retirement Forms
 - c. Insurance Forms
 - d. Direct Deposit Forms
 - e. Sick Time Benefit Forms
6. After filling out all required paperwork at the payroll office, the employee will be directed to the online copy of the “Employee Handbook”. Employees will sign a waiver noting that they have been notified and shown how to access the Employee Handbook.
7. Employees not covered by the “Employee Handbook” should be directed to their immediate supervisor to receive a copy of their policy and procedures. The employee shall sign a receipt for the handbook, which shall be placed in their personnel file.
8. Once the new employee submits their paperwork to the payroll clerk and has access to the Employee Handbook, they will go to the clerk’s office to receive their oath of office.
9. If the employee needs to be a notary to perform their duties, they will coordinate with the county administrator to get a bond with the county’s insurance provider. The notary

application will be completed by the employee and submitted to the clerk's office. In the case of an internal transfer, if the elected official or department head would like the employee to retain their notary status, the employee will retain their notary supplies and status.

D. Procedure (Out):

1. When an employee separates from employment, the elected official or department head shall send a "notice of separation" to both the payroll clerk and the computer network administrator. This notice should include the date of separation and a timesheet for the employee, if applicable. Final pay authorization shall be subject to review by the administrator's office.
2. The payroll office will ensure that all appropriate paperwork is completed and will contact the Elected Official or Department Head to facilitate the request for further information.
3. If the employee is a notary and has a notary bond through the county, the employee shall furnish the clerk's office with their stamp and a signed letter to the State of Michigan requesting termination of their notary status.
4. The Computer Network Administrator shall immediately terminate the employee's computer access upon receiving a notice of separation."
5. The elected official or department head may conduct an exit interview before the employee leaves employment with the county. For assistance with exit interviews and the exit interview document, please coordinate with the county administrator.

E. Record Retention:

1. All payroll-related files shall be maintained at the payroll office and retained or disposed of following the State of Michigan's Record Retention Schedule.
2. All records shall be retained or destroyed in accordance with pertinent Record Retention laws and policies, including but not limited to emails, paper documents, digital files, etc.

219 | Compensatory Time

- A. All nonexempt county employees shall receive compensatory time if documentation is completed and signed by their elected official or department head.
 1. Compensatory time shall be approved by the Chair of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee before the qualifying event.
 2. **Emergency or unforeseen compensatory time:** An elected official or department head may grant emergency or unforeseen compensatory time prior to notifying the Chair of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee, so long as:
 - a. The compensatory time does not exceed two (2) hours a day;

223 | Timekeeping

- A. Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every nonexempt employee. Federal and state laws require the county to maintain an accurate record of time worked to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked refers to the actual time spent on the job performing assigned duties.
 - 1. Nonexempt employees should accurately record the hours worked each day. They should also record the hours incurred during a departure from work for personal reasons.
 - 2. The Board of Commissioners must always approve overtime work before it is performed.
- B. Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
- C. It is the employees' responsibility to enter their time records to certify the accuracy of all time recorded.
 - 1. The elected official or department head will review and then initial the time record before submitting it for payroll processing.
- D. If corrections or modifications are made to the time record, both the employee and the elected official or department head must verify the accuracy of the changes by submitting a written verification that is signed to the payroll clerk. All payroll time will be reported, every pay period, to the payroll clerk.

225 | Paydays

- A. All employees are paid biweekly on every other Friday. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period.
- B. In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a day off, such as a holiday, employees will receive pay on the last day of work before the regularly scheduled payday.
- C. Employee pay will be directly deposited into their bank accounts once they provide advance written authorization to the county. Employees will receive an itemized statement of wages when the county makes direct deposits.
 - 1. If an employee wants to make a change to their direct deposit information, they must present in person to the payroll clerk to fill out the direct deposit form.

227 | Employment Termination

- A. Termination of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization, and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Below are examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:
 - 1. **RESIGNATION** – voluntary employment termination initiated by an employee.
 - 2. **DISCHARGE** – involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization.

3. **LAYOFF** – involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization for non-disciplinary reasons.
 4. **RETIREMENT** – voluntary employment termination initiated by the employee meeting age, length of service, and any other criteria for retirement from the organization.
- B.** Since employment with the county is based on mutual consent, both the employee and the county have the right to terminate employment. Employee benefits will be affected by employment termination in the following manner.
1. All accrued, vested benefits that are due and payable at termination will be paid.
 2. Some benefits may be continued at the employee's expense if the employee so chooses.
 - a. The employee will be notified in writing of the benefits that may be continued and of the terms, conditions, and limitations of such continuance.
- C.** Any employee who voluntarily releases themselves from county employment and is subsequently rehired shall not be given benefits or considerations above those of any newly hired employee, except for any retirement or applicable benefits retained upon separation.

229 | Severance Pay

- A.** Employees are not generally eligible for severance pay upon termination of employment, but in its sole discretion, the county may elect to provide severance pay to a terminated employee, provided that the employee provides a full release of all claims as part of the severance agreement.

231 | Pay Advances

- A.** The county does not provide pay advances or loans on unearned wages to employees.

233 | Administrative Pay Corrections

- A.** The county takes all reasonable steps to ensure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck and that employees are paid promptly on the scheduled payday.
- B.** In the unlikely event that there is an error in the amount of pay, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of the payroll office so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible.

235 | Pay Deductions

- A.** The law requires that the county make certain deductions from every employee's compensation. Among these are applicable federal, state, and local income taxes. The county also must deduct Social Security taxes on each employee's earnings up to a specified limit that is called the Social Security "wage base." The county matches the amount of social security taxes paid by each employee.

- B.** The county offers programs and benefits beyond those required by law. Eligible employees may voluntarily authorize deductions from their paychecks to cover the costs associated with participating in these programs.
- C.** The county cooperates with the local credit unions and banking facilities as a service to its employees. The county, upon the employee's written instructions and approval, will make regular deductions from their paycheck and pay the amount to the credit union or bank of their choice. Further information can be obtained from the payroll division of the administrator's office.
- D.** The payroll department reserves the right to limit the number of institutions and the minimum dollar amount per pay period for deductions.
- E.** If you have questions concerning why deductions were made from your paycheck or how they were calculated, your elected official or department head can assist in having your questions answered.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

301 | Employee Benefits Overview

- A.** Eligible county employees are provided with a wide range of benefits.
- 1.** Several programs (such as Social Security, workers' compensation, state disability, and unemployment insurance) cover all employees as prescribed by law.
 - 2.** Benefits eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee categories.
 - a.** Elected officials or department heads can identify the programs for which employees are eligible.
 - b.** Details of many of these programs can be found elsewhere in the employee handbook.
 - 3.** The following benefits are available to eligible employees:
 - Auto, Employer-Owned Car
 - Auto Mileage
 - Bereavement Leave
 - Deferred Compensation Plan
 - Dental/Optical/Hearing Reimbursement Program
 - Educational Financial Assistance
 - Eldercare & Family Leave
 - Holidays
 - Jury Duty Leave
 - Licensure Assistance
 - Life Insurance
 - Long-Term Retirement Disability
 - Major Medical Insurance
 - Meal Allowance
 - Medical Insurance
 - Medical Leave
 - Membership Dues
 - Military Leave
 - Parking
 - Personal Leave
 - Prescription Drug coverage
 - Retirement Plan
 - Sick Leave Benefits
 - Tool and Equipment Assistance
 - Travel Allowances
 - Uniform and Uniform Maintenance
 - Vacation Benefits
 - Witness Duty Leave
- B.** Some benefit programs require employee contributions, but the county fully pays for most.
- C.** The benefit package for regular full-time employees represents an average additional cost to the county of approximately sixty (60) percent of wages.

303 | Vacation Benefits

- A. Vacation time off with pay is available to eligible employees to provide opportunities for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits. Employees in the following employment categories are eligible to earn and use vacation time as described in this policy:
1. Regular full-time employees
 2. Regular part-time employees (pro rata)
- B. **Vacation Earning Schedule:** The amount of paid vacation time employees receive each year increases with the length of their employment as shown in the following schedule.

VACATION EARNING SCHEDULE

YEARS OF ELIGIBLE SERVICE EACH YEAR	VACATION DAYS
After 1 year	12 days
After 5 years	15 days
After 6 years	16 days
After 7 years	17 days
After 8 years	18 days
After 9 years	19 days
After 10 years	20 days

A. **Accrual and Usage:**

1. The length of eligible service is calculated based on a "benefit year." This is the twelve (12)-month period that begins when the employee starts to earn vacation time. An employee's benefit year may be extended for any significant leave of absence except military leave of absence. Military leave does not affect this calculation. (See individual leave of absence policies for more information.)
2. Once employees enter an eligible employment classification, they begin to earn paid vacation time according to the schedule. Earned vacation time is available for use in the year following its accrual.
3. Paid vacation time can be used in increments of fifteen (15) minutes or more. To take vacation, employees should request advance approval at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance from their elected official or department head. Requests will be reviewed based on several factors, including departmental needs and staffing requirements.

4. New full-time employees may convert up to five (5) days of sick time to vacation time, provided this conversion occurs within the first year of employment. Converted vacation time from sick time cannot be used after the first year of employment.

B. Administration of Vacation Time:

1. Vacation time off is paid at the employee's base pay rate at the time of vacation. It does not include longevity or any special forms of compensation such as overtime or shift differentials.
2. In the event that available vacation is not used by the end of the benefit year, employees may carry unused time forward to the next benefit year.
 - a. If the total amount of unused vacation time reaches a "cap" of the larger of one (1) year's worth of the employee's vacation benefit or the balance of unused vacation time an employee had as of December 31, 1995, further vacation accrual will stop.
 - b. When the employee uses paid vacation time and brings the available amount below the cap, vacation accrual will begin again.
 - c. An employee who has not used their vacation time in amounts sufficient to be under the cap may request an extension of the time available to use the vacation time. An employee must request their elected official or department head to petition the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee for this extension of time. This petition must include the reason why the extension is needed and the length of the extension.

C. Termination and Payout of Vacation Time:

1. Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for unused vacation time that has been earned through the last day of work.
2. If the county, in its sole discretion, terminates employment for cause, forfeiture of unused vacation time may result.

D. Seniority:

1. Continuous service, also known as seniority, refers to employment with the county and being on the payroll without any breaks or interruptions.
2. Seniority shall be used for retirement, sick leave, vacation, and longevity calculation purposes.
3. Part-time service, which immediately precedes the transfer of an employee to full-time status, shall receive credit time in figuring the introductory period; however, this time shall not accrue seniority benefits.

305 | Holidays

- A. Observed holidays:** The County will grant holiday time off to all employees on the holidays listed below.

1. New Year's Day (January 1)

2. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (third Monday in January)
3. Presidents' Day (third Monday in February)
4. Good Friday (Close at noon)
5. Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
6. Independence Day (July 4)
7. Labor Day (first Monday in September)
8. Veterans' Day (November 11)
9. Thanksgiving (fourth Thursday in November)
10. Day after Thanksgiving
11. Christmas Eve (December 24)
12. Christmas (December 25)
13. New Year's Eve (December 31)

B. Holiday pay and compensation: The county will grant paid holiday time off to all eligible employees immediately upon assignment to an eligible employment classification. Holiday pay will be calculated based on the employee's straight-time pay rate (as of the date of the holiday) times the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked on that day.

1. Eligible employee classifications:
 - a. Regular full-time employees
 - b. Year-round part-time employees whose regularly scheduled workday falls on a holiday (pro rata)
 - c. Introductory employees
2. If a recognized holiday falls during an eligible employee's paid absence (such as vacation or sick leave), holiday pay will be provided instead of the paid time off benefit that would otherwise have applied.
3. If eligible nonexempt employees, including eligible part-time nonexempt employees, work on a recognized holiday, they will receive holiday pay plus wages at one and one-half (1.5) times their straight-time rate for the hours worked on the holiday.
4. Paid time off for holidays will not be counted as hours worked for the purposes of determining overtime.

C. Scheduling of holidays that fall on the weekend: A recognized holiday that falls on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday. A recognized holiday that falls on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. When Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve falls on Friday, the preceding Thursday

shall be a holiday. When Christmas or New Year's Eve falls on Saturday or Sunday, the preceding Friday shall be a holiday.

307 | Workers' Compensation Insurance

- A. The county provides a comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical, or hospital treatment.
- B. Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses should inform their elected official or department head and the Mason County Administrator, who is the insurance administrator, immediately.
 - 1. An accident report must be completed by the employee and their elected official or department head within forty-eight (48) hours after the injury occurs. It will be the responsibility of the employee's elected official or department head to complete the accident report form if the employee is unable to complete it.
 - 2. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it must be reported immediately. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible.
 - 3. Accident report forms can be obtained from the insurance administrator.
- C. Any county employee witnessing an accident, incident, or altercation on or involving county property or employees shall provide the insurance administrator with a written statement of their observations, including conditions of the physical area, and any other pertinent information.
- D. Neither the county nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by the county.

309 | Sick Leave Benefits

- A. **Eligible Employees:** The County provides paid sick leave benefits to all eligible employees for periods of temporary absence due to illness or injury. Eligible employee classifications are:
 - 1. Regular full-time employees
 - 2. Regular part-time employees
 - 3. Part-time employees
 - 4. Introductory employees
 - 5. Temporary employees
 - 6. Casual employees

B. Earning Sick Time:

1. Regular full-time employees will accrue sick leave benefits at the rate of twelve (12) days per year (one (1) day for every full month of service). Sick leave benefits are calculated based on a "benefit year," the twelve (12) month period that begins when the employee starts to earn sick leave benefits.
2. Effective February 21, 2025, regular part-time, part-time, introductory, temporary, and casual employees will accrue one (1) hour of earned sick time for every thirty (30) hours worked upon the date of hire.

C. Usage:

1. All employees may use earned sick time after ninety (90) days of employment.
2. Employees may use sick leave benefits for an absence due to:
 - a. Mental or physical illness or injury of the employee or employee's family member.
 - b. Medical diagnosis or treatment of illness or injury of the employee or employee's family member.
 - c. Preventive medical care for the employee or the employee's family member.
 - d. The birth of a child or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care.
 - e. Matters arising from the employee or employee's family member being a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault.
 - f. If the employee's place of business is closed due to a public health emergency.
 - g. If the employee's child's school or place of care is closed due to a public health emergency and the employee needs to care for the child.
 - h. If a public official or healthcare provider determines that the health of others may be jeopardized because of the employee or employee's family member's exposure to a communicable disease.
 - i. If the employee or employee's family member is a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault, for medical or psychological or other counseling for physical or psychological injury or disability; to obtain services from a victim services organization; to relocate due to domestic violence or sexual assault; to obtain legal services related to domestic violence or sexual assault; or to participate in any civil or criminal proceedings related to or resulting from the domestic violence or sexual assault.
 - j. Meetings at a child's school or place of care related to the child's health or disability, or the effects of domestic violence or sexual assault on the child.
3. For sick leave benefits, care for family members includes the following relationships:
 - a. Child (biological, adopted, step, foster, legal ward, in loco parentis)

- b. Grandchild
- c. Spouse
- d. Parent (biological, foster, step, adoptive, legal guardian)
- e. Grandparent
- f. Sibling (biological, step, foster, or adopted)
- g. Child of domestic partner
- h. Domestic partner
- i. Any other individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is equivalent to a family relationship

D. Reporting:

1. Employees who are unable to report to work due to any allowable sick leave benefits reasons should notify their elected official or department head before the scheduled start of their workday, if possible. An elected official or department head must also be contacted on each additional day of absence. Sick leave time can be used in increments of fifteen (15) minutes or more.
2. If an employee is absent for three (3) or more consecutive days due to the allowable reasons that employees may use sick time, a physician's statement or other documentation, verifying the reason for sick leave, may be requested by the elected official or department head and may be required as a condition to receiving sick leave benefits. The county must reimburse employees for out-of-pocket costs incurred in securing documentation. If the county does not make a written request for documentation for absences of three (3) consecutive days or less, the county will not cover the cost of the note. The county will not require the documentation to explain the nature of the illness or the details of violence.

E. Administration of Sick Leave Benefits:

1. Sick leave benefits will be calculated based on the employee's base pay rate at the time of absence and will not include any special forms of compensation, such as overtime or shift differentials.
2. All earned sick time rolls over to the next year with no carryover limits, only usage limits. Employees are limited to using a maximum of one hundred and fifty (150) days' worth of sick leave benefits within the calendar year.
3. Upon termination, an employee with ten (10) years of service will be paid for one-half (1/2) of their unused sick days at the employee's rate of pay at the time of termination, not to exceed a total payout of 600 hours.

- a. Effective February 21, 2025, part-time employees will be eligible to receive payment for accrued sick time after ten (10) years of service, starting on the date they accrue sick time.
 - b. **Example of sick time payout:** if an employee has 2,000 hours of sick benefits at the time of termination, they will be paid a maximum of 600 hours. If an employee has 200 hours of sick benefits at the time of termination, they will be paid for one-half of (1/2) the total hours for 100 hours total.
 - c. The county will reinstate any unused and unpaid sick time for an employee who is rehired after a separation of six (6) months or less and will allow the employee to begin using sick time immediately, so long as the employee was not paid out for or transferred their sick time before the time of termination.
- 4. An employee may agree to transfer up to twelve (12) days of unused sick leave to another employee with the prior approval of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee. Both employees must sign a release form provided by the payroll department.
- 5. **Seniority:**
 - a. Continuous service, also known as seniority, refers to employment with the county and being on the payroll without any breaks or interruptions.
 - b. Seniority shall be used for retirement, sick leave, vacation, and longevity calculation purposes.
 - c. Part-time service, which immediately precedes the transfer of an employee to full-time status, shall receive credit time in figuring the introductory period. However, this time shall not accrue seniority benefits.
- F. **Employee Rights:** Written notice of employees' rights under the Earned Sick Time Act shall be provided to employees at the time of hire. A poster must be displayed detailing employee rights under the act. Should an employee believe the employer violated the act, they can file a claim with the Wage and Hour Division within three (3) years of the alleged violation date. An investigation will be completed. If a violation is found, the department may award all appropriate relief, including but not limited to payment of all earned sick time improperly withheld, any and all damages incurred by the complainant as a result of a violation of this act, back pay, and reinstatement in the case of job loss.

311 | Bereavement Leave

- A. Employees who wish to take time off due to the death of an immediate family member should notify their elected official or department head immediately.
- B. Up to three (3) days of paid bereavement leave will be provided to eligible employees in the following classifications:

1. Regular full-time employees
 2. Regular part-time employees (pro rata)
- C. Bereavement pay is calculated based on the base pay rate at the time of absence and will not include any special forms of compensation, such as overtime or shift differentials.
- D. Approval of bereavement leave will occur in the absence of unusual operating requirements. Employees may, with the approval of their elected official or department head, use any available paid leave for additional time off as necessary.
- E. The County defines "immediate family" as the employee's spouse, parent, step-parent, child, sibling; the employee's spouse's parent, child, or sibling; the employee's child's spouse; grandparents or grandchildren.
- F. An elected official or department head may grant up to five (5) working days under unusual circumstances.

313 | Jury Duty

- A. The county encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when required.
- B. Jury duty pay will be calculated on the employee's base pay rate times the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked on the day of absence. Employee classifications that qualify for paid jury duty leave are:
1. Regular full-time employees
 2. Regular part-time employees (pro rata)
- C. Employees must present their jury duty summons to their elected official or department head as soon as possible, so that the official or department head can make arrangements to accommodate their absence. Of course, employees are required to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.
- D. Either the county or the employee may request an excuse from jury duty if, in the county's judgment, the employee's absence would create severe operational difficulties.
- E. The county will continue to provide health insurance benefits for the full term of the jury duty absence.
- F. Vacation, sick leave, and holiday benefits will continue to accrue during jury duty leave.
- G. Any jury fees that are earned during regular work hours will be signed over to the county treasurer. The employee will retain any jury fee received after regular work hours, as well as mileage reimbursement.

314 | Witness Duty

- A. If employees have been subpoenaed or otherwise requested to testify as witnesses by the county, they will receive paid time off for the entire period of witness duty.
- B. Employees will be granted unpaid time off to appear in court as a witness when requested by a party other than the county. Employees are free to use any available paid leave benefit (such as vacation leave) to receive compensation for the period of this absence.
- C. The subpoena should be shown to the employee's elected official or department head immediately after it is received so that operating requirements can be adjusted, where necessary, to accommodate the employee's absence. The employee is expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.
- D. Any witness fees received while on paid time off will be signed over to the county treasurer.

315 | Benefits Continuation (COBRA)

- A. The federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) enables employees and their qualified beneficiaries to maintain health insurance coverage under the county's health plan when a "qualifying event" would otherwise result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events include resignation, termination of employment, or the death of an employee; a reduction in an employee's hours or a leave of absence; an employee's divorce or legal separation; and a dependent child no longer meeting the eligibility requirements.
- B. Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at the county's group rates plus an administration fee.
- C. The county provides each eligible employee with a written notice that describes the rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under the county's health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations.

317 | Educational Assistance

- A. The county recognizes that the skills and knowledge of its employees are crucial to the organization's success. The educational assistance program encourages personal development through formal education, enabling employees to maintain and improve job-related skills or enhance their ability to compete for reasonably attainable positions within the county.
- B. The county will provide educational assistance to all eligible employees who have completed twelve (12) months of employment in an eligible employment classification. To maintain eligibility, employees must remain on the active payroll and perform their job satisfactorily through the completion of each course. Employees in the following employee classification(s) are eligible for educational assistance:
 - 1. Regular full-time employees

2. Regular part-time employees
- C. Individual courses or courses that are part of a degree, licensing, or certification program must be related to the employee's current job duties or a foreseeable-future position in the organization in order to be eligible for educational assistance. The county has the sole discretion to determine whether a course relates to an employee's current job duties or a foreseeable-future position. Employees should contact their elected official or department head for more information or questions about educational assistance.
 - D. Requests for educational assistance must receive prior approval from the employee's elected official or department head, as well as from the County Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee.
 - E. Reimbursement will be submitted to the employee's elected official or department head for review.
 1. Reimbursements will be made on the basis of one-half (1/2) of the tuition/book(s) fee upon enrollment with a receipt indicating that the tuition/book(s) has been paid, and one-half (1/2) the tuition/book(s) upon the completion of the course(s) with a passing grade or in the case of technical training, satisfactory completion.
 2. Documentation of satisfactory completion shall be submitted along with the request for the final one-half (1/2) of the tuition/book(s) fee to the County Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee.
 3. If any employee does not complete said course(s), the County Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee shall review the cause of non-completion and have the right to reclaim any fees previously paid.
 - F. While educational assistance is expected to enhance employees' performance and professional abilities, the county cannot guarantee that participation in formal education will entitle the employee to automatic advancement, a different job assignment, or pay increases.
 - G. The county invests in educational assistance to employees with the expectation that the investment be returned through enhanced job performance. However, if an employee voluntarily separates from the county's employment within one (1) year of the last educational assistance payment, the amount of the payment will be considered only a loan. Accordingly, the employee will be required to repay the full amount of the original educational assistance payment. The elected official or department head will alert the payroll office of the amount that the employee will owe upon separation.

319 | 457 Plan

- A. The county has established a 457 plan that is available to all regular full-time and part-time employees. The purpose of the plan is to encourage eligible employees to save on a pretax basis and to build a financial reserve for retirement.
- B. Under the plan, eligible employees may elect to have the County withhold between one percent (1%) and twenty-five percent (25%) of their gross compensation through payroll deductions to a maximum

amount per year prescribed by IRS regulations, which is adjusted by the IRS annually for inflation: and contribute that amount to the plan as a savings contribution.

- C. Employees may suspend their contributions at any time and can also adjust the amount of their contributions by completing a form available from the payroll department.
- D. Withdrawals from the plan are permitted once an employee has attained age fifty-nine and one-half (59 ½) or in the event of financial hardship as defined in the plan.
- E. The money contributed by employees is held by the plan's trustees. The value of each employee's account at retirement depends on a number of factors, such as how long an employee has been a member, how much the employee has contributed, and investment gains.
- F. The plan allows employees to elect how much of their compensation they want to contribute to the plan and to direct the investment of their funds into professionally managed investment funds.
- G. An employee is fully invested in his or her own contributions. Any questions regarding the 457 plan should be directed to the county administrator.

321 | Personal Days

- A. The county provides two (2) paid personal days per calendar year, not to be counted as vacation or sick time. Eligible employee classifications are:
 - 1. Regular full-time employees
- B. After six (6) months of employment in the first year, two (2) personal days are allotted per calendar year.
- C. Employees will not be able to carry over any personal days from one calendar year to the next.
- D. Personal days can be used in minimum increments of fifteen (15) minutes. To take a personal day, employees should request advance approval at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance from their elected official or department head. Requests will be reviewed based on a number of factors, including business needs and staffing requirements.
- E. Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for unused personal days that have been earned. However, if the county, in its sole discretion, terminates employment for cause, forfeiture of unused personal days may result.

323 | Longevity Pay

- A. The County provides longevity pay, up to a maximum of \$2,500.00, to all eligible employees based on years of service. Eligible employee classifications are:
 - 1. Regular full-time employees
- B. **Employment Classification & Longevity Pay**

1. **Clerical employees** shall receive longevity pay as outlined in the following schedule.

YEARS OF ELIGIBLE SERVICE PAY FOR EACH ADDITIONAL <u>YEAR OF SERVICE</u>	<u>AMOUNT OF LONGEVITY</u>
After 5 years	\$100.00
After 10	\$150.00
After 11 years	\$185.00

2. **Custodial employees** shall be paid longevity as shown in the following schedule.

YEARS OF ELIGIBLE SERVICE PAY FOR EACH ADDITIONAL <u>YEAR OF SERVICE</u>	<u>AMOUNT OF LONGEVITY</u>
After 3 years	\$100.00
After 11 years	\$170.00

3. **Elected officials**, other than County Commissioners, and **all appointed officials** shall be paid longevity as shown in the following schedule.

YEARS OF ELIGIBLE SERVICE PAY FOR EACH ADDITIONAL <u>YEAR OF SERVICE</u>	<u>AMOUNT OF LONGEVITY</u>
After 1 year	\$100.00
After 10 years	\$150.00

325 | Retirement System

- A. The County provides an independent retirement system for all eligible employees. Eligible employee categories are:
1. Regular full-time employees or those required by State Statute
- B. The county participates in the Michigan Municipal Employees Retirement System (MERS), an agent multiple employer public employee retirement system. MERS is authorized and operated under state law, Act 135 of the Public Acts of 1945 as amended.
1. For employees, elected officials (excluding county commissioners), department heads, jail administration and non-union clerical, the County provides a retirement program based on the MERS benefit program of B-4, E-1, E-2, FAC-3 with vesting after ten (10) years of credited service at any age with pension payable at age sixty (60) and with an early retirement option at age fifty-five (55) with fifteen (15) or more years of credited service. Benefits are computed based on a three (3) year average of final compensation, multiplied by a factor of two-point-

five percent (2.50%), multiplied by the number of years of service. Retirees receive an annual cost-of-living increase adjustment of up to two and one-half percent (2 1/2%), based on the consumer price index. This adjustment is made January 1 for all retirees who have been on the pension payroll since July 1 or before prior to adjustment. Death or disability benefits are also provided.

2. For commissioners elected after January 1, 1997, the County provides a retirement program based on the MERS benefit program of C-1 New, E-1, E-2, FAC-3 with vesting after ten (10) years of credited service at any age with pension payable at age sixty (60) and with an early retirement option at age fifty-five (55) with fifteen (15) or more years of credited service. Benefits are computed based on a three (3) year average of final compensation, multiplied by a factor of one-point-five percent (1.50%), multiplied by the number of years of service. Retirees receive an annual cost-of-living increase adjustment of up to two and one-half percent (2 1/2%), based on the consumer price index. This adjustment is made January 1 for all retirees who have been on the pension payroll since July 1 or before prior to adjustment. Death or disability benefits are also provided.
- C. The county annually contributes 100% of the pension obligation for its employees.
 - D. The MERS' board has the responsibility and authority for the investment of the system's assets. State statute provides for a seven-member board, which is comprised of three employee members, three officer members, and the State Treasurer. The Governor of the State of Michigan appoints the board members for three (3) year terms. By statute, the State Treasurer is custodian of system assets.
 - E. Continuous service, also known as seniority, refers to employment with the county and being on the payroll without any breaks or interruptions. Seniority shall be used for retirement, sick leave, vacation, and longevity calculation purposes. Part-time service, which immediately precedes the transfer of an employee to full-time status, shall receive credit time in figuring the introductory period; however, this time shall not accrue seniority benefits.

327 | Dental/Optical/Hearing Reimbursement Program

- A. The County provides a Dental/Optical/Hearing reimbursement program to all eligible employees. Eligible employee categories are:
 1. Regular full-time employees
 2. Regular part-time employees (Pro rata)
- B. Dental/Optical/Hearing expenses of the eligible employee's spouse and their eligible dependents under twenty-two (22) years of age. The County defines "eligible dependents" for Section 327 as the employee's child and the employee's spouse's child.
- C. After January 1, 2003, eligible employees will accrue \$1,200.00 each calendar year with a maximum accrual of \$2,000.00. New employees shall receive a pro-rated allotment after thirty (30) days of employment based on the number of remaining days in the calendar year. Expenses incurred after

the employee's eligibility date and prior to their termination date will be eligible for reimbursement up to the maximum dollar allotments.

D. Reimbursement Procedure:

1. An eligible employee shall submit their paid original receipt along with the appropriate voucher signed by their Elected Official or Department Head. The paid receipt must include the patient's name, the amount paid, and the date of the procedure. The voucher must include the employee's name, employee's vendor number, appropriate general ledger number, description of service (i.e. dental, optical, or hearing), date, and Elected Official or Department Head signature. The voucher shall then be reviewed by the County Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee with reimbursement given to the employee upon approval by the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee.
 2. Reimbursements are to be paid to the employee by ACH direct deposits for employees with an authorization form on file with the county treasurer.
 3. Unpaid dental, optical, and hearing bills will not be considered for payment.
 4. Dental, optical, and hearing expenses incurred by the employee or spouse and their eligible dependents will be considered up to the amount accrued by the employee within the calendar year that the expense was incurred.
- E. An employee shall forfeit any unused Dental/Optical/ Hearing balance upon termination.
- F. Any employee found guilty of submitting false documentation for reimbursement shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

329 | Health Insurance and Life Insurance

A. Medical Insurance

1. The county makes available group medical insurance plans covering certain hospitalization, surgical, and medical expenses for participating full-time and regular part-time employees working at least thirty (30) hours per week and their eligible dependents.
2. Summary descriptions of the plan are available in the county administrator's office. The specific terms and conditions governing the group medical insurance plan are set forth in detail in the master policy or policies governing the plan as issued by the carrier or carriers.
3. The county reserves the right to modify the coverage provided under the group medical insurance plan, to select the insurance carrier or carriers, to become a self-insurer either wholly or partially, and to select the administrator of such self-insurance plans.
4. Eligible employees begin participation in the group medical insurance plan on the first (1st) day of the premium month following the commencement of employment with the county.

5. Employees electing to participate in the group medical insurance plan shall advise the county in writing of this intent. They will sign the appropriate payroll deduction forms for the payment of the required monthly premium, if any.
6. County commissioners are not eligible for county-paid health insurance effective January 1, 2013.

B. HSA Contribution

1. The County will establish a Health Savings Account for each eligible employee taking high-deductible insurance coverage and annually contribute the eligible plan deductible amount to each account during the contract period, subject to the cap set annually by the State of Michigan under Public Act 152 of 2011. The amount the county contributes to an employee's Health Savings Account will be the difference between the state cap amount and the premium amount of the high deductible insurance coverage plan selected by the employee.
2. Annually, the county will increase the cap so that the total of the health insurance premium and the contribution to the Health Savings Account is no more than the cap set annually by the State of Michigan under Public Act 152 of 2011.
 - a. The employee will be responsible for any cost above the cap set annually by the State of Michigan under Public Act 152 of 2011.
 - b. Employees hired after the contribution date who elect to participate in the County's group medical insurance plan will receive a pro-rated HSA contribution based upon the ratio of the number of complete months of service in the medical insurance year to twelve (12).
3. The county will work with a local financial institution to facilitate setting up an HSA account, but employees are free to set up their own accounts if they so choose. Account information must be provided to the county to allow for the direct deposit of the annual County HSA contribution or employee contributions through payroll deduction, if desired.
4. Pursuant to Internal Revenue Service regulations, contributions to the HSA will be discontinued or reduced in the year that the employee, retiree, or their spouse reaches the age of sixty-five (65). A pro-rata amount will be deposited in the year that an employee, retiree, or their spouse reaches the age of sixty-five (65).
5. Each employee who wants to get paid in lieu of time off for their vacation leave may cash in up to the lesser of their following year's health insurance premium share and/or plan deductible or the IRS health savings account contributions limitation.
 - a. To utilize this option, employees must complete and submit the required forms to the Mason County Payroll Office before November 30th of each year. This authorization will permit the County of Mason to deduct the specified vacation hours from the first or second payroll of the new year and apply the value at the prior year's pay rate toward the employee's HSA to be used for deductible or premium costs.

6. Payroll Deductions:

- a. Employee contributions to their HSA shall be paid through payroll deductions, and all employees shall be required to sign the appropriate payroll deduction authorization forms.
- b. The co-pay on the health insurance premium and any employee contributions to their Health Savings Accounts shall be paid through payroll deductions, and all employees shall be required to sign the appropriate payroll deduction authorization forms.

C. Medical Insurance for Retirees

1. If the employee has fifteen (15) or more years of service with the county and retires at age fifty-five (55) or older the county will annually contribute the eligible plan deductible amount to each account subject to the cap set annually by the State of Michigan under Public Act 152 of 2011 to age sixty-five (65) and the Medicare/Medicaid supplement for the employee and covered spouse from age sixty-five (65) to age seventy (70) subject to the cap set annually by the State of Michigan under Public Act 152 of 2011.
 - a. However, should a retired employee have the availability and provided hospitalization plan by a subsequent employer, or if such retired employee shall have the availability and provided hospitalization plan by his or her spouse's employer, this coverage shall not be effective. The retired employee shall sign a certification form, provided by the County, every six (6) months regarding the availability of another health plan, and this can be returned in-person or via email to the county administrator.
2. After age seventy (70) retirees are required to pay their own insurance premium fee to the county treasurer.
3. In the case of the death of a retiree prior to the retiree reaching age seventy (70), the surviving covered spouse shall be eligible for the continuation of the county paying its percentage until the date that the deceased retiree would have reached age seventy (70).
4. Retirement coverage shall not be effective for any retired employee or surviving spouse who has the availability of a provided hospitalization plan by a subsequent employer or if such retired employee shall have the availability of a provided hospitalization plan by his or her spouse's employer.
5. The retired employee shall sign a certification form every six (6) months regarding the availability of another health plan.
6. Employees hired after October 9, 2012 are not eligible for retiree health insurance.

D. Payment in Lieu of Medical Insurance

1. Employees who are eligible for coverage under the county's group medical insurance plan, who are also eligible for group health insurance coverage provided by an employer other than the

county, and who can provide proof of such alternate coverage, can opt out of the county's group medical insurance plan and its related HSA.

2. Employees who opt out will receive credit in a monthly amount of \$335.50, but will not be eligible for coverage in the county's group medical insurance plan.
 - a. That amount will be paid to the employee's deferred compensation account or directly to the employee as taxable compensation.
 - b. This payment is not available to county employees who are married to another county employee.
3. An employee who subsequently loses medical/ hospitalization coverage from another source shall have the right to obtain medical/ hospitalization coverage from the county as provided in this document at the earliest date possible after written notice to the county. Said employee shall be entitled to a pro rata contribution to the county's qualified deferred compensation plan or directly to the employee as taxable compensation to date the employee becomes covered by the employer's medical/hospitalization plan.
4. Employees who decline enrollment in the county's group medical insurance plan for themselves or their dependents (including their spouse) because they have other health insurance may only subsequently enroll during the open enrollment (December) period. The only exception would be if you or your dependent loses eligibility from the other coverage and you are eligible under the county's plan.

E. Term Life Insurance

1. All regular full-time employees shall be eligible for group term life insurance policy coverage in the amount of \$20,000 with double indemnity payments.
2. The specific terms and conditions governing the term life insurance coverage are set forth in detail in the master policy or policies issued by the carrier or carriers.
3. The county pays the required monthly premium for eligible employees and reserves the right to change carriers as needed.

F. Continuation of Insurance Premiums

1. In the event that an employee eligible for insurance coverage is discharged, quits, retires, resigns, is laid off, or commences an unpaid leave of absence, the county shall have no obligation or liability whatsoever for making any insurance premium payment for any such employee or their lawful dependents beyond the month in which the discharge, quit, retirement, resignation, layoff, or unpaid leave of absence commences; provided, however, that employees on a family and medical leave of absence shall continue to be eligible for county paid insurance for the period of their family and medical leave on the same terms that would exist if they were not on the leave.

2. Employees on county-approved unpaid leaves of absence may continue insurance benefits on a month-by-month basis by paying to the county, in advance, the amount of the next month's premium for that employee and/or their lawful dependents, subject to the approval of the insurance program.
3. The county shall resume payment of its portion of insurance premiums for eligible employees who return to work as of the first (1st) day of the premium month following the date of the employee's return to work.
4. The county provides health insurance continuation for disabled employees.
 - a. If an employee meets the requirements of the Michigan Employment Retirement System (MERS) for disability retirement allowance, the employee's health insurance plan will continue in the same manner as if the employee retired under normal conditions.
 - b. If disability is terminated and the employee does not return to work, the health insurance will be discontinued.

G. Married Couple Employed by the County

1. If the county employs a married couple, they cannot be covered under one policy and the other take the dollar amount incentive for not taking the health insurance.

331 | Professional Conferences

- A. County employees occasionally need to attend conferences, seminars, meetings, or technical training sessions outside the County of Mason. Each employee shall be paid for their time away from their worksite during regularly scheduled office hours. Compensatory time shall not be considered for overnight lodging.
- B. Appointed department heads and employees must have prior approval from their supervisors to attend. Registration fees may be paid in advance by submitting a completed voucher to the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee for approval. Prepayment of fees is contingent upon the submission of the voucher in a manner that allows for the payment to be processed and approved within the normal payment cycle.
- C. Reimbursements for mileage, meals, and lodging shall be as outlined in the Business Travel Expense section (517) of this policy handbook.

LEAVE POLICIES

401 | Personal Leave

- A. The County provides leaves of absence without pay to eligible employees who wish to take time off from work duties to fulfill personal obligations. Employees in the following employment category(ies) are eligible to request personal leave as described in this policy:
 - 1. Regular full-time employees
- B. Eligible employees may request personal leave only after having completed one (1) year of service. As soon as eligible employees become aware of the need for a personal leave of absence, they should request a leave from their elected official or department head.
- C. Personal leave may be granted for a period of up to six (6) months each calendar year. With the approval of the elected official or department head, an employee may use any available sick leave or vacation leave as part of the approved period of leave.
- D. Requests for personal leave will be evaluated based on several factors, including anticipated workload requirements and staffing considerations during the proposed absence period.
- E. Subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans, the county will provide health insurance benefits for the first thirty (30) calendar days following the approved start date of personal leave. At that time, employees will be responsible for the full costs of these benefits if they wish to continue coverage. When the employee returns from personal leave, benefits will again be provided by the county according to the applicable plans.
- F. Benefit accruals, such as vacation, sick leave, or holiday benefits, will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon return to active employment.
- G. When a personal leave ends, every reasonable effort will be made to return the employee to the same position, if it is available, or to a similar available position for which the employee is qualified. However, the county cannot guarantee reinstatement in all cases.
- H. If an employee fails to report to work promptly at the expiration of the approved leave period, the county will assume the employee has resigned.

403 | Military Leave

- A. A military leave of absence will be granted to employees, except those occupying temporary positions, to attend scheduled drills or training or if called to active duty with the U.S. armed services.
- B. The leave will be unpaid. However, employees may use any available paid time off for the absence.
- C. Subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans for which the employee is otherwise eligible, health insurance benefits will be provided by the County until thirty (30) calendar days after military leave begins. At that time, the employee will be responsible for the full costs of

these benefits if they wish to continue coverage. When the employee returns from military leave, benefits will again be provided by the county according to the applicable plans.

- D. Benefit accruals, such as vacation, sick leave, or holiday benefits, will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon the employee's return to active employment.
- E. Employees on two (2)-week active-duty training assignments or inactive duty training drills are required to return to work for the first regularly scheduled shift after the end of training, allowing reasonable travel time. Employees on longer military leave must apply for reinstatement in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws.
- F. Every reasonable effort will be made to return eligible employees to their previous position or a comparable one. They will be treated as though they were continuously employed for purposes of determining benefits based on length of service, such as the rate of vacation accrual and job seniority rights.

405 | Pregnancy-Related Absences

- A. The County will not discriminate against any employee who requests an excused absence for medical disabilities associated with pregnancy. Such leave requests will be made and evaluated in accordance with the medical leave policy provisions outlined in this handbook and in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws.
- B. Requests for time off associated with pregnancy and/or childbirth (apart from medical disabilities associated with these conditions) will be considered in the same manner as any other request for an unpaid personal or family leave. Accumulated sick leave and/or vacation time may be applied for this purpose until exhausted.

407 | Family and Medical Leave Policy

Employees who have been employed for at least twelve (12) months are eligible for leaves of absence for family and medical reasons under the terms and conditions set forth below and as those terms and conditions are supplemented and explained by the **Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)** and the regulations promulgated under that act, provided that they were employed for at least 1,250 hours of service during the twelve (12) month period immediately preceding the commencement of the requested leave:

- A. **Qualifying reasons for leaves.** An eligible employee is entitled to a total of twelve (12) workweeks of leave during a “rolling” twelve (12) month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any leave for any one or more of the following reasons:

FMLA REGULAR LEAVE:

1. The birth of a son or daughter, and to care for the newborn child;
2. The placement of a son or daughter of the employee for adoption or foster care;

3. To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition; and
4. Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of their job.

FMLA SERVICE MEMBER LEAVE:

1. Because of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that a spouse, son, or daughter of the employee is on covered active duty (or has been notified of an impending call to covered active duty) in the Armed Services.
2. To care for a covered service member who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of an eligible employee and who has suffered a serious injury or illness in the line of duty on active duty.

For purposes of leaves under subparagraphs 3 and 4 above, a "serious health condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves (a) inpatient care (i.e., an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity, or any subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care; or (b) continuing treatment by a health care provider. Ordinarily, unless complications arise, the common cold, the flu, earaches, upset stomach, minor ulcers, headaches other than migraine, routine dental or orthodontia problems, and periodontal disease are examples of conditions that do not meet the definition of a serious health condition and do not qualify for FMLA leave.

Continuing treatment includes (i) a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition that also involves treatment two or more times by a health care provider or treatment by a health care provider on at least one occasion which results in a regimen of continuing treatment under the supervision of the health care provider; (ii) any period of incapacity due to pregnancy, or for prenatal care; (iii) any period of incapacity or treatment for such incapacity due to a chronic serious health condition; (iv) a period of incapacity which is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective; and (v) any period of absence to receive multiple treatments by a health care provider for restorative surgery after an accident or other injury, or for a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days in the absence of medical intervention or treatment. A period of incapacity means an inability to work, attend school, or perform other regular daily activities due to the serious health condition or its treatment and recovery.

- B. **Requests for leave.** Employees desiring leaves of absence under this section shall provide written notice to the county setting forth the reasons for the requested leave, the anticipated start date of the leave, and its anticipated duration. The timing of this notice shall be as follows:
 1. **Foreseeable leaves.** An employee must provide at least thirty (30) days advance notice before the leave is to begin if the need for the leave is foreseeable based on an expected birth, placement for adoption or foster care, or planned medical treatment for a serious health

condition of the employee or of a family member. If thirty (30) days' notice is not practicable, such as because of a lack of knowledge of approximately when leave will be required to begin or a change in circumstances, notice must be given as soon as possible. Employees are expected to consult with the county prior to the scheduling of planned medical treatment in order to work out a treatment schedule that best suits the needs of both the county and the employee and the county may, for justifiable cause, require an employee to attempt to reschedule treatment, subject to the ability of the health care provider to reschedule the treatment and the approval of the health care provider as to any modification of the treatment schedule. In the event that an employee fails to give the required notice with no reasonable excuse for the delay, the county may deny the taking of the leave until at least thirty (30) days after the date the employee provides notice to the county of the need for the leave.

- 2. Unforeseeable leaves.** When the need for leave, or its approximate timing, is not foreseeable, an employee shall give notice to the county as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case. It is expected that an employee will give notice to the county within no more than one or two working days of learning of the need for leave, except in extraordinary circumstances. In the case of a medical emergency requiring leave because of an employee's own serious health condition or to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition, written advance notice is not required.

Employees shall provide notice to the county either in person or by telephone, telegraph, facsimile ("fax") machine, or other electronic means. Notice may be given by the employee's representative (e.g., a spouse, family member, or other responsible party) if the employee is unable to do so personally. The employee or representative will be expected to provide more information when it can readily be accomplished as a practical matter, taking into consideration the exigencies of the situation.

The county has the obligation to determine if a particular leave request qualifies for FMLA leave. This determination shall be promptly communicated to the employee as soon as the county has received sufficient information to make a determination if a requested leave qualifies as FMLA.

- C. Medical Certification.** A request for leave to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition, or due to the employee's own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's position, must be supported by a certification issued by the health care provider of the employee or the employee's ill family member. The employee must provide the requested certification to the County within fifteen (15) calendar days, unless it is not practicable under particular circumstances to do so despite the employee's diligent, good faith efforts. An employee who fails to provide the certification may be denied the taking of leave until the required certification is provided.

If the county has reason to doubt the validity of a medical certification, it may require the employee to obtain a second opinion at the county's expense from a healthcare provider of its choice, provided that the selected healthcare provider cannot be employed on a regular basis by the county. If the opinions of the employee's and the county's designated healthcare providers differ, the county may

require the employee at the county's expense to obtain certification from a third healthcare provider designated or approved jointly by the county and the employee. The county and the employee must each act in good faith to attempt to reach an agreement on whom to select for the third opinion provider. This third opinion shall be final and binding.

The county may request recertification at any reasonable interval, but not more often than every thirty (30) days, unless:

1. The employee requests an extension of leave;
2. Circumstances described by the original certification have changed significantly (e.g., the duration of the illness, the nature of the illness, complications); or
3. County receives information that casts doubt upon the continuing validity of the certification.

The county may also require recertification of the employee's or the family member's serious health condition when it is prevented from recovering its share of health benefit premium payments made on the employee's behalf during a period of unpaid leave because the employee is unable to return to work after leave due to the continuation, reoccurrence, or onset of a serious health condition.

Employees whose leave was occasioned by a serious health condition that made the employee unable to perform their job are required to obtain and present certification from the healthcare provider that they are fit for duty and able to return to their work. This certification must be provided at the time the employee seeks reinstatement at the end of the leave, and the County may deny restoration until satisfactory certification is provided.

- D. Length of leave.** An employee is eligible for up to twelve (12) work weeks of leave each year. This year is based upon a "rolling" twelve (12)-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any leave under this section. These twelve (12) work weeks of leave may be taken in one continuous period or "intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule" under certain circumstances. "Intermittent leave" is leave taken in separate blocks of time due to a single illness or injury, rather than for one continuous period of time, and may include leave of periods from an hour or more to several weeks. A "reduced leave schedule" is a leave schedule that reduces an employee's usual number of working hours per workweek, or hours per workday. Leave taken because of a birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care may only be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule with the prior written approval of the county. Leave taken to care for a sick family member or an employee's own serious health condition may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary.

A covered service member is a member of the Armed Forces who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness or a veteran who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness and was a member of the Armed Forces at any time during the period of five (5) years preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes the medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy. An eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member who suffered a serious injury or illness in the line of duty on covered active duty in the Armed Forces shall be entitled to a total of

twenty-six (26) work weeks of leave during a twelve (12)-month period to care for that service member. This service member family leave shall only be available during a single twelve (12)-month period, and during that period the eligible employee shall only be entitled to a total of twenty-six (26) weeks of combined regular FMLA leave and Service Member Family Leave.

For intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule, there must be a medical need for leave (as distinguished from voluntary treatments and procedures), and it must be that such medical need can be best accommodated through an intermittent or reduced leave schedule. In the case of a request for intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule that is medically necessary, the employee shall advise the county of the reasons why the intermittent/reduced leave schedule is necessary and the schedule for treatment, if applicable. The treatment regimen and other information described in the certification of a serious health condition meets the requirement for certification of the medical necessity of intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule. Employees needing intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule must attempt to schedule their leave so as not to disrupt the county's operations. The employee and the county shall attempt to work out a schedule that meets the employee's needs without unduly disrupting the County's operations, subject to the approval of the health care provider.

If an employee requests intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, including during a period of recovery from a serious health condition, the county may require the employee to transfer temporarily to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified and which better accommodates recurring periods of leave than does the employee's regular position. The alternative position must have equivalent pay and benefits. The county may also transfer the employee to a part-time job with the same rate of pay and benefits, provided the employee is not required to take more leave than is medically necessary. The county may not eliminate benefits that otherwise would not be provided to part-time employees; however, the county may proportionately reduce earned benefits where such reduction is normally made by the county for its part-time employees.

If an employee takes leave on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule, only the amount of leave actually taken is counted toward the maximum twelve (12) weeks of leave. Where an employee normally works a part-time schedule or variable hours, the amount of leave is determined on a pro-rata or proportional basis by comparing the new schedule with the employee's normal schedule. If an employee's schedule varies from week to week, a weekly average of the hours worked over the twelve (12) weeks before the beginning of the leave period is used for calculating the employee's normal workweek.

- E. Payment status while on leave.** Employees on leaves of absence under this section shall be paid in accordance with the following:
1. In instances where the leave is needed due to the employee's own serious health condition, the leave shall be with pay as long as the employee has available accrued paid leave days. These paid leave days shall be applied in the following order:

- a. Paid sick leave
 - b. Paid vacation
2. In instances where the leave is needed for reasons other than the employee's own serious health condition, the leave shall be with pay as long as the employee has available accrued paid leave days. These paid leave days shall be applied in the following order:
 - a. Paid sick leave
 - b. Paid vacation

As a condition of the leave, employees must utilize available paid leave and cannot elect to have unpaid leave in order to retain paid leave for use at other times. Upon the exhaustion of accrued paid leave, the remainder of the leave shall be without pay.

- F. Benefit status while on leave.** While on leave, an employee's coverage under any group health plan shall be continued on the same conditions as coverage would have been provided if the employee had been continuously employed during the entire leave period. An employee may choose not to retain health coverage during the leave, and upon return from the leave is entitled to reinstatement of the group health plan coverage without any qualifying period, physical examination, or exclusion of pre-existing conditions.

Except as required by the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (COBRA), the county's obligation to maintain health benefits ceases when an employee informs the County of their intent not to return from leave (including at the start of leave if the County is so informed before the leave starts), or the employee fails to return from leave and thereby terminates employment, or the employee exhausts their leave entitlement.

The county may recover its share of health plan premiums paid during a period of unpaid leave from an employee if the employee fails to return to work after the employee's leave entitlement has been exhausted or expires, unless the reason the employee does not return is due to:

1. The continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition which would entitle the employee to leave under this section, unless the county requests medical certification and the employee does not provide such certification in a timely manner (within thirty (30) days); or
2. Other circumstances beyond the employee's control.

The county's right to recover its share of health premiums paid during periods of unpaid leave extends to the entire period of unpaid leave taken by the employee. When an employee fails to return to work, except for the reasons stated above, health premiums paid by the county during a period of leave are a debt owed by non-returning employee to the county. In the circumstances where recovery is allowed, the county may recover its share of health insurance premiums through deduction from any sums due to the employee (e.g., unpaid wages, vacation pay, profit sharing, etc.). Alternatively, the county may initiate legal action against the employee to recover its share of health insurance premiums.

- G. Rights upon return to work.** On return from leave, an employee shall be returned to the same position the employee held when leave commenced, or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment, unless the employee is no longer qualified for the position because of their physical or mental condition or the failure to maintain a necessary license or certification.

FMLA Procedure

In order to comply with the provisions of the FMLA, the following procedures shall be followed:

- A. Posting requirements.** A notice explaining the Act's provisions and providing information concerning the procedures for filing complaints of violations of the Act with the Wage and Hour Division shall be posted in conspicuous places where employees are employed. The notice must be posted prominently where it can be readily seen by employees and applicants for employment, and shall be large enough to be easily read and contain fully legible text. In the event that a substantial portion of the workforce is comprised of workers who are not literate in English, the notice shall be provided in a language in which the employees are literate.
- B. General notice requirements.** The information concerning FMLA entitlements and employee obligations under the FMLA as set forth in the Wage and Hour Division FMLA Fact Sheet shall be included in written guidance to employees concerning employee benefits or leave rights. In addition, information regarding the employer's policies regarding the FMLA shall be included in this written guidance.
- C. Specific notice requirements.** Written notice shall be given to the employee the first time in each six (6)-month period that an employee gives notice of the need for FMLA leave. The notice shall be given within a reasonable time after notice of the need for leave is given by the employee, within one or two business days if feasible, and shall be given in a language in which the employee is literate. If leave has already begun, the notice should be mailed to the employee's address of record. This notice shall include, as appropriate:
1. That the leave will be counted against the employee's annual FMLA leave entitlement;
 2. Any requirements for the employee to furnish medical certification of a serious health condition and the consequences of failing to do so;
 3. The employee's right to substitute paid leave and whether the County will require the substitution of paid leave, and the conditions related to any substitution;
 4. Any requirement for the employee to make any premium payments to maintain health benefits and the arrangements for making such payments, and the possible consequences of failure to make such payments on a timely basis (i.e., the circumstances under which coverage may lapse);
 5. Any requirement for the employee to present a fitness for duty certificate to be restored to employment;

6. The employee's status as a key employee and the potential consequence that restoration may be denied following FMLA leave, explaining the conditions required for such denial;
7. The employee's right to restoration to the same or an equivalent job upon return from leave;
8. The employee's potential liability for payment of health insurance premiums paid by the employer during the employee's unpaid FMLA leave if the employee fails to return to work after taking FMLA leave.

If the specific information provided in the notice changes with respect to a subsequent period of FMLA leave during the six (6)-month period, the county shall within one (1) or two (2) business days after receipt of the employee's notice of need for leave provide written notice referencing the prior notice and setting forth any information that has changed.

Written notification of the need to provide medical certification or a fitness for duty report shall be given with respect to each employee notice of a need for leave unless the initial notice in the six (6)-months period and the written documents describing the county's leave policies clearly provide that certification or a fitness for duty report would be required. Oral notification of this requirement must be made if subsequent written notification is not provided.

- D. Review of the adequacy of medical certification.** An employee requesting FMLA leave to care for the employee's seriously-ill spouse, son, daughter, or parent, or due to the employee's own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of the employee's position must be supported by a certification issued by the health care provider of the employee or the employee's ill family member. This certification requirement is satisfied by submission of a completed certificate.

Additional information cannot be requested from the employee's health care provider after an employee submits a complete certification signed by the health care provider, unless the employee is also on a worker's compensation leave of absence. However, a healthcare provider representing the County may contact the employee's healthcare provider, with the employee's permission, for purposes of clarification and authentication of the medical certification.

If the County has reason to doubt the validity of a medical certification, it may require the employee to obtain a second opinion at the County's expense from a healthcare provider of its choice, provided that the selected healthcare provider cannot be employed on a regular basis by the County. If the opinions of the employee's and the County's designated healthcare providers differ, the County may require the employee at the County's expense to obtain certification from a third healthcare provider designated or approved jointly by the County and the employee. The County and the employee must each act in good faith to attempt to reach an agreement on whom to select for the third opinion provider. This third opinion shall be final and binding.

- E. Designation as FMLA Leave.** The County is responsible for designating leave, paid or unpaid, as FMLA qualifying. This designation decision must be based only upon information received from the employee

or the employee's spokesperson. In instances where the County does not have sufficient information about the reason for an employee's use of paid leave, the County should inquire further of the employee or the spokesperson to ascertain whether the paid leave is potentially FMLA qualifying.

Once the County acquires knowledge that leave is being taken for an FMLA required reason, the County must promptly (within two business days absent extenuating circumstances) notify the employee that the paid leave is designated and will be counted as FMLA leave. The County's notice that the leave has been designated as FMLA leave may be given orally or in writing. If the notice is oral, it shall be confirmed in writing no later than the following payday.

If the leave is taken for an FMLA reason and has not been so designated by the County, an employee may request such designation by notifying the County within two (2) business days of returning to work that the leave was for an FMLA reason.

F. Recordkeeping. In addition to the records required to be maintained under the Fair Labor Standards Act, the payroll office shall keep for a period of at least three (3) years the following information:

1. Dates FMLA leave is taken by FMLA eligible employees. Leave must be designated in records as FMLA leave; leave so designated may not include leave required under state law or an employer plan which is not also covered by FMLA.
2. If FMLA leave is taken by eligible employees in increments of less than one full day, the hours of the leave.
3. Copies of employee notices of leave furnished to the County under FMLA, if in writing, and copies of all general and specific written notices given to employees. Copies may be maintained in employee personnel records.
4. Any documents describing employee benefits or County policies and practices regarding the taking of paid and unpaid leaves.
5. Premium payments of employee benefits.
6. Records of any dispute between the County and eligible employee regarding designation of leave as FMLA leave, including any written statement from the County or employee of the reasons for the designation and for the disagreement.

Records and documents relating to medical certifications, recertifications, or medical histories of employees or employees' family members, created for purposes of FMLA, shall be maintained as confidential medical records by the payroll office in separate files/records from the usual personnel files.

WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

500 | Security Policy for Court Facilities

A. Courthouse Security:

1. Impermissible Items:

- a. No weapons or other **impermissible items** are allowed in the Mason County Courthouse. Impermissible items include:
 - i. Firearms and explosives of any kind (including fireworks);
 - ii. Knives, box cutters, razor blades, or other similar items;
 - iii. Chemical sprays, such as mace, pepper sprays, or any other spray that could be considered harmful;
 - iv. Tools such as hammers, screwdrivers, pliers, wrenches, nails, chains or any other item which may be used as a weapon. This does not include tools used by maintenance staff or contractors who may be performing repairs or maintenance on courthouse premises or facilities. Additionally, tools used by offices in the course of their operations are also exempted;
 - v. Alcohol, marijuana, illicit drugs or other intoxicating substances;
- b. Impermissible items will not be held for safekeeping by security personnel.
- c. These prohibitions do not apply to security personnel of the court, or officers of the Mason County Sheriff's Office, Ludington Police Department, the Michigan State Police, deputized court officers, conservation officers, Mason County animal control officers, or other law enforcement officers appearing in the performance of their official duties, if the officer is in uniform, or otherwise properly identified, unless the officer is on duty undercover. To be clear, this exception does not apply to off-duty officers who are in the building conducting their own personal court business.
- d. The Chief Judge may authorize additional exceptions under appropriate circumstances. Said exceptions and authority must be granted in writing and state the scope and duration of the exception. The Chief Judge will notify the Administrator of exceptions.

2. **Entering the Courthouse:** Building entrants shall access the courthouse at the lower East entrance to the building. All other access doors shall remain locked. Access shall not be given to entrants through any of these other/locked doors.

- a. Exceptions for entering the lower West entrance include:

- b. Persons in violation of this order may be held in contempt of court.

6. After-Hours Access to the Courthouse:

- a. After-hours courthouse usage and entry are permitted for department heads and elected officials. Access to the building by other employees, must be approved by the department head in writing with a copy of the approval to be provided to the Chief Judge and County Administrator. Department heads and elected officials should encourage employees seeking after-hours access to utilize remote access tools first.
- b. Any vendor or contractor that requires after-hours access must be accompanied by a department head/elected official.
- c. On duty Ludington Police Department officers and Mason County Sheriff's deputies shall have 24 hour access to the courthouse as an added measure of security.

B. Courtroom Security:

1. The level of courtroom security shall be determined by the Chief Judge, the assigned judge of a particular court, and the Mason County Sheriff's bailiff assigned to courthouse security detail, and will be commensurate with the nature of the proceedings, including any increased risk factor that may be associated with a particular case.
2. A bailiff may be assigned to a particular courtroom each day, as determined by the Chief Judge and the assigned judge to a particular court, taking into account the security needs of a particular court session.
3. When the Chief Judge or assigned judge believes that increased security is necessary for a specific case, they shall use their best efforts to contact the Mason County Sheriff Department 48 hours in advance of the proceeding to discuss and determine the appropriate level of security.
4. The Court recognizes the right of access by the public to a court proceeding. This right may only be limited as circumstances dictate pursuant to Michigan Court Rule 8.116(D)(1).

C. Gallery Seating Protocol and Courtroom Decorum:

1. The Chief Judge and/or assigned judge may limit public seating to promote courtroom safety and decorum.
2. Seating may be reserved for a victim and his/her family, as well as the defendant's family.
3. The presiding judge may limit opportunities for courtroom entrance and exit, while court is in session.

4. Important legal proceedings take place within a courthouse. Appropriate attire is required. A judge may require a litigant, witness, attorney or observer to leave the courtroom or adjourn a proceeding to comply with standards of courtroom decorum.
5. No food or drink shall be brought into a courtroom unless permitted by the presiding judge.

501 | Safety

- A. **Purpose:** To ensure a safe and healthy work environment for employees and visitors, the county has established a comprehensive workplace safety program. This program is a top priority for the county. The Maintenance Superintendent has responsibility for implementing, administering, monitoring, and evaluating the safety program. Its success depends on the alertness and personal commitment of all.
- B. **Communication on Safety:** The county provides employees with information about workplace safety and health issues through regular internal communication channels, including department head-employee meetings, bulletin board postings, memos, and other written communications.
 1. Some of the best safety improvement ideas come from employees. Those with ideas, concerns, or suggestions for improved safety in the workplace are encouraged to raise them with their elected official or department head, or with another elected official or department head, or bring them to the attention of the Maintenance Superintendent.
- C. **Training:** Employees and department heads receive periodic workplace safety training. The training covers potential safety and health hazards and safe work practices and procedures to eliminate or minimize hazards.
- D. **Reporting**
 1. Reports and concerns about workplace safety issues may be made anonymously if the employee wishes. All reports can be made without fear of reprisal.
 2. Employees must immediately report any unsafe condition to the appropriate elected official or department head.
 3. Employees who violate safety standards, who cause hazardous or dangerous situations, or who fail to report or, when applicable, remedy such situations, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
 4. In the event of an accident resulting in injury, regardless of the apparent severity of the injury, employees should immediately notify their supervisor and the county administrator, who serves as the insurance administrator. Such written reports are necessary and should be filed with the county administrator in order to comply with laws and initiate insurance and workers' compensation benefits procedures.
- E. **Safety Practices:** Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and exercise caution in all work activities. Some of the following practices will reduce the risk of losses due to fire:

1. Do not pile objects in walk areas.
2. Do not smoke in any county building. This is a violation of county policies.
3. Use flammable materials only under appropriate conditions.
4. Take the time to check all equipment and appliances at the close of each business day to make sure they are turned off.

F. Evacuation

1. All employees should leave the building whenever the fire alarm is activated and should remain outside the building until the responding fire department or emergency personnel gives the okay for re-entry.
 - a. All courthouse employees should gather at the northwest corner of the county courthouse property, near the flag pole and memorial.
 - b. Employees at other county buildings should discuss and decide on a mutual gathering location.
2. Each elected official or department head should establish a policy for their department concerning the manner of evacuation, safeguarding of office materials (files, cash on hand, etc.), and the responsibilities of each employee.

503 | Work Schedules

- A. The normal work schedule for the following office's employees is eight (8) hours a day, five days a week;
 1. Administration Department
 2. Building & Zoning Department
 3. Clerk's Office
 4. District Court Office
 5. Drain Commissioner's Engineering and Maintenance Technicians
 6. Equalization Department
 7. Friend of the Court Office
 8. Probate Court Office
 9. Prosecutor's Office
 10. Treasurer's Office
 11. Note: Some employees in these offices may be scheduled to work fewer hours.

- B. The regular work schedule for all other employees is seven hours a day, five days a week, or as established by the Board of Commissioners.
- C. Elected officials or department heads will advise employees of the times their schedules will typically begin and end. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as adjustments to the total hours scheduled each day and week.

505 | Smoking & Vaping

- A. **Purpose:** To protect and enhance indoor air quality and contribute to the health and well-being of all employees and citizens, Mason County government buildings and grounds shall be entirely smoke & vaping-free.
- B. **Policy**
 - 1. Smoking and vaping will be strictly prohibited within all county buildings, grounds, and public spaces, including conference rooms, reception areas, restrooms, stairwells, hallways, parking lots, county-owned vehicles, and workstations. This policy applies to all employees, clients, contractors, and visitors.
 - 2. Prominent signs displaying the following statement will be posted at all entrances and throughout county buildings: "Smoking and vaping are prohibited in all buildings, pursuant to the Michigan Clean Indoor Air Act."
 - 3. **Reporting**
 - a. The success of this policy will depend upon the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of smokers and nonsmokers. All employees share the responsibility for adhering to and enforcing the policy.
 - b. Persons observing a violation of this policy should bring it to the attention of their elected official or department head, maintenance supervisor, or the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee. Elected officials or department heads, the maintenance superintendent, or the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee receiving a complaint will investigate and take action to resolve the issue as soon as possible.
 - 4. **Violation:** Persons found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action(s) in the same manner and magnitude as violations of other county policies. A violation of this policy will be considered "inappropriate conduct" for purposes of disciplinary options under the personnel policies of the Mason County Board of Commissioners. Progressive discipline measures may be used in imposing punishment.

507 | Rest & Meal Periods

- A. **Rest Period**

1. Each workday, employees are provided with two (2) rest periods of fifteen (15) minutes in length. To the extent possible, rest periods will be provided in the middle of work periods.
2. Since this time is counted and paid as time worked, employees must not be absent from their workstations beyond the allotted rest period.

B. Meal Periods

1. All employees are provided with one (1) unpaid meal period of sixty (60) minutes in length each workday.
 - a. Elected Officials or Department Heads will schedule meal periods to accommodate operating requirements.
 - b. Employees will be relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions during meal periods and will not be compensated for that time.
2. Elected Officials or Department Heads are encouraged to schedule meal periods in a manner that will allow their office to remain open throughout the meal period.

509 | Overtime

- A. When operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, employees may be scheduled to work overtime hours. When possible, advance notification of these mandatory assignments will be provided to employees and the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee.
- B. All overtime work must receive the elected official's or department head's prior authorization and funds must be provided for it in the budget.
 1. Prior approval must be received from the Mason County Board of Commissioners if overtime is not authorized in an office's budget.
- C. Overtime compensation is paid to all nonexempt employees in accordance with federal and state wage and hour restrictions.
 1. Overtime pay is reported to the payroll clerk based on actual hours (straight-time) worked. The payroll clerk is responsible for converting overtime hours to one and a half (1.5) times the regular rate per one (1) hour of straight-time worked.
 2. Time off on sick leave, vacation leave, or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations.

511 | Use of Equipment & Vehicles

- A. **Purpose:** Equipment and vehicles essential in accomplishing job duties are expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

B. Reporting

1. Employees are expected to promptly report to their elected official or department head if any equipment, machines, tools, or vehicles appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent the deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others.
2. The elected official or department head can answer any questions about an employee's responsibility for the maintenance and care of equipment or vehicles used on the job.

C. Rules of Use: Employees authorized to use county vehicles shall abide by the following rules:

1. There will be no personal use of the vehicles.
2. Employees must obey all traffic laws and are personally responsible for all traffic tickets.
3. There will be no non-employee passengers without the written authorization signed by the employee's Elected Official or Department Head.
4. Employees shall not consume or possess any alcoholic beverages, nicotine products, narcotics, drugs, or controlled substances while in possession or operation of a County vehicle.

D. Violation of Policy: The improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment or vehicles, as well as excessive or avoidable traffic and parking violations, can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.**513 | Distracted Driving Policy**

- A. Purpose:** To set forth the policy of Mason County concerning the use of electronic devices by all employees who drive a vehicle while performing their duties and responsibilities on behalf of Mason County. This includes all devices, whether owned by Mason County or by the employee, and encompasses, but is not limited to, smartphones, PDAs, BlackBerrys, MP3 players, GPS devices, and two-way radios.
- B. Overview:** Mason County employs many individuals who use cell phones and other wireless communication devices to carry out their daily duties and responsibilities. Mason County recognizes that potential distractions may arise when cell phones and related devices are in use while operating a car, van, or truck (i.e., "moving vehicle"). In keeping with our obligation under federal and state health and safety laws to maintain a safe and healthful workplace, and to control potential risk to our employees, passengers, and the general public, Mason County has adopted this policy on the use of cell phones and similar devices by employees while operating a moving vehicle. This policy applies to employee use of both agency vehicles and private vehicles in the course of, and within the scope of, their employment.
1. Every employee is expected to exercise good judgment while driving a motor vehicle or other equipment, whether on the phone or not. Adopting these guidelines can help reduce potential liability, prevent possible injury, and perhaps save lives.

- C. Interpretation and Administration:** The interpretation and administration of this policy shall be the responsibility of the elected official or department head. It is the employee's responsibility to use electronic devices safely and adhere to all federal, state, and local rules and regulations regarding the use of electronic devices, including in-vehicle technologies (such as navigation systems) and other features. Current or pending legislation will be monitored by general counsel with respect to the regulation of cellular phones and related equipment by drivers to ensure ongoing compliance with all applicable legislation.
- D. Policy:** It shall be the policy of Mason County that:
1. Employees should be familiar with state laws and local ordinances that may apply to cell phone use within a moving vehicle. Local prohibition of cell phone use by law means employees are prohibited by this policy from using a cell phone or related devices.
 2. Employees must comply with [Michigan PA 300 of 1949 as amended](#).
 3. No employee is to engage in the use of a cell/mobile phone, engage in any form of text messaging, internet use, reading, or sending e-mails while operating a motor vehicle that is in motion. Emergency phone calls are the only exception, such as to summon "911" or other similar number for emergency assistance.
 4. Addresses or other information must be entered into a navigation or dispatch device prior to putting the vehicle in motion.
 5. Phone calls should be handled by the employee when the vehicle is not in motion. Allow calls to go to voicemail until the employee can safely pull off the road to respond.
 6. Employees using mobile phones must not discuss confidential issues while others are in the vehicle who do not have a "need to know" such information.
 7. Employees are expected to practice common phone courtesy and refrain from loud or offensive talk with others present.
 8. Employees who may have responsibilities for operating other agency equipment (powered lawn equipment, forklift trucks, golf carts, backhoes, or similar equipment) are prohibited from using cell phone while operating said equipment, unless such use is essential for the employee to perform his or her job duties.
 9. Employees should direct questions regarding this policy to their elected official or department head.
- E. Violation of Policy:** Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

515 | Emergency Closings

- A.** At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, power failures, or earthquakes can disrupt county operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of a work facility.

- B. If such an emergency occurs during nonworking hours, local radio will be asked to broadcast a notification of the closing. Such a determination shall be made by a committee composed of the chair of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee, the county clerk, and the county treasurer, upon consultation with the county sheriff and the maintenance superintendent.
 - 1. The committee will make its decision in time to have the announcement made on the 7:00 a.m. news broadcast at W.K.L.A., WMOM, K-Rock, and Big Dog radio stations. The committee will also notify the WZZM News, 7&4 News, and 9&10 News television stations.
 - a. The county clerk and treasurer will notify the radio and television stations.
 - 2. The closure announcement will include the conditions of closing and for what period of time.
 - 3. The county administrator's office will also post the closing on the county website.
- C. When operations are officially closed due to emergency conditions, the time off from scheduled work will be paid.
 - 1. Employees in essential operations may be asked to work on a day when operations are officially closed. In these circumstances, employees who work will receive regular pay.
 - 2. Employees who do not report for work if an office is not officially closed or closed without proper authorization shall not be paid for lost time.

517 | Business Travel Expenses

- A. The county will reimburse employees for reasonable business travel expenses incurred while on assignments away from the normal work location.
- B. All business travel must be approved in advance by the appropriate elected official or department head.
 - 1. Employees whose travel plans have been approved are responsible for arranging their own travel.
 - 2. When approved, the actual costs of travel, meals, lodging, and other expenses directly related to accomplishing business travel objectives will be reimbursed by the county. Employees are expected to limit expenses to reasonable amounts.
- C. Employees should prearrange their lodging accommodations so that they can obtain a county check to pay for lodging prior to traveling on county business so that the county can avoid paying sales tax.
 - 1. Tax-exempt forms can be obtained from the accounts payable clerk.
- D. Employees should check with the treasurer to determine if a county vehicle is available for use on their trip.
- E. Expenses that generally will be reimbursed include the following:

1. Cost of parking for travel, limited to thirty (30) minutes before and after the scheduled event, training, or meeting.
 2. Taxi fares, only when there is no less expensive alternative.
 3. Mileage costs for use of personal cars, only when less expensive transportation is not available.
 4. Cost of standard accommodations in mid-priced hotels, motels, or similar lodgings. This does not preclude individuals from staying at the host hotel of conventions or seminars.
 5. Charges for telephone calls, fax, and similar services required for business purposes.
 6. Tips not exceeding 15% of the total cost of a meal or 10% of a taxi fare. Any tips for the service of alcoholic beverages are not reimbursed.
- F.** Reimbursements for meals must include itemized receipts and shall not exceed the following charges:
1. Breakfast \$11.75 (For meals between 12:00 am and 11:00 am)
 2. Lunch \$11.75 (For meals between 11:00 am and 4:00 pm)
 3. Dinner \$28.00 (For meals between 4:00 pm and 12:00 am)
- G.** Charges considered unacceptable for reimbursement to an employee are as follows:
1. Personal goods and services
 2. Personal telephone calls
 3. Entertainment
 4. Alcoholic beverages
 5. Travel not related to county business
- H.** Employees who are involved in an accident while traveling on business must promptly report the incident to their elected official or department head.
- I.** Vehicles owned, leased, or rented by the County may not be used for personal use without prior approval.
- J.** With prior elected official or department head approval, employees on business travel may be accompanied by a family member or friend, when the presence of a companion will not interfere with successful completion of business objectives.
1. Generally, employees are also permitted to combine personal travel with business travel, as long as time away from work is approved.
 2. Additional expenses arising from such nonbusiness travel are the responsibility of the employee.
- K.** When travel is completed, employees should submit completed travel expense reports within fourteen (14) days. Original receipts for all individual expenses shall accompany reports.

- L. Employees should contact their elected official or department head for guidance and assistance on procedures related to travel arrangements, expense reports, reimbursement for specific expenses, or any other business travel issues.
- M. Abuse of this business travel expenses policy, including falsifying expense reports to reflect costs not incurred by the employee, can be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

519 | County Credit Card Policy

- A. **Authorization and Authority of the Chair of the Finance Committee:** The Chair of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee or their designee is authorized to secure the issuance of credit cards for use by selected county officials and employees and is responsible for the accounting, monitoring, retrieving, and generally overseeing compliance with this credit card policy.
 - 1. **Designation of Responsibilities:** The Chair of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee may designate any or all of their responsibilities under this policy to the county administrator, or the appropriate elected official or department head. Such designation must be done in writing and signed by the Chair of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee and the designated individual.
- B. **List of Credit Cards:** A list of all credit cards in use by county officials shall be maintained by the Chair of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee.
 - 1. The list to detail the:
 - a. Entity issuing the card
 - b. Name under which the card was issued
 - c. Account number, credit limit
 - d. Date issued
 - e. Persons who are authorized to use each credit card
 - 2. Each official or employee who has been issued a credit card shall sign the list indicating that he or she has received the credit card and has received and read a copy of this policy.
- C. **Credit Card Limits:** The total combined authorized credit limit of all credit cards issued to Mason County shall not exceed 1% of the total budget of the county for the current fiscal year.
- D. **Requesting a Credit Card:** Any elected official or department head seeking authorization to obtain a credit card or additional credit cards must make a written request to the Chair of the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee. A written request shall state the reason why the credit card or additional cards are needed.
- E. **Use of Credit Card(s)**

1. No employee may use a credit card without the knowledge and written permission of their elected official, department head, or their designee.
2. A credit card held in the name of the county and/or a department of the county shall be used only for the purchase of goods and services for the official business of the county. The use of credit cards is limited to the following circumstances:
 - a. Travels, meals, and accommodations while on county business;
 - b. Necessary expenses incurred in operating a county vehicle; and
 - c. Circumstances where it is impractical to secure a county check, but only when such purchases have been authorized, in writing, by the appropriate elected official or department head.
3. Personal use of county credit cards is strictly forbidden. A Department Head or employee inappropriately using a county credit card shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

F. Reporting Use of Credit Cards

1. County officials and employees who use a county credit card shall include a copy of the vendor's credit card slip with the request for payment submitted to the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee.
 - a. If no credit card slip was obtained that described the transaction, the employee shall submit a signed voucher that shows the name of the vendor or entity from which the goods or services were purchased, the date and amount of the transaction, the official business that required the transaction and the chart of account number indicating the line item to which the transaction is to be charged.
 - b. All credit card slips submitted for payment shall include this information as well.
 - c. Vouchers shall also include a statement explaining why a credit card slip was not obtained.
2. Failure to timely submit voucher packets so that payment can be made in time to avoid finance charges may cause a department's privilege to use the credit card to be revoked.

G. Review of Statements and Payment

1. The Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee of the County Board shall review each credit card statement to ensure that transactions comply with this policy.
 - a. Any transactions that appear on statements without documentation from a credit card slip or signed voucher shall be immediately discussed with the appropriate elected official or department head.
2. Payment to the entity issuing the credit card shall not be made until approved by the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee of the County Board of Commissioners.

3. Credit card balances shall be paid in full within the issuing credit card company's allotted time frame so as not to incur finance charges. At no time shall this exceed thirty (30) days from the statement date. The only exception to this would be under the protest filed with the credit card company for an invalid charge.
- H. Loss of Credit Card:** An official or employee who is issued a credit card is responsible for its protection and custody. If a credit card is lost or stolen, the entity that issued the card shall be immediately notified to cancel it. The Chair of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee shall also be immediately notified.
- I. Returning Credit Card:** An official or employee who was issued a credit card shall return the credit card to the Chair of the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee upon termination of their employment or service with Mason County.

521 | Visitors in the Workplace

- A. Friends, relatives, and children of employees are not permitted in the work areas without the prior approval of the appropriate elected official or department head.
- B. Employees are responsible for the conduct and safety of their visitors.
- C. Visits should be restricted to a reasonable time as determined by the appropriate elected official or department head.
- D. Excessive visits can be disruptive to the work area and are discouraged.

523 | Use of Personal Vehicles

- A. All county employees authorized to use their personal vehicles for county business are entitled to payment for mileage. The mileage rate will be that rate established by the Internal Revenue Service (Permissible Business Mileage).
- B. Requests for reimbursement of mileage shall be submitted to the payroll clerk and be accompanied by an official travel log bearing the following:
 1. Employee(s)
 2. Date(s) of travel
 3. Purpose of travel
 4. Site-to-site mileage, including a map from the original location to the destination with the least amount of mileage for the selected route.
 5. Elected official or department head approval
- C. Personal vehicles used on county business are not covered by county insurance. Employees who use their own vehicles are required to purchase auto insurance, as mandated by state law.

- D. Employees are personally responsible for any traffic tickets and any accidental damage to their personal vehicles.

525 | Life-Threatening Illness in the Workplace

- A. Employees with life-threatening illnesses, such as cancer, heart disease, and AIDS, often wish to continue their usual pursuits, including work, to the extent allowed by their condition. The county supports these endeavors as long as employees can meet acceptable performance standards. As in the case of other disabilities, the county will make reasonable accommodations in accordance with all legal requirements to allow qualified employees with life-threatening illnesses to perform the essential functions of their jobs.
- B. Medical information on individual employees is treated confidentially.
 - 1. The county will take reasonable precautions to protect such information from inappropriate disclosure.
 - 2. Elected officials, department heads, and other employees have a responsibility to respect and maintain the confidentiality of employee medical information.
 - 3. Anyone inappropriately disclosing such information is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
- C. Employees with questions or concerns about life-threatening illnesses are encouraged to contact the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee for information and referral to appropriate services and resources.

527 | Animals in County Facilities

- A. Animals not employed as service animals (police dogs, leaders for the blind, or other animals assisting the disabled) are not permitted in Mason County facilities as a matter of security, health, and safety.
- B. Any requests for exceptions under this policy or accommodations under the American's with Disabilities Act must be made in writing to the county administrator for consideration by the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

601 | Employee Conduct and Work Rules

- A. To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, the county expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization.
- B. It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:
 - 1. Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
 - 2. Falsification of timekeeping records
 - 3. Working under the influence or impairment of alcohol or illegal drugs
 - 4. Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment
 - 5. Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
 - 6. Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
 - 7. Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned or customer-owned property
 - 8. Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct
 - 9. Violation of safety or health rules
 - 10. Smoking or vaping in prohibited areas
 - 11. Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
 - 12. Possession, transfer or sale of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace
 - 13. Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice
 - 14. Unauthorized absence from workstation during the workday
 - 15. Excessive tardiness
 - 16. Inappropriate attire and grooming habits
 - 17. Acceptance of gifts or gratuity from any individual or agency that may be construed as influencing a decision of a County employee is prohibited
 - 18. Employees are prohibited from using the County's address as their permanent mailing address unless the employee resides at a County facility
 - 19. Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other employer-owned equipment

20. Violation of personnel policies
 21. Unsatisfactory performance or conduct
- C. Any employee, upon action by their respective elected official, may be discharged from employment for violating these employee conduct and work rules. An appointed department head, with the approval of the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee, may also exercise the above discharge.

603 | Progressive Discipline

- A. **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to state the county's position on administering equitable and consistent discipline for unsatisfactory conduct in the workplace. The most effective disciplinary measure is one that does not need to be enforced and stems from good leadership and fair supervision at all levels of employment.
- B. **Overview:** The county's own best interest lies in ensuring fair treatment of all employees and in making certain that disciplinary actions are prompt, uniform, and impartial. The primary purpose of any disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence, and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future. Although employment with the county is based on mutual consent and both the employee and the county have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause or advance notice, the county may use progressive discipline at its discretion.
- C. **Policy:** Disciplinary action may involve any of four (4) steps, depending on the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences. There may be circumstances when one or more steps are bypassed.
1. These steps may include:
 - a. Verbal warning
 - b. Written warning
 - c. Suspension with or without pay
 - d. Termination of employment
 2. Progressive discipline means that, with respect to most disciplinary problems, these steps will normally be followed: a first offense may call for a verbal warning; a written warning may follow a subsequent offense; another offense may lead to a suspension; and, still another offense may then lead to termination of employment.
 3. The county recognizes that certain types of employee problems are serious enough to justify either a suspension or, in extreme situations, termination of employment, without going through the usual progressive discipline steps.
 4. While it is impossible to list every type of behavior that may be deemed a serious offense, the **EMPLOYEE CONDUCT AND WORK RULES (601)** policy includes examples of problems that may result in immediate suspension or termination of employment. However, the issues listed are not all necessarily serious offenses, but may be examples of unsatisfactory conduct that will trigger progressive discipline.

- D. Conclusion:** By using progressive discipline, we hope that most employee problems can be corrected at an early stage, benefiting both the employee and the county.

605 | Sexual & Other Unlawful Harassment

- A. Purpose:** The county is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated. As an example, sexual harassment (both overt and subtle) is a form of employee misconduct that is demeaning to another person, undermines the integrity of the employment relationship, and is strictly prohibited.

B. Reporting

1. Any employee who wants to report an incident of sexual or other unlawful harassment should promptly report the matter to his or her Elected Official or Department Head.
2. If the Elected Official or Department Head is unavailable or the employee believes it would be inappropriate to contact that person, the employee should immediately contact the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee or any other member of management.
3. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal.
4. Any elected official or department head who becomes aware of possible sexual or other unlawful harassment should promptly advise the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee or any member of management who will handle the matter in a timely and confidential manner.

C. Violation of Policy

1. Anyone engaging in sexual or other unlawful harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
2. The County Board of Commissioners shall have the power to take such legal action as provided by law in regards to an elected official in violation of this policy to protect the county from liability.

607 | Attendance & Punctuality

- A.** To maintain a safe and productive work environment, the county expects employees to be reliable and to be punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on other employees and the county. In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, they should notify their elected official or department head as soon as possible in advance of the anticipated tardiness or absence.
- B.** Poor attendance and excessive tardiness are disruptive. Either may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

609 | Personal Appearance

- A. Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and impact the business image the county presents to customers and visitors.
- B. During business hours, employees are expected to present themselves in a clean and neat appearance and to dress according to the requirements of their respective positions. Employees who appear for work inappropriately dressed will be sent home and directed to return to work in proper attire. Under such circumstances, employees will not be compensated for their time away from work.
- C. Consult your elected official or department head if you have questions as to what constitutes appropriate attire.

611 | Return of Property

- A. Employees are responsible for all property, materials, and written information issued to them or in their possession or under their control.
- B. Employees must return all the county property on or before their last day of work.
 - 1. Where permitted by applicable laws, the county may withhold from the employee's check or final paycheck the cost of any items that are not returned when required.
 - 2. The county may also take all necessary action to recover or protect its property.

613 | Resignation

- A. Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment with the county. Although advance notice is not required, the county requests at least two (2) weeks' written notice of resignation from all employees.
- B. If an employee fails to provide advance notice as requested, they may be considered ineligible for rehire.

615 | Solicitation

- A. In an effort to ensure a productive and harmonious work environment, persons not employed by the county may not solicit or distribute literature in the workplace at any time for any purpose.
- B. The county recognizes that employees may have interests in events and organizations outside the workplace. However, employees may not solicit or distribute literature concerning these activities during working time.
 - 1. Working time does not include lunch periods, work breaks, or any other periods in which employees are not on duty.

- C. In addition, the posting of written solicitations on county bulletin boards is prohibited. Bulletin boards are reserved for official organization communications on such items as:
1. Employee announcements
 2. Internal memoranda
 3. Job openings
 4. Organization announcements
 5. Workers' compensation insurance information
 6. State disability insurance/unemployment insurance information
 7. Meeting notices
 8. Labor law posters

617 | Drug-Free Workplace Policy and Statement

A. Objective

1. To provide all county employees with a safe, drug-free workplace and to promote high standards of employee health.
2. To carry out the county's basic responsibility to serve the public safely and without undue interruption.
3. To comply with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988.

B. Policy and Statement

1. Employees are the county's most valuable resource, and for that reason, their health and safety are of paramount concern.
2. The illegal manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of narcotics, drugs, or controlled substances while on the job, on county property, or in county vehicles will result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Employees shall be informed of the preceding statement and, as a condition of employment, shall agree to notify the Employer of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) days after such a conviction. The county will notify the federal contracting agency within ten (10) days after receipt of such notice of conviction.
3. The illegal manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of narcotics, drugs, or controlled substances off-duty and off county premises may also result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge. These actions can affect on-the-job performance and the confidence of the public and the government in the county's ability to meet its responsibilities.

4. Alcohol is prohibited on county property, vehicles, equipment, and operations. Alcohol use that adversely affects an employee's job performance or the public and/or regulatory perception of the county is not acceptable.
5. The legal use of controlled substances prescribed by a licensed physician is not prohibited, but employees in selected positions designated by the county are required to make such use known to an appropriate county representative, such as, but not limited to, drivers, operators, licensed personnel, and electricians.
6. Violation of the county's policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
7. Law enforcement officials will be notified whenever illegal drugs are found.
8. Whenever possible, the county will assist in overcoming drug, alcohol, and other problems that may adversely affect employee job performance.
9. In cases of confirmed illegal drug use, sale, or possession on or off county premises, operating vehicles and/or equipment while under the influence, appropriate measures will be taken to determine the scope of the problem.

C. Responsibility of Employees

1. Compliance with this drug-free workplace statement is a condition of continued employment.
2. Employees who are convicted of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace must notify the county administrator of the conviction within five (5) days. Failure to notify the county administrator of such a conviction will result in discharge.

D. Policy Responsibility

1. All elected officials or department heads are responsible for being alert to possible violations of this policy by employees under their supervision.
2. The county administrator shall assist elected officials or department heads faced with a need to act under this policy.
3. The county administrator will oversee the overall application of this policy and back up the elected officials or department heads' implementation of it as needed.
4. The county administrator will notify federal agencies under contract with the county within ten (10) days after receiving notice of a conviction as noted above.
5. Employees with questions on this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use in the workplace should raise their concerns with their elected official, department head, or the county administrator without fear of reprisal.

619 | Social Media

- A. Overview:** At Mason County, we understand that social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family, friends, and co-workers around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To help you make informed decisions about your social media use, we have established guidelines for responsible social media use. This policy applies to all employees who work for Mason County or one of its subsidiary agencies.
- B. Definition:** In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. “Social media” includes all means of communicating or posting information or content for any sort of the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board, or a chat room whether or not associated or affiliated with Mason County, as well as any other form of electronic communication.
- C. Employee Responsibilities and Considerations:** The same principles and guidelines found in Mason County policies apply to your activities online. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online.
1. Before creating online content, consider the risks and rewards involved. Keep in mind that any of your conduct that adversely affects your job performance or the performance of fellow co-workers, or otherwise adversely affects members of the public, contractors, people who work on behalf of Mason County, or Mason County's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
 2. Carefully read these guidelines and related policies, including, but not limited to, Mason County's policies concerning ethics, harassment, discrimination, computer equipment use, information systems, etc., to ensure that your postings are consistent with these policies.
 - a. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
 3. Always be fair and courteous to fellow co-workers, persons who serve on boards or commissions, elected and appointed officials, members of the public, contractors or people who work on behalf of Mason County.
 - a. Keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers or by utilizing our Open Door Policy than by posting complaints to a social media outlet.
 - b. If you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video, or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening, or intimidating, that disparage members of the public, co-workers, or contractors,

or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion, or any other status protected by law or Mason County policy.

4. Make sure you are always honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly.
 - a. Be open about any previous posts you have altered.
 - b. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything, therefore, even deleted postings can be searched.
 - c. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about Mason County, fellow co-workers, members of the public, contractors, people working on behalf of Mason County, competitors, or others.
5. Maintain the confidentiality of Mason County trade secrets and private or confidential information. Trade secrets may include information regarding the development of systems, processes, products, know-how, and technology. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures, or other internal business-related confidential communications.
6. Do not create a link from your blog, website, or other social networking site to a Mason County website or social media page/profile without identifying yourself as a Mason County employee.
7. Express only your personal opinions.
 - a. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for Mason County.
 - b. If Mason County is a subject of the content you are creating, be clear and open about the fact that you are an employee and make it clear that your views do not represent those of Mason County, fellow co-workers, citizens, contractors, or people working on behalf of Mason County.
 - c. It is best to include a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Mason County."
8. Refrain from using social media while on work time or on county-provided equipment, unless it is work-related as authorized by your elected official or department head or consistent with Mason County's computer equipment use policy.
9. Do not use Mason County email addresses to register on social networks, blogs, or other online tools utilized for personal use.
10. Any conduct pertaining to this policy that adversely affects job performance, the performance of a co-worker, or otherwise adversely affects members of the public, or those who work on behalf of or represent Mason County, may result in disciplinary action.

- D. Reporting:** Mason County prohibits taking adverse action against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation.
 - 1.** Any employee who retaliates against another co-worker for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- E.** Employees should not speak to the media on Mason County's behalf without contacting the Public Information Officer (PIO), who is the county administrator. All media inquiries should be directed to the PIO.
- F.** If you have questions or need further guidance, please contact your elected official, department head, or the county administrator.

INFORMATION & TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

701 | Network Hardware and Software Policy

- A. Overview:** Asset Management is the process of receiving, documenting, and eventually disposing of equipment. It is critically important to maintain up-to-date inventory and asset controls to ensure computer equipment locations and dispositions are well known. Lost or stolen equipment often contains sensitive data. Proper asset management procedures and protocols provide documentation that aids in recovery, replacement, investigative, and insurance activities.
- B. Purpose:** The purpose of the County of Mason Asset Management Policy is to establish the rules for the control of hardware, software applications, and information used by the County of Mason.
- C. Scope:** The County of Mason Asset Management Policy applies to individuals who are responsible for the use, purchase, implementation, and/or maintenance of County of Mason Information Resources.
- D. Policy**
 - 1. Hardware, Software, Applications, and Data**
 - a.** The Mason County Computer Network Advisory Board must approve all network hardware, software, and applications.
 - b.** Software used by County of Mason employees, contractors, and/or other approved third parties working on behalf of the County of Mason must be properly licensed.
 - c.** If there are any questions about whether your software/application is network-related, please contact the Mason County Director of Information Technology.
 - d.** Cloud computing applications must be used in compliance with all laws and regulations concerning the information involved, e.g., personally identifiable information (PII), protected health information (PHI), financial data, etc.
 - e.** Hardware and network-wide software inventories must be maintained continually and reconciled no less than annually by the Director of Information Technology. Individual departmental program application inventories shall be maintained continually by each elected official/department head.
 - f.** All County of Mason technology assets must be formally classified with ownership assigned.
 - g.** Maintenance and repair of organizational assets must be performed, logged, and managed by the County of Mason Director of Information Technology in a timely manner.
 - h.** Upon termination of employment, contract, or agreement, all County of Mason technology assets must be returned to the County of Mason Director of Information Technology.
 - i.** Confidential data should only be stored on devices that are encrypted.

- j. All decommissioned technology assets must be stored in a secure area prior to destruction.
- k. All decommissioned technology assets must be tracked and documented by the Director of Information Technology.

E. Violation of Policy

1. Personnel found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and related civil or criminal penalties.
2. Any vendor, consultant, or contractor found to have violated this policy may be subject to sanctions up to and including removal of access rights, termination of contract(s), and related civil or criminal penalties.

703 | Employee Termination IT Checklist

- A. **Overview:** The Mason County Network is essential to maintaining our productivity. All Mason County employees are provided computer network access, interior and/or exterior door access, and telephone system access. The type of access for any given employee is determined by the specific office's needs in which they are employed.
- B. **Purpose:** The purpose of this procedure is to define the process for the removal of a County of Mason Employee from the county computer network, interior and/or exterior door access and telephone system. This procedure is designed to minimize the potential exposure to the County of Mason from damages that may result from unauthorized use of the County of Mason's resources. Damages include the loss of sensitive or confidential data, intellectual property, damage to the County of Mason's public image, damage to critical internal systems, and fines or other financial liabilities incurred as a result of those losses.
- C. **Scope:** This checklist applies to all terminated County of Mason employees with County of Mason-owned workstations, laptops, telephones, and/or key cards used to conduct the business needs of the County of Mason.
- D. **Procedure**
 1. **Notification of Termination** – When an employee terminates employment, the departmental manager/department head/elected official notifies the director of information technology of the employee's name and date of termination. As an additional verification, the Mason County Payroll Department notifies the director of information technology of any employee who is/has terminated employment with the County of Mason.
 2. **Disable MFA** – this eliminates the employee from gaining access to the network from an off-site computer, as well as on-site.
 3. **Remove employee access in Active Directory** – This is accomplished by disabling the account in Active Directory as well as changing the password as a secondary denial of access.

The employee remains “disabled” in Active Directory for 365 days post-employment. If there are no court actions pending or other internal reasons to keep the employees' digital information, the account is deleted after one (1) year post-employment. The director of information technology confirms with the departmental manager/department head/elected official prior to deletion to ensure there is no need to keep the account past one (1) year post-employment. Additionally, there is a note added to the Active Directory account listing the date the employee was terminated.

4. **Removal of employee from email access and the Global Address List** – Upon request by the departmental manager/department head/elected official, the employee's email is forwarded to the departmental manager/department head/elected official and/or his/her designee. An “out of office” message is also placed in the employee's email box for a period of up to one (1) year.
5. **Recover county-owned computer equipment** – If the employee was allowed to work remotely or has other computer equipment, all must be returned to the departmental manager/department head/elected official. The director of information technology verifies this. The computer equipment is then repurposed for the next employee filling the vacancy in that department.
6. **Terminate access to voicemail/extension** – The Mitel Communicator password and voicemail password are changed, and the extension is listed as vacant until such time as a new employee is hired/starts. Upon request by the departmental manager/department head/elected official, the employee’s telephone extension is forwarded to the departmental manager/department head/elected official and/or his/her designee.
7. **Revoke building/office access** – Key cards are immediately disabled upon termination of the employee on the S2 Netbox. If the key card is returned to the departmental manager/department head/elected official or the Director of Information Technology, the card is repurposed for another employee. If the keycard is not returned, it is disabled and labeled as disabled/lost.
8. **Termination List** – An Excel list is kept by the director of information technology, chronologically listing all terminated employees. This list is updated as needed and is reviewed on a minimum of a monthly basis. The listing shows the termination date, name of the employee, date to delete the account in Active Directory, whether the employee resigned, was fired, or retired, and a space for additional notes.
9. **Responsibilities of Employers** –
 - a. All elected officials and department heads are responsible for ensuring that office-specific computer program access has been reviewed and terminated.
 - b. Elected officials and department heads in county buildings not serviced by a key card system are required to secure the physical keys for those buildings.

705 | Remote Access Services Policy

- A. Overview:** Remote access to our network is essential to maintain our productivity, but in many cases this remote access originates from networks that may already be compromised or are at a significantly lower security posture than our network. While these remote networks are beyond the control of the County of Mason policy, we must mitigate these external risks to the best of our ability.
- B. Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to define rules and requirements for connecting to the County of Mason Network from any host. These rules and requirements are designed to minimize the potential exposure to the County of Mason from damages that may result from unauthorized use of the County of Mason's resources. Damages include the loss of sensitive or confidential data, intellectual property, damage to public image, damage to critical County of Mason internal systems, and fines or other financial liabilities incurred as a result of those losses.
- C. Scope:** This policy applies to all County of Mason employees with a County of Mason-owned computer or workstation used to connect to the County of Mason Network. This policy applies to remote access connections used to do work on behalf of the County of Mason, including reading or sending email, accessing departmental programs, and using shared drives/printers. This policy covers any and all technical implementations of remote access used to connect to the County of Mason Network.
- D. Policy:** It is the responsibility of the County of Mason employees with remote access privileges to the County of Mason Network to ensure that their remote access connection is given the same consideration as the users' on-site connection to the County of Mason Network.
1. When accessing the County of Mason Network from a personal computer, Authorized Users are responsible for preventing access to any County of Mason computer resources or data by non-Authorized Users. Performance of illegal activities through the County of Mason Network by any user (Authorized or otherwise) is prohibited. The Authorized User bears responsibility for and consequences of misuse of their access. For further information and definitions, see the *Use of Internet and Online Services Policy located in the County of Mason Personnel Policy*.
 2. Authorized Users will not use County of Mason Network resources to access the Internet for outside business or personal interests.
 3. **Requirements:**
 - a. Secure remote access must be strictly controlled with encryption (i.e., Virtual Private Networks (VPNs), Two-Factor Authentication (2fa)) and strong passphrases.
 - b. Authorized Users shall protect their login and password, even from family members.
 - c. Users shall either log off or lock their workstations when unattended. Locked workstations shall remain locked until the user re-authenticates.

- d. While using a County of Mason-owned computer to connect to the County of Mason Network remotely, Authorized Users shall ensure the remote host is not connected to any other network at the same time.
- e. County of Mason-owned computers and equipment shall be protected from theft.
- f. Use of external resources to conduct County of Mason business must be approved in advance by the Mason County Director of Information Technology and the appropriate elected official or department head.
- g. All hosts that are connected to the County of Mason internal network via remote access technologies must use the most up-to-date anti-virus software, which includes personal computers.

4. Rules of Behavior:

- I understand that I have been given access to the County of Mason Network Remote Services to perform my official duties.
- I will not attempt to access data, information, or applications that I am not authorized to access, nor bypass access control measures.
- I will not provide or knowingly allow other individuals to use my account credentials to access the County of Mason Network.
- To prevent and deter others from gaining unauthorized access to sensitive resources, I will log off or lock my computer workstation or will use a passphrase-protected screensaver whenever I step away from my work area, even for a short time, and I will log off when I leave for the day.
- To prevent others from obtaining my passphrase via “shoulder surfing”, I will shield my keyboard from view as I enter my passphrase.
- I agree to immediately inform my Department Head and the Mason County Director of Information Technology if I have reason to believe my account access passphrase has been compromised.
- I will not engage in, encourage, or conceal any hacking or cracking, denial of service, unauthorized tampering, or unauthorized attempted use of any data or component within the County of Mason Network.
- I agree to inform the Mason County Director of Information Technology when access to the County of Mason Network is no longer required.
- I agree that I have completed all required training in the past twelve (12) months as provided by the Mason County Director of Information Technology.

1. Accountability

- I understand that I have no expectation of privacy while using any services or programs on the County of Mason Network.

- I understand that I will be held accountable for my actions while accessing and using the County of Mason Network, including any other connected systems and IT resources.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to protect sensitive information from disclosure to unauthorized person or groups.
- I understand that I must comply with all software copyrights pertaining to the use of the County of Mason Network.
- I will promptly report IT security incidents or incidents of suspected fraud, waste or misuse of systems to the Mason County Director of Information Technology and/or the Mason County Computer Network Advisory Board.

Rules of Behavior Statement of Acknowledgement

I have read and agree to comply with the requirements of these Rules of Behavior. I understand that the terms of this agreement are a condition of my initial and continued access to the County of Mason Network and related services and that if I fail to abide by the terms of these Rules of Behavior, my access to any and all County of Mason Network information systems may be terminated and I may be subject to criminal or civil prosecution. I have read and presently understand the above conditions and restrictions concerning my access.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

707 | Network Training Policy

- A. All Mason County Employees will be required to complete a fifteen (15)-minute network-safety training every quarter.
- B. If any employee does not complete the training prior to the official due date, the employee's network account will be locked.
 - 1. To unlock their account, the employee will be required to contact the Director of Information Technology, who will provide a temporary password to complete the required training. If the training is not completed within twenty-four (24) hours of being granted the temporary password, the employee's network credentials will be revoked.
 - 2. Furthermore, unless good cause is shown, the employee may face permanent denial of computer network access.
 - 3. A revocation of network credentials and/or a permanent denial of computer network access may be grounds for disciplinary action by the employee's department.

709 | Email Retention Policy

- A. **Overview:** Email is a tool used to exchange messages and documents via telecommunications equipment and computers. Email messages are public records if they document a public employee's official duties.
- B. **Purpose:** Email records are used to support a variety of official communications and processes. There is no single retention period for email. Each message must be evaluated for its content and purpose to determine the length of time it must be retained following the appropriate Record Retention and Disposal Schedule. Just like paper records, email messages may be evidence of decisions and activities. Both senders and recipients of email messages must determine if a particular message should be retained to document their role in agency activities.
- C. **Scope:** The County of Mason Email Retention Policy applies to all county employees who utilize county-owned email to conduct business on behalf of the county.
- D. **Policy:** Michigan law requires that all public records, regardless of format, be listed on an approved Record Retention and Disposal Schedule. Each Department must abide by its departmental Record Retention and Disposal Schedule as provided by the State of Michigan.
 - 1. Please reference the following for more information:
<https://www.michigan.gov/dtmb/services/recordsmanagement/schedules/glocal>

711 | Mason County Wireless Internet Policy

- A. **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to identify procedures for maintaining the security requirements of the Mason County Network in regards to the wireless access points.

B. This policy shall be reviewed and/or revised by the **Mason County Computer Network Advisory Board (MCCNAB)** as needed to maintain the security access control measures of the wireless access points to the Mason County Network.

- 1.** MCCNAB has established wireless access to the internet for public users and to the Mason County Network for county employees. Access to the wireless network is available through wireless access points in the Mason County Courthouse and the Mason County Sheriff's Department.

C. Policy

1. Public User WLAN

- a.** While the **Wireless Local Area Network (WLAN)** with access to the internet for public users has a broadcasted signal, it is controlled by a security key. This security key will be changed at least every six (6) months by the Mason County Computer Network Administrator. The current security key will be provided to the following departments:

Mason County Sheriff's Office

Mason County Emergency Management

Prosecuting Attorney District

Court Circuit Court

- b.** These departments may allow visitors to access the internet through the public WLAN. This WLAN has been configured on the firewall only to allow users to access the internet through the network. By using this wireless access, users agree to abide by the terms of Mason County's Acceptable Use Policy, which governs the use of county-owned resources. County personnel are prohibited from assisting with the configuration of privately owned computers.

2. Mason County Users WLAN

- a.** The secondary wireless access point has a masked signal. Each computer that wishes to access the network through this WLAN must be configured to find the signal. This WLAN provides users with full access to all resources on the Mason County Network. This WLAN will be configured on computers that have been approved by the appropriate department head or elected official. The security key for this shall be changed by the Mason County Computer Network Administrator as needed to maintain network security and minimize threats to the network. In addition, any County employee who has county equipment configured for wireless should have their county computer confiscated and network profile deactivated upon employment termination.

- b. The following individuals are authorized to configure computers for access to this WLAN:
 - i. Mason County Computer Network Administrator
 - ii. Mason County Network First Responders
 - iii. Mason County Emergency Management Coordinator

713 | Use of Cellular Telephone Policy

- A. Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to establish a policy, guideline, and criteria which will apply to all elected officials and employees for the acquisition and use of cellular telephones for Mason County business.
1. Cellular telephones can enhance public safety and administrative efficiency. The cost of such technology must be managed as the Mason County Board of Commissioners fulfills its obligation to conduct county business efficiently and responsibly. This policy aims to address both needs.
 2. In recent years, the Mason County Sheriff's Office has utilized cellular phones as an integral part of its law enforcement operations. Digital telephones prevent eavesdropping. For elected officials and department heads, emergencies can be communicated to key employees away from home during evenings and weekends. Buildings and Grounds employees depend on cellular telephones to stay in touch as they are constantly on the move among the county facilities.

B. Policy

1. **Inventory of Cell Phones:** The elected officials and department heads shall maintain listings of all cellular phone equipment, including whether the phone was leased or purchased, cellular phone number, billings, length of contracts, etc. All contracts shall provide, for each individual cellular number, a monthly log of numbers called and the corresponding charges for each call.
2. **Purchase or lease of cellular phones:** After the effective date of this policy, all cellular phone leases or purchases shall be explicitly itemized within departmental budgets. Contracts for cellular coverage must be authorized and executed by the Board of Commissioners. Employees shall maintain their cellular equipment in working condition and report any loss or destruction of such equipment to their supervisors immediately.
3. **Use of County Cellular Phones:** Elected officials and department heads shall be responsible for the usage and billing of cellular telephones within their respective offices. Any county employee having the use of a Mason County cellular phone shall observe the following restrictions in its usage. Failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

- a. When the county employee leaves the office during normal business hours, the employee shall have the county's cellular phone turned on so that communication can continue with that employee. When outside the office, the employee shall carry the cellular phone at all times, in case of emergency.
 - i. Elected officials and department heads may direct employees to check departmental cellular phones out when on-call and log all transfers of cellular phones among employees for temporary use.
 - ii. Elected officials and department heads, may direct or request key employees with cellular telephones to remain available via the cellular phone beyond normal business hours.
 - b. County cellular phones may not be used for personal reasons. Employee personal telephone calls, texts, and other forms of communication are prohibited except for emergency phone calls.
 - c. County cellular phone numbers shall be made available to appropriate county staff to facilitate increased access to staff.
 - d. The elected official and department head shall manage cellular phone usage cost-effectively. The elected official and department head is encouraged to assign cellular phones on a rotating checkout basis and to remove cellular phone privileges in response to changing needs or inappropriate usage.
 - e. Employees shall not use cellular phones within 100 feet of any medical-electrical equipment, oxygen, ventilators, or I.V., or gasoline pumps.
 - f. Employees shall exercise due care to protect cellular phones from theft and extreme weather, including keeping cellular phones in temperature-controlled, secure locations, whether within or outside county offices.
4. **Use of Employee's Private Cellular Phones for County Business:** With the elected official's and department head's authorization and appropriate documentation, the county shall reimburse all county employees that use their personal phones for county business 50% of the monthly cost of the phone up to a value not to exceed \$50.00.
5. **Criteria for Acquisition and Use of Cellular Phones:** For a county employee to be eligible to acquire or use a cellular telephone, any one (1) of the following three (3) criteria shall be met: safety, emergency, and/or efficiency of operations.

715 | Mason County Website Link Policy

- A. **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to ensure proper and consistent linkage to the Mason County Governmental Website.
- B. **Policy**

1. Requests for providing links to the www.masoncounty.net homepage must comply with one (1) of the following:
 - a. The link must be to a governmental agency and/or
 - b. The link must be to a local non-profit resource.
2. All requests must be made in writing (paper or electronic) to the Director of Information Technology or the MCCNAB board.
3. All requests shall be forwarded to the MCCNAB Chair, who has the authority to determine compliance with the policy and notify the requesting party of their decision.
4. Mason County reserves the right to remove any broken link.

717 | Computer Network Chargebacks

- A. Policy:** The following policy is established to outline a procedure for allocating non-network computer-related service costs to county departments.
1. The Network Operation & Maintenance Fund was established to provide for the operation and maintenance of the Mason County Network. The Network is funded using cost allocation assessments to the various departments on the Network, based on the number of email boxes utilized by each department as of January 1st of each year.
 2. The Network consists of operating and maintaining the following:
 - a. servers;
 - b. switches, hubs and routers;
 - c. data cabling within and between the Courthouse, Jail, Jail Annex, Airport, Animal Control, and Mason County Parks;
 - d. e-mail and internet service;
 - e. employee login, password and user group maintenance; and
 - f. e-mail and cyber security training;
 3. Individual workstations and their associated costs are not a part of the Network. Non-network related costs include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. purchase of new equipment or replacement equipment;
 - b. removing workstations from the Network;
 - c. installing or removing software from workstations; and
 - d.
 - e. installing or removing local printers, print servers and print shares.

4. The network administrator shall ensure that all licensed software is removed from each individual workstation prior to that workstation being taken out of county service.
5. Non-network related costs that must be performed by or coordinated through the Network support vendor on a chargeback basis include the following:
 - a. configuring workstations, print shares and print servers for use on the Network;
 - b. new data cable drops in individual departments; and
 - c. specialized software installed on Network servers
6. **Replacement Equipment**
 - a. Replacement workstations, printers, etc. may be purchased subject to Board of Commissioners budget approval and placed in service without Network Advisory Board approval provided that such equipment is network compatible and is configured in accordance with adopted network standards and this Policy.
7. **New Equipment**
 - a. Additional workstations may be added to the network only with Board of Commissioners approval.

719 | Use of Internet & Online Services Policy

- A. The Mason County Board of Commissioners authorizes the use of the Internet and online services for the support of county tasks when necessary. The Board has developed these services to enhance the ability of the county offices to provide high-quality information to Mason County residents, to increase the efficiency of communications within/between government offices, and to expand the county's responsiveness to the public.
 1. **Use and Misuse:** The Internet and online services provided by Mason County are established for public purposes to assist employees in conducting the business of the county. Use of the Internet services provided by Mason County may be revoked at any time for unacceptable use. The County retains the right to keep, retrieve, and monitor all access to Internet and online service activity, including e-mail messages sent to or from the County's gateway.
 2. **Conformance with Operational Procedures:** Restrictions may be placed on use of the Internet or online services to protect the County and its resources. Downloading of information from the Internet or opening file attachments from e-mail messages shall be done in accordance with standards and procedures, which shall be established by the Mason County Computer Network Advisory Board, and are designed to protect the County's equipment and software and to limit potential liabilities. Failure to comply with these standards and procedures by an employee may result in the revocation of Internet and/or online service privileges or disciplinary action.

- 3. Responsibility of Elected Officials/Department Heads:** Each Elected Official and Department Head must accept the responsibility to uphold and enforce this Policy, and subsequent Procedures and Standards as may be established, before Internet or online services are utilized within their respective offices.
- 4. Identification of County Resources:** The use of county resources shall be clearly indicated in all communications utilizing Internet and online services.
 - a. User Registration/Acceptance of Policy:** The name of a user of any County account shall be registered with the Mason County Computer Network Advisory Board. Each county user will sign a statement certifying the he/she will abide by the provisions included in this policy, procedures and standards. If more than one user is assigned to an account, all those using the account shall be registered with the Mason County Computer Network Advisory Network Board. Unauthorized use of another user's account is prohibited.
 - b. Signature Line:** Each electronic mail transmission shall include a signature line identifying the message as County property and the name, department and telephone number of the user.
- 5. Implementation Authority:** Upon adoption of this Statement of Policy, the Board of Commissioners authorizes the Mason County Computer Network Advisory Board to establish standards and procedures necessary for its implementation.
- 6. Mason County Internet and Online Services Standards and Procedures for Internet and Online Services**
 - a. Providers:** The County will provide Internet access or other service accounts for employees for business purposes only.
 - b. Certification:** All users must sign an Internet service request form as outlined below.
 - c. Acceptable Use Standards:** It is expected that employees keep in mind that access to the County's online service is for public purposes. Use of these services implies that good judgment be exercised when seeking information on the Internet and sending electronic mail. Acceptable uses for the Internet will include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - i. Research/Education:** Communication with professional associations, other governments, universities, businesses, and/or individuals associated with the facilitation of County business, research, and education efforts, as authorized by the elected official or department head.
 - ii. General Public:** Distribution of information to the general public, whereby such information is made available under County guidelines and policies for the release of information and under the Freedom of Information Act.

iii. Incidental Communication: Incidental communication among county employees and professional colleagues, which facilitates work assignments and professional discussion in a work-related field of knowledge. Incidental communication with family and friends and other non-business communications shall not be conducted on County time.

7. Unacceptable Use Standards: Unacceptable uses for the Internet and online services will include, but not limited to, the following:

- a. Personal Use:** Personal use not related to the conduct of work on behalf of Mason County or other organizations as set forth in the previous section.
- b. Unlawful Access:** Efforts to gain unlawful access to information or computer and communications resources.
- c. Malicious Code:** The intentional introduction of, or experimentation with, malicious code, such as computer worms or viruses. Intentional or unintentional introduction of a virus to the county's network may result in disciplinary action.
- d. No County Affiliation:** Illegal, fraudulent, or malicious activity; political activity; religious promotion; or activity on behalf of organizations or individuals having no affiliation with the County.
- e. Copyright/Patent Violations:** Transmission of materials of applicable copyright laws or patents.
- f. Work Interference:** Sending messages that are likely to result in the loss of recipients' work or systems, and any other types of use that could cause network congestion or otherwise interfere with the work of others.
- g. Obscene/Profane:** Generating, receiving, viewing, storing, transmitting, or other use of data or other matter which is abusive, profane, pornographic, or offensive to a reasonable person.
- h. Personal Web Pages:** To ensure a uniform County web presentation, development of a web or home page for personal or department purposes is not permitted on a County account, unless authorized by the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee.

B. Procedures: The following procedures, which are subject to change by the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee, are established for users of the Internet and online services:

- 1. Access:** Each user of Internet and/or online services shall be registered with the Mason County Computer Network Advisory Board before any outside service is accessed.
- 2. Usage Request:** A user and the user's Elected Official/Department Head must complete and sign an Internet/online services request form on page 67 and return it to MCCNAB Board before a user name is assigned and access to the Internet is allowed on a County-owned account.

3. **Remote Access:** An employee may access a County account from a remote location other than the site designed for that account (e.g., telecommuting or checking e-mail while away from the office on business) only with written approval of the employee's supervisor and only for County business.
 4. **Signature Line:** All users must establish a signature line at the bottom of every message that prominently states, "This e-mail system is the property of the County of Mason. All data and other electronic messages within this system are the property of the County of Mason. E-mail messages in this system may be considered County Records and therefore may be subject to Freedom of Information Act requests and other legal disclosure." The signature line also must include user's name, department, and phone number.
 5. **Anti-Virus Scans:** Files from all outside sources, including the Internet, must be scanned with anti-virus software either by user or user's department before the first use. Failure to comply with this provision may result in suspension of privileges or disciplinary action.
 6. **Compliance Review:** Violations of the Internet and Online Services Policy or Standards and Procedures will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Administration and the Elected Official/Department Head. Violations may result in disciplinary action, and, if appropriate, may include referral of a case to the appropriate authorities for civil or criminal prosecution.
 7. **Audits:** Elected Officials/Department Heads will receive periodic reports on Internet and online usage within their departments and are expected to discuss any questionable usage with their employees. The Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee may audit Internet and online use by any employee at any time and may suspend departmental or user accounts as a result of violations of the policy, standards, and procedures set forth herein.
- C. **Costs:** The county will make provision in the departmental budgets to provide internet or other online service accounts for employees, provided procedures and standards are followed, under the following circumstances.
1. **Budget Availability:** Funding must be available and budgeted within a department's adopted budget.
 2. **Departmental Regulation:** Elected officials and department heads will monitor all usage by their employees and costs within their departments.
 3. **Efficient/Effective Use:** The Internet or another online service is recognized as an efficient and cost-effective tool compared to other communication tools, such as the telephone, mail, fax machine, or interoffice memos.
 4. **Additional Costs:** No additional Internet account costs (e.g., upgrading browsers) may be incurred by a user without the consent of the Computer Network Administrator.

INTERNET/ONLINE SERVICES USE REQUEST**Employee/Account User:**

I hereby request to use the Internet and online services which are available via the Mason County account. My signature below certifies that I have read the Internet and Online Services Use Policy, and Internet and Online Services Standards and Procedures, and that I understood, accept and will abide by the provisions stated therein.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

NAME: _____

(PRINT OR TYPE)

DEPARTMENT: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ OFFICE PHONE: _____

Elected Official/Department Head:

I hereby authorize access to the Internet and online services which are available via the Mason County account for the employee indicated above. My signature below certifies that I have read the Internet and Online Services Use Policy, and Internet and Online Services Standards and Procedures, and that I understand, accept and will abide by the provisions stated therein.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE POLICIES

801 | Administrator

- A. The Board of Commissioners, by a majority vote of its members elect, appoints a county administrator and sets his or her salary. After his or her appointment, the administrator holds his or her office at the pleasure of the Board of Commissioners and may be removed in the manner provided by law for the removal of county officers, within the terms of any employment contract, and by a majority vote of the Commissioners elected to office. All requests by the Board or committee members for information or action shall be directed to the county administrator. The county administrator is the chief administrative officer of the county. The functions and duties of the county administrator shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:
1. The Administrator may request at any time that county officers or employees furnish information respecting any or all county matters in their charge.
 2. The Administrator may approve line item budget amendments within county budgets as long as they do not increase the total amount of the budget.
 3. After receiving reports from and holding conferences with the various departments of the county, the Administrator shall prepare a proposed budget for the consideration of the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee, and recommend to said Committee the expenditure and revenue requirements to assist the Committee in formulating the tax needs of the county for allocation purposes.
 4. The Administrator shall have authority to approve change orders on county projects up to a maximum of \$5,000.00 with the concurrence of the Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners as long as funds are available in the project budget.
 5. The Administrator shall receive annual reports from the Equalization Director, Maintenance Superintendent, Animal Control Officer, Zoning & Building Director, Airport Manager, Emergency Management Coordinator, and MSU Extension Director, and facilitate their presentation to the County Board.
 6. The Administrator shall, at his or her sole discretion, have authority over and be responsible for hiring, disciplining, and reviewing the employees in positions that are designated to report directly to the Administrator, provided that the Administrator shall not have the authority to hire for any position unless that position has been approved and budgeted by the Board of Commissioners. The Administrator, with the approval of the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee, may discharge from employment those employees in positions, which are designated to report directly to the Administrator.
 7. The following employees shall be designated to report directly to the administrator:
 - a. Equalization Director
 - b. Animal Control Officers

- c. Zoning & Building Director
- d. Airport Manager
- e. Emergency Management Coordinator
- f. Senior Services Coordinator
- g. Veterans Affairs Officer
- h. Accounts Payable (AP) Clerk
- i. Payroll Clerk

803 | Contracts

- A. All contracts in amounts exceeding \$1,000.00 that obligate the County of Mason must be approved by the full County Board and signed by the Board Chair and witnessed by the county clerk when applicable.
- B. The Board Chair has the authority to sign contracts in amounts of less than \$1,000.00.

805 | Monetary Transactions

- A. Each county department must reconcile its monetary transactions to its record of receipts.
 - 1. All cash and checks received must be deposited promptly with the county treasurer.
 - 2. Deposits and/or transmittals shall bear record of the receipts involved.
 - 3. Deposits of receipts shall be made to the county treasurer weekly.
 - 4. The county treasurer shall be responsible for notifying each department of its deposit requirements under this policy.
- B. An employee shall immediately inform their elected official or department head if the cash/checks received and the monetary transactions do not reconcile.
 - 1. It shall be the responsibility of the elected official or department head to conduct a thorough investigation into the missing funds and submit a written report of the findings to the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee.
 - 2. The Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee will contact the fraud division of the Michigan Department of Treasury when required.
- C. Action may be taken against any employee(s) involved if deemed necessary by their elected official, department head, or the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee. Such action may be disciplinary or legal prosecution.
- D. Under no circumstances may any person, either elected official, department head, or employee, "borrow" from funds on hand for personal use. Such "borrowing" will be considered theft and will be

grounds for dismissal and/or prosecution. In addition, said funds shall not be used for any office purchases.

- E. Under no circumstances may any person, including elected officials, department heads, or employees, exchange personal checks for cash on hand. Such an exchange shall be considered inappropriate behavior and shall be grounds for dismissal.

807 | Social Security Number Privacy Policy

- A. **Overview:** Pursuant to the Michigan Social Security Number Privacy Act, Public Act 454 of 2004, MCL 445.81 et seq. (the “Act”), the County of Mason (“County”) is required to create a privacy policy concerning the social security numbers that it possesses or obtains.

1. This privacy policy sets forth the County’s policies and procedures regarding how social security numbers are obtained, stored, transferred, used, discarded, and disposed.
2. It is the policy of the County to protect the confidentiality of social security numbers obtained in the ordinary course of County business from employees, vendors, contractors, customers, or others. No person shall knowingly obtain, store, transfer, use, disclose, or dispose of a social security number that the County obtains or possesses except in accordance with the Act and this privacy policy.

- B. **Purpose:** The purposes of such a policy are to:

1. Ensure to the extent practicable the confidentiality of the social security numbers it acquires in the course of business.
2. Prohibit unlawful disclosure of the acquired social security numbers.
3. Limit who has access to information or documents that contain the social security numbers.
4. Describe how to dispose of documents that contain social security numbers properly.
5. Establish penalties for violation of the privacy policy.

- C. **Procedure**

1. Obtaining Social Security Numbers

- a. Social security numbers should be collected only where required by federal or state law, or as permitted by federal or state law for legitimate reasons consistent with this privacy policy.
- b. Legitimate reasons for collecting a social security number include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. A pre-employment background check.
 - ii. For purposes of verifying employee eligibility for employment.

- iii. For tax reporting purposes, for new hire reporting or for purposes of enrollment in any County employee benefit plans.
- iv. From creditors or vendors for tax reporting purposes.

2. Public Display Restriction

- a. All or more than four sequential digits of a social security number shall not be placed on identification cards, badges, time cards, employee rosters, bulletin boards, permits, licenses, or any other materials or documents designed for public display.
- b. Documents, materials, or computer screens that display all or more than four sequential digits of a social security number shall be kept out of public view at all times.

3. Account Numbers

- a. All or more than four sequential digits of a social security number shall not be used as a primary account number for an individual or household.

4. Computer Transmission

- a. All or more than four sequential digits of a social security number shall not be used or transmitted on the Internet or on a computer system or network unless the connection is secure or the transmission is encrypted.

5. Mailed Documents

- a. County documents containing all or more than four sequential digits of a social security number shall only be sent in cases where federal or state law, rule, regulation, or court order or rule authorizes, permits, or requires that a social security number appear in the document.
- b. Documents containing all or more than four sequential digits of a social security number, that are sent though the mail, shall be protected as to not reveal the number through the envelope window or otherwise be visible from outside the envelope or package.

6. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

- a. Where all or more than four sequential digits of a social security number are contained within a document subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the social security number shall be redacted or otherwise rendered unreadable before the document or copy of a document is disclosed. See MCL 15.243(w).

7. Storage

- a. All documents containing social security numbers shall be stored in a physically secure manner.
- b. Social security numbers shall not be stored on computers or other electronic devices that are not secured against unauthorized access.

8. Access to Social Security Numbers

- a. Only personnel who have legitimate business reasons to know will have access to records containing social security numbers.
- b. The elected officials or department heads having access to records containing social security numbers shall determine which other personnel within their departments have a legitimate reason in the county's ordinary course of business to have access to such social security numbers.
- c. Personnel using records containing social security numbers must take appropriate steps to secure such records when not in immediate use.

9. Disposal

- a. Documents containing social security numbers will be retained in accordance with the requirements of state and federal laws.
- b. At such time documents containing social security numbers may be disposed of, such disposal shall be accomplished in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the social security numbers, such as shredding.
- c. All records, which contain social security numbers, which are awaiting disposal by shredding, should be in a locked trash bin.
- d. All social security numbers, which can be found on electronic files and databases, must be irretrievable before discarding the files, databases, or computer equipment. This can be done by erasing or physically destroying.

10. Unauthorized Use or Disclosure of Social Security Numbers

- a. The county shall take reasonable measures to enforce this privacy policy and to correct and prevent the reoccurrence of any known violations.
- b. All county personnel must return any document or material that contains social security number(s) to confidential locations when they are not present at their workstation.

D. Compliance

1. Any employee who knowingly obtains, uses, or discloses social security numbers for unlawful purposes or contrary to the requirements of this privacy policy shall be subject to discipline up to and including discharge.
 - a. Additionally, certain violations of the Act carry criminal and/or civil sanctions.

7. Tax revenues that are earmarked for buildings, building infrastructure, and furniture purchases.

D. Operational Process: Funds in the Public Improvement Fund can be accumulated and expended under the following process-

1. An elected official, department head, the county administrator, a standing committee of the **Board of Commissioners (BOC)**, or a board established by the BOC can make requests for funds to be appropriated to the Public Improvement Fund.
 - a. These requests must be submitted in writing to the county administrator for inclusion on the agenda of the **Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee (FPRC)** of the BOC.
 - b. The FPRC will review the request and make a recommendation to the BOC for consideration.
 - c. The BOC will either approve or deny the request for appropriation at a public meeting.
 - d. The individual or entity making the request shall have the opportunity to attend the meetings of the FPRC and the BOC to explain their request for appropriation.
2. An elected official, department head, the county administrator, a standing committee of the BOC or a board established by the BOC can make written requests for funds to be expended from the Public Improvement Fund.
 - a. Elected officials and department heads who have a liaison standing committee of the county board must present their written requests to the liaison standing committee.
 - b. Upon consideration by the liaison standing committee, these requests must be submitted in writing to the county administrator for inclusion on the agenda of the FPRC of the BOC.
 - c. The FPRC will review the request, the amount of funds available in the Public Improvement Fund, and make a recommendation to the BOC for consideration.
 - d. The BOC will either approve or deny the request to expend funds at a public meeting.
 - e. The individual or entity making the request shall have the opportunity to attend the meetings of the FPRC and the BOC to explain their request for expenditure of funds from the Public Improvement Fund.
3. Upon approval by the County BOC, an elected official, department head, the county administrator, a standing committee of the BOC, or a board established by the BOC may purchase the approved buildings, building infrastructure, and furniture.

- a. Invoices related to the purchase must be submitted to the county administrator for payment.

E. Investment of Funds

1. The county treasurer shall be responsible for the investment of funds held in the Public Improvement Fund.
2. The treasurer and the county administrator shall meet as needed to discuss the timing of future purchases, ensuring that the treasurer can maximize investment income by purchasing long-term investment vehicles when appropriate.

F. Earmarking of Funds

1. The county administrator shall keep an accounting of the balance for the various reserves established in the Public Improvement Fund.
 - a. The administrator shall allocate investment income earned by the county treasurer to the appropriate reserve account monthly.
 - b. The administrator shall provide the Board of Commissioners with a report detailing the balances in the various reserve accounts on an annual basis or whenever requested by the FPRC.

811 | Equipment Replacement Fund Policy

A. Purpose: The purpose of the Equipment Replacement Fund is to accumulate funds necessary to replace equipment needed for the operations of the various departments of county government. The funds will be accumulated over the life of the existing equipment to spread the cost of replacement over the budget years during which the equipment is in use.

1. For purposes of this policy, Equipment will be defined to include, but not be limited to, vehicles, computers, computer software, furniture, and the K-9 dog.

B. Benefits: The benefits of the Equipment Replacement Fund are as follows:

1. Funds are available to replace equipment at the time the equipment is either worn out or obsolete.
2. Replacement costs are spread out over a number of budget years.
3. The county saves interest expense by avoiding borrowing money to pay for equipment purchases.
4. Funds are available to be used as local match for state and federal equipment grants when they are offered.
5. Investment income can be earned on the funds thus decreasing the amount of taxpayer dollars necessary to fund the purchase of equipment.

C. Funding: The Equipment Replacement Fund will be funded as follows-

1. General Fund appropriations approved by the county board as part of the annual budget process.
2. Jail Operations Fund appropriations approved by the county board as part of the annual budget process.
3. General Fund appropriations approved by the county board as part of the year-end budget amendment process.
4. Jail Operations Fund appropriations approved by the county board as part of the year-end budget amendment process.
5. State and federal grant funds that are earmarked for equipment purchases.
6. Investment income earned on the reserves in the Equipment Replacement Fund.
7. Tax revenues that are earmarked for equipment purchases.

D. Operational Process: Funds in the Equipment Replacement Fund can be accumulated and expended under the following process-

1. An elected official, department head, the county administrator, a standing committee of the **Board of Commissioners (BOC)** or a board established by the BOC can make requests for funds to be appropriated to the Equipment Replacement Fund.
 - a. These requests must be submitted in writing to the county administrator for inclusion on the agenda of the **Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee (FPRC)** of the BOC.
 - b. The FPRC will review the request and make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.
 - c. The BOC will either approve or deny the request for appropriation at a public meeting.
 - d. The individual or entity making the request shall have the opportunity to attend the meetings of the FPRC and the BOC to explain their request for appropriation.
2. An elected official, department head, the county administrator, a standing committee of the BOC, or a board established by the BOC can make written requests for funds to be expended from the Equipment Replacement Fund.
 - a. Elected officials and appointed department heads who have a liaison standing committee of the county board must present their written requests to the liaison standing committee.
 - b. Upon consideration by the liaison standing committee, these requests must be submitted in writing to the county administrator for inclusion on the agenda of the FPRC of the BOC.
 - c. The FPRC will review the request, the amount of funds available in the Equipment Replacement Fund, and make a recommendation to the BOC for consideration.

- d. The BOC will either approve or deny the request to expend funds at a public meeting.
 - e. The individual or entity making the request shall have the opportunity to attend the meetings of the FPRC and the BOC to explain their request to expend funds from the Equipment Replacement Fund.
 3. Upon approval by the county BOC, an Elected Official, appointed Department Head, the County Administrator, a standing committee of the BOC, or a board established by the BOC may purchase the approved equipment. Invoices related to the purchase must be submitted to the county administrator for payment.

E. Investment of Funds

1. The county treasurer shall be responsible for investing funds held in the Equipment Replacement Fund.
2. The treasurer and the county administrator shall meet as needed to discuss the timing of future purchases, ensuring that the treasurer can maximize investment income by purchasing long-term investment vehicles when appropriate.

F. Earmarking of Funds

1. The county administrator shall keep an accounting of the balance for the various reserves established in the Equipment Replacement Fund.
 - a. The administrator shall allocate investment income earned by the county treasurer to the appropriate reserve account on a monthly basis.
 - b. The administrator shall provide the Board of Commissioners with a report detailing the balances in the various reserve accounts on an annual basis or whenever requested by the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee.

813 | Register of Deeds Automation Fund Policy

- A. The purpose of the Register of Deeds Automation Fund Policy is to accumulate funds necessary to upgrade technology within the Register of Deeds office, with priority given to upgrading search capabilities. Upgrading technology is defined to include the design and purchase of equipment and supplies and the implementation of systems and procedures that allow the Register of Deeds to receive, enter, record, certify, index, store, search, retrieve, copy and otherwise process by automated procedures and advanced technology documents, instruments, abstracts, maps, plats and other information recorded and maintained by the Register of Deeds.
- B. **Benefits:** The benefits of the Register of Deeds Automation Fund are as follows:
 1. Funds are available to replace equipment, supplies, and systems at the time they are either worn out or obsolete.
 2. Replacement costs are spread out over a number of budget years.

3. The county saves interest expense by avoiding borrowing money to pay for equipment, supplies, and systems purchases.
4. Funds are available to be used as local match for state and federal grants for equipment, supplies, and systems when they are offered.
5. Investment income can be earned on the funds thus decreasing the amount of taxpayer dollars necessary to fund the purchase of equipment, supplies, and systems.

C. Funding: The Register of Deeds Automation Fund will be funded as follows:

1. \$5.00 for each recorded instrument will be deposited into the automation fund in accordance with directives contained in Letter Number 2003-3 from the Local Audit and Finance Division of the State of Michigan Department of Treasury.
2. Investment income earned on the funds deposited in the Register of Deeds Automation Fund.

D. Operational Process: Funds in the Register of Deeds Automation Fund can be expended under the following process:

1. The register of deeds can make written requests for funds to be expended from the Register of Deeds Automation Fund.
 - a. The **Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee (FPRC)** will review the request, the amount of funds available in the Register of Deeds Automation Fund, and make a recommendation to the **Board of Commissioners (BOC)** for consideration.
 - b. The BOC will either approve or deny the request to expend funds at a public meeting.
 - c. The register of deeds shall have the opportunity to attend the meetings of the FPRC and the BOC to explain the request to expend funds from the Register of Deeds Automation Fund.
2. Upon approval by the county BOC, the Register of Deeds may purchase the approved equipment, supplies, and systems. Invoices related to the purchase must be submitted to the county administrator for payment.

E. Investment of Funds

1. The county treasurer shall be responsible for the investment of funds held in the Register of Deeds Automation Fund.
2. The treasurer and the county administrator shall meet as needed to discuss the timing of future purchases, ensuring that the treasurer can maximize investment income by purchasing long-term investment vehicles when appropriate.

F. Earmarking of Funds

1. The county administrator shall keep an accounting of the balance for the various reserves established in the Register of Deeds Automation Fund.

- a. The administrator shall allocate the investment income earned by the county treasurer to the appropriate reserve account on a monthly basis.
 - i. The administrator shall provide the BOC with a report detailing the balances in the various reserve accounts on an annual basis or whenever requested by the FPRC.

815 | County Purchasing Policy

- A. Purpose:** The purpose of these Purchasing Policies and Procedures is to establish levels of authorization to purchase goods and services within budget approval by the Board of Commissioners. The Purchasing Policies and Procedures seek to assure that all purchases of the county are conducted systematically and properly, to establish a process that engenders confidence from the taxpayers of the county, that products and services are purchased at competitive prices, and to establish a process that achieves these objectives without the bureaucratic systems that stifle the efficient operation of county departments.
- B. Objectives:** The main objectives of the county purchasing policy are as follows:
1. Ensure that County resources are used wisely and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, federal, state, and local laws;
 2. Enable departments to obtain goods and services in a timely and efficient manner;
 3. Assure vendors of impartial and equal treatment;
 4. Assure taxpayers that the county is receiving maximum dollar value for expenditures; and
 5. Keep purchases within budgetary limits by securing only those goods and services for which funds have been approved.
- C. Scope:** The purchasing policies and procedures are to be followed by all departments and agencies under the direct budgetary control of the Board of Commissioners. This includes all county departments supervised by department heads, as well as boards and commissions that receive appropriations from the county board of commissioners.
- D. Application:** This policy applies to contracts for the procurement of supplies, equipment, services, and construction activities entered into by Mason County and its constituent departments and agencies. When the procurement involves the expenditure of federal or state assistance or contract funds, the procurement shall be conducted in accordance with any mandatory applicable federal or state laws and regulations. Nothing in this policy shall prevent any public agency from complying with the terms and conditions of any grant, gift, or bequest that is otherwise consistent with law.
- E. Definitions:**
1. Budget Administrator – A department head, or other appointed officials, formally recognized by the Board of Commissioners as a manager of one or more budgetary cost centers.

2. Competitive Bids – Competitive bids shall be solicited from vendors on items costing in excess of \$25,000.00. Competitive bids will be received as sealed bids only and shall be opened at the advertised public bid openings.
3. Competitive Quotes – Competitive quotes from vendors on Items costing less than \$25,000.00. Competitive quotes may be received in a more informal manner, which may include, but not limited to, through U.S. mail, facsimile, or e-mail.
4. Expendable/ Recurrent Supplies – Routine supplies needed to carry on the county’s daily business (i.e. food, medical supplies, office supplies, janitorial supplies, jail supplies, dog food, etc.)
5. Emergency Purchases – An authorization granted by the chair of the county board of commissioners, vice-chairperson, or county administrator to purchase consumable goods, services, or enter into contracts during a declared state of emergency. All purchasing requirements are waived during this period.
6. Fixed Asset – A fixed asset shall be defined as a piece of equipment, appliance, infrastructure, or building in which its purchase price is greater than \$5,000.00 and its useful life expectancy exceeds one year.
7. Professional Services - Professional services are provided by an outside vendor who has the expertise in a specific discipline by virtue of their education, experience, or both. Such expertise typically requires licensing or certification by a state or professional organization. Such services include accountants, architects, attorneys, auditors, engineers, financial advisors, planning consultants, and surveyors, among others.
8. Proposal – A proposal is a response from a vendor in lieu of a requirement for a written quote or sealed bid. A proposal is used when it is difficult, too costly, or impractical to develop a detailed set of specifications. A proposal also allows the vendor to propose solutions to problems rather than be confined by the limits of the specifications.
9. Public Bid Opening – A date and time established to open competitive bids received on Items and/or Services being procured. The public bid opening shall be advertised in the Ludington Daily News or other paper of general circulation within the county.
10. Request for Proposals (RFP) – A document issued by a budget administrator that contains specifications and County bidding procedures for the procurement of items and/or services. An RFP is sent to vendors as a mechanism to solicit competitive bids.
11. Request for Qualifications (RFQ) – A document issued by a budget administrator that specifies desired qualifications for a professional or technical service that the county may require.
12. Sealed Bid – A sealed bid is a response from a vendor to a formal request from a department to purchase consumable goods, a service agreement, or a fixed asset based on specifications prepared by the department and approved by the county administrator.

- 13. Service Agreements** – Service agreements are defined as a contractual obligation in which the county has made a determination that it is better to have a service performed because of price, degree of specialization, or lack of sufficient resources. The service agreement will specify the vendor's responsibilities and the services to be provided, as well as the county's responsibilities, including the price. Service agreements shall include the maintenance and servicing of county-owned equipment and software, as well as the maintenance of buildings and services provided to the county for internal use, such as janitorial work and grounds maintenance.
- F. Administration:** The Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee shall administer this Policy. The Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee shall, with the approval of the Board of Commissioners, establish and amend, where necessary, all rules and regulations to develop consistency with this policy.
- G. Purchases:** Purchases made pursuant to this policy shall be consistent with good business practices and in accordance with the ethical standards of generally accepted accounting principles and of all applicable local, state, and federal laws.
- 1. Purchases of and Contract for Goods, Supplies, and Contractual Services:**
- a.** All purchases of and contracts for goods, supplies, and contractual services required by the county shall be made in accordance with this policy.
 - b.** No contract or purchase can be subdivided to avoid the requirements of this policy.
- H. Budget:** Purchases will not be authorized that would result in an overdraft of a budgetary line item. Budget administrators contemplating a purchase that may result in exceeding the amount budgeted must contact the county administrator to request the necessary budget amendment.
- I. Lease of Equipment/Property:** Lease/installment purchase agreements must be reviewed and recommended for approval to the board of commissioners by the county administrator.
- J. Maintenance Agreements:** Maintenance Agreements are established to adequately protect and maintain county-owned equipment. Maintenance Agreements must be reviewed and recommended for approval by the appropriate Elected Official or Department Head. It is the responsibility of the department or office to see that service is performed in accordance with the terms of the agreement.
- K. Term of Warranty:** If there is a terms of warranty, it will be indicated in the voucher packet. Many items are delivered with a warranty certificate attached. It is the ordering department's or office's responsibility to record these warranties and submit a copy to the accounts payable office.
- L. Non-Discrimination:** Companies doing business with the county shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment or customer because of his or her religion, race, color, national origin, age, height, weight, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or any other characteristic protected by law.

- M. Tax Exempt:** The County is exempt from the payment of federal and state taxes on most transactions. Tax exempt certificates or other evidence of tax exemption will be provided by the accounts payable office when requested by vendors.
- N. General Requirements:** The county board of commissioners or authorized agent reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, quotes, or proposals, with or without cause. Bids, quotes, and proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
1. Comparison of unit price and total price.
 2. Delivery date promised and adherence to the delivery schedule.
 3. Reputation regarding quality of product or service.
 4. Evaluation of whether minimum requirements have been met.
 5. Location of prospective vendor.
- O. Process for Written Quotes:** Where specified in the Purchasing Policies and Procedures, a budget administrator is required to follow the process listed below for written quotes.
1. A budget administrator shall prepare general specifications regarding the consumable goods to be purchased, services needed, or fixed asset to be purchased. These specifications will be sent to vendors qualified to deliver the product or service.
 2. Once the quotes have been received, the budget administrator will review the quotes, select the successful vendor, and issue a voucher.
- P. Process for Sealed Bids:**
1. Where specified in the Purchasing Policies and Procedures, budget administrators are required to follow the process listed below:
 - a. Submit, in written form or on a form provided by the county administrator, a request to the county administrator to solicit sealed bids. The request shall state the estimated cost of the purchase, whether sufficient budgeted funds exist, and specifications regarding the consumable goods, services, or fixed asset to be purchased. The request must also specify the manner in which the bids will be advertised, the time frame regarding the bid notice, the due date for the sealed bids, and the individual(s) responsible for review of the bids to ensure the minimum requirements have been met.
 - b. Upon receiving a request to solicit bids, the County Administrator or designee must approve or deny the request within one month of its receipt. If the request is denied, the County Administrator must specify the reason for its denial.
 - c. Once a budget administrator has reviewed the bids, they are to submit the bids and the recommended award to the County Board of Commissioners for approval.

2. A budget administrator may request the Board of Commissioners to waive the sealed bid process. Such a request must be in writing, stating the reasons that it is to the advantage of the county to waive the sealed bid process or that it is impractical to have a competitive bid process.
- Q. Award to Other than the Low Bidder:** When the award is not given to the lowest bidder, a full and complete statement of the reason for awarding the bid to another (higher) bidder shall be prepared by the appropriate standing committee of the board of commissioners and filed with other papers relating to the transaction.
- R. Bid Deposits:** Bid deposits shall be required of bidders in an amount and in such form as required by the county when determined necessary by the county or as required by law.
- S. Rejection of all Bids or Offerors:** It shall be within the discretion of the board of commissioners, if appropriate, not to award a contract to a bidder or offeror for any reason, including determination that the party is not a responsible bidder or offeror.
- T. Bid, Payment, and Performance Bonds:** To protect the county's interests, bid surety, payment bonds, performance bonds, or other security may be required for supply or service contracts in conformance with federal or state law as the board of commissioners deems advisable. Any such bonding requirements shall be outlined in the solicitation. Bid or performance bonds shall not be used as a substitute of a determination of a bidder's or offeror's responsibility. Financial statements or performance bonds may be required from any company if deemed appropriate by the board of commissioners.
- U. Purchase of Consumable Goods:** At all times, budget administrators are encouraged to seek competitive bids for the purchase of consumable goods.
1. **Less than \$2,500** – If an individual purchase of consumable goods (order) is less than \$2,500, a budget administrator is not required to solicit three quotes for the purchase. A budget administrator may purchase such consumable goods.
 2. **Greater than \$2,500** – If the estimated purchase will exceed \$2,500, a budget administrator shall solicit three (3) quotes for the purchase of consumable goods.
 3. The Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee may waive the requirement to solicit three (3) quotes for the purchase of consumable goods if a budget administrator submits in writing a valid reason as to why competitive quotes should be waived. Budget administrators may appeal the decision of the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee to the Board of Commissioners should the waiver not be granted.
 4. The County may waive the requirement to solicit three (3) quotes for the purchase of consumable goods if the County is able to purchase an acceptable and competitively priced item from the State of Michigan Extended Purchasing Program.
- V. Service Agreements:** At all times, it is encouraged that three quotes or bids be solicited for service agreements.

- 1. Less than \$2,500/less than one (1) year** – If a services agreement is for a period of less than one (1) year and the estimated cost is less than \$2,500, a budget administrator is not required to solicit three (3) quotes for the service. The Chairperson of the Board is authorized to sign service agreements on behalf of the county if sufficient budget funds exist for that purpose.
- 2. More than \$2,500/longer than one (1) year** – If a service agreement covers a period longer than one (1) year or its estimated cost exceeds \$2,500 but is less than \$10,000, a budget administrator is required to solicit three (3) written bids for the service. The bids are to be presented to the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee along with a recommendation from the authorized budget administrator for final approval. An authorized budget administrator may request a waiver of the bid requirements to the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee, which may waive the requirement to solicit three (3) quotes if a budget administrator submits valid reasons as to why competitive bid requirements should be waived. The budget administrator may appeal the decision of the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee to the Board of Commissioners should a waiver not be granted.
- 3.** If the service agreement covers a period longer than one (1) year or its estimated cost exceeds \$25,000, authorized budget administrators are required to solicit sealed bids for the service.

W. Purchase of Fixed Assets:

- 1. Less than \$5,000** – If the estimated purchase price of a fixed asset is less than \$5,000, a budget administrator shall solicit three (3) quotes. The Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee may waive the three (3)-quote minimum if a budget administrator provides sufficient justification.
- 2. More than \$5,000 but less than \$25,000** – If the estimated purchase price of the fixed asset is greater than \$5,000 but less than \$25,000, a budget administrator shall solicit three (3) written quotes for the purchase of the fixed asset. A budget administrator may request that the Board of Commissioners waive the requirement to solicit three written quotes if adequate justification is provided.
- 3. More than \$25,000** – If the estimated purchase price of a fixed asset is greater than \$25,000, budget administrators must follow the steps specified.

X. Professional Services: It is the policy of the Board of Commissioners to solicit professional services based on qualifications and expertise. A competitive bid selection process may be used at the Board's discretion. This policy recognizes the importance of experience and the ability to work with County employees and the General Public, which is equally important as price.

Y. Sole Procurement: A contract may be awarded, without competition, when the board of commissioners determines, after conducting a good-faith review of available resources, that there are limited appropriate sources for the required supply, equipment, services, or construction item.

The county administrator or the soliciting office or department, where delegated by the county administrator, shall conduct negotiations, as appropriate, regarding price, delivery, and terms.

- Z. Computer Equipment Acquisition:** All computer requests for hardware, software, licensing, and consulting services submitted shall only be commenced after review and recommendations by the County Computer Network Advisory Board.
- AA. Disposal of Fixed Assets:** Each county department and office shall maintain a complete inventory of all equipment. This county inventory shall be reviewed and updated at least annually.
1. Equipment that is thought to be surplus, worn out, or otherwise unnecessary to the operation of a department shall be reported as such to the county administrator by department heads or elected officials.
 2. It shall be the board of commissioners' responsibility to declare personal property of the county as surplus and authorize its disposition. The board of commissioners shall decide whether to make other use of the equipment, assign the equipment to another county department, or permit the trade-in, sale, donation, or other disposal of the equipment. Items disposed of shall be removed from the inventory list. A permanent record shall be kept of the manner of disposition of all county property.
 3. If governmental fund surplus goods are sold at auction, or disposed of by other sale, the proceeds of the sale shall be returned to the County Treasurer who shall deposit the same into a County General Fund revenue account entitled Proceeds from Sale of Fixed Assets. The proceeds from the disposition of surplus goods of a proprietary fund shall remain in the proprietary fund. When fixed assets are disposed of by any means, it shall be properly recorded in the Fixed Assets Ledger by the County Administrator.
 4. **Disposal of Surplus Computer and Network-Related Equipment:** The following policy shall apply to the disposition of surplus computer and network-related equipment.
 - a. A county officer or department head may declare equipment within their respective offices surplus. All surplus equipment shall be turned over to the computer network administrator, who will store said equipment until its final disposition is made. The computer Network administrator shall keep a listing of said surplus equipment. The list shall periodically be reported to the network advisory board and made available to county officers and department heads upon request.
 - b. The computer network administrator may utilize surplus equipment for parts and other repairs to equipment currently in service that may be in need of repair, or may hold equipment in reserve to be placed in service in the event of equipment failure.
 - c. For equipment not held in reserve, the network advisory board is authorized by the Mason County Board of Commissioners to sell surplus equipment. Surplus equipment may be offered at public auction, offered for sale at fair market value, or

sold or disposed of in any other manner that the network advisory board deems in the best interests of the county.

- d. Other than operating system software, all equipment sold shall have all licensed software uninstalled and have all files containing data relating to county business removed.
- e. Proceeds from the sale of equipment shall be returned to the capital account of the Network Operation & Maintenance Fund #636 and be subject to the existing Policy regarding its expenditure.

BB. Exclusions: The provisions of the entire Purchasing Policy shall not apply to the following:

1. Employment of temporary, part-time, or full-time employees of the county.
2. Collective bargaining agreements between employee associations and the county.
3. The board of commissioners' policy for banking, daily cash management, and short-term investments.
4. The rental, lease, or purchase of real estate.
5. Purchase of utilities (gas, water, sewage, electricity, etc.).
6. Purchase of insurance. The board of commissioners shall have the authority and duty to purchase or contract for insurance required by the county.
7. Professional service contracts with the independent auditors, who conduct the annual audit of the county, and legal counsel, who are contracted for by the board of commissioners.

CC. Insurance Requirements: Contractor insurance requirements should be based on the contract's dollar value, duration, and the level of hazard associated with the work to be performed.

1. Insurance requirements should be based on the following three categories:
 - a. **Low Hazard** might be best illustrated by artisan-type contractors such as carpenters, plumbers (no digging or trenching), painters, and small repair-type contractors.
 - b. **Medium Hazard** would include roofers, plumbers with minor digging, cement contractors, land grading, landscapers, building maintenance and cleaning contractors, and bricklayers.
 - c. **High Hazard** includes excavation and underground contractors, road contractors, erection and welding projects, all major building or parks and recreation playground construction and renovation, and all infrastructure construction and renovation, including removal of contaminants or pollutants.
2. All contractors and/or vendors are required to have the following insurance:
 - a. Workers' Compensation and Employers' Liability, Michigan Statutory Limits of Liability, including a thirty (30) day Notice of Cancellation.

- b. Commercial General Liability Insurance (occurrence basis only) with the following coverage inclusions:
 - i. Broad Form General Liability Endorsement.
 - ii. Independent Contractor Coverage.
 - iii. Products & Completed Operations.
 - iv. Contractual Liability.
 - v. Mason County named as Additional Insured.
 - vi. Thirty (30) day Notice of Cancellation.
- c. Motor Vehicle Liability Coverage, and Michigan No-Fault Coverages, including all owned, non-owned, and hired vehicles.
- d. Owners and Contractors Protective Liability (OCP) in the name of the County, including a thirty (30) day Notice of Cancellation.
- e. Other coverages which may be required under certain contracts, such as Pollution Liability, Medical Malpractice, Professional Liability, etc.
- f. County will be named as Additional Insured on all insurance coverage, except for Workers' Compensation and Employers' Liability Insurance.
- g. Limits of Liability for General Liability, and Vehicle Liability shall be within the following guidelines based on contract amounts:
 - i. **Low and Medium Hazard Projects up to \$750,000 and up to 180 Days Duration:**
 - a. Include coverage in items AB: 1, 2, 3, & 6 above.
 - b. Minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and aggregate.
 - ii. **Low and Medium Hazard Projects from \$750,001 to \$1,750,000:**
 - a. Include coverage in items AB: 1, 2, 3, & 6 above. Minimum of \$2,000,000 per occurrence and aggregate
 - iii. **All High Hazard Projects and all contracts above \$1,750,001 to \$2,750,000:**
 - a. Include coverage in items AB: 1, 2, 3, 4, & 6.
 - b. Minimum of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and aggregate.
 - iv. The required amounts continue to escalate by adding \$1,000,000 to the beginning and ending project range and to the minimum insurance requirement.
 - v. A Waiver of Subrogation is required on the certificate of liability insurance.

- vi. The certificate of liability insurance is required to have a 30-day notice of cancellation.

DD. Professional Services Contracts Requirements: Professional Liability Coverage (Errors and Omissions) is required for all contracts for professional services, such as architecture, engineering, design firms, or similar professions, as well as medical professions.

1. Limits of Liability for General Liability and Vehicle Liability shall be within the following guidelines based on contract amounts:
 - a. **Projects up to \$750,000:** Minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and aggregate.
 - b. **Projects \$750,001 to \$1,750,000:** Minimum of \$2,000,000 per occurrence and aggregate.
 - c. **Projects \$1,750,001 to \$2,750,000:** Minimum of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and aggregate.
 - d. The required amounts continue to escalate by adding \$1,000,000 to the beginning and ending project range and to the minimum insurance requirement.
 - e. A Waiver of Subrogation is required on the certificate of liability insurance.
 - f. The certificate of liability insurance is required to have a 30-day notice of cancellation.
2. Liability limits over \$1,000,000 per occurrence may be obtained by using an Excess Liability (Umbrella) policy in addition to the primary policies.

817 | Publicly Appointed Guardian Reimbursement Policy

- A. **Overview:** Mason County has several individuals who have public guardians/conservators who do not have the financial resources required to compensate their guardians/conservators. The Mason County Board of Commissioners has allocated funding to conservatively compensate public guardians and conservators for the important services they provide when there is no other source of income to draw from the ward's funds.
- B. **Purpose:** This policy provides payment for public guardian and conservator services for Mason County residents who lack sufficient financial resources to compensate their public guardian or conservator.
- C. **Policy:** To receive compensation for guardian/conservator services:
 1. Eligible public guardians/conservators will be compensated at the rate of \$85.00 per month for each ward they serve. An individual serving as both guardian and conservator for a ward shall receive two (2) payments.
 2. To be eligible for compensation, the public guardian/conservator must:
 - a. Serve a ward who is a resident of Mason County.

- b. Serve a ward who cannot pay the public guardian/conservator fees.
 - c. Not be a relative or interested party of the ward and must serve in the capacity of public guardian/conservator.
 - d. Not receive other fee compensation from Mason County for their ward.
3. Compensation eligibility will be determined individually for each ward of the public guardian/conservator on a first-come, first-served basis.
 4. Each public guardian/conservator will provide proof of residency and the completed SCAO-approved Financial Statement form (MC 287) as proof of the ward's indigency to the Probate Register, who will then process the request for compensation. Once the compensation from the county fund is approved, the public guardian or conservator will remain eligible as long as the ward meets the criteria listed in Item 2 above.
 5. The public guardian/conservator will submit a separate monthly invoice for each ward to the Probate Register. The Probate Judge will then approve the invoices for payment.
 6. If the ward's financial status or residency changes, the Probate Register will be notified in writing immediately.

819 | ACH (Automated Clearing House) Policy

The following policy shall govern the use of electronic transactions and ACH arrangements for Mason County:

A. Definitions

1. "Automated Clearing House" or "ACH" means a national and governmental organization that has authority to process electronic payments, including, but not limited to, the National Automated Clearing House Association and the Federal Reserve System.
2. An "ACH arrangement" means the agreement between the originator of the ACH transactions and the receiver of an ACH transaction.
3. An "ACH transaction" means an electronic payment, debit or credit transfer processed through an automated clearing house.
4. An "ACH policy" means the procedures and internal controls as determined under this written policy developed and adopted by the county treasurer.

B. Authority to Enter into ACH Arrangements and Electronic Transfers of Public Funds

1. The county treasurer may enter into an ACH arrangement as provided by Public Act 738 of 2002, effective December 30, 2002.
2. Mason County shall not be a party to an ACH arrangement unless the Mason County Board of Commissioners has adopted a resolution to authorize electronic transactions and the Mason County Treasurer has presented a written ACH policy to the county board.

3. An ACH arrangement under Public Act 738 of 2002 is not subject to the Revised Municipal Finance Act, Public Act 34 of 2002 (MCL 141.2101, et seq.), or to provisions of law or charter concerning the issuance of debt by a local unit.

C. Responsibility for ACH Agreements

1. The Mason County Treasurer is responsible for Mason County's ACH agreements, including payment approval, accounting, reporting, and generally for overseeing compliance with the ACH policy.
2. The accounts payable clerk shall submit to the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee documentation on a bi-weekly basis detailing the goods or services purchased, the cost of the goods or services, the date of the payment, and the departments serviced by each payment of public funds made by electronic transfer. This report will be contained in the county's electronic financial software system.

D. Internal Accounting Controls to Monitor Use of ACH Transactions Made by the County: The following system of internal accounting controls will be used to monitor the use of ACH transactions by Mason County:

1. The authorized vendor list shall be maintained in the county's financial software system. The treasurer and administrator shall oversee this list.
2. An ACH enrollment form shall be on file with the Mason County Treasurer or an employee designated by the treasurer for all vendors authorized to be paid by ACH transaction.
3. It shall be the policy to have the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee of the Board of Commissioners approve invoices for ACH payment. A separate summary schedule for claims submitted for payment by ACH transaction shall be prepared by the accounts payable clerk and approved by the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee at their regularly scheduled meetings. Transfers of funds between county entities such as the Building Authority, Family Independence Agency, Medical Care Facility, and Road Commission, together with employee payroll deductions and withholding tax payments, are excluded from Finance Committee approval, but shall be summarized separately for the Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee by the accounts payable clerk in the schedule of claims.
4. The accounts payable clerk shall retain all ACH transaction documents for audit purposes.

821 | Record Retention

- A. **Purpose:** In Michigan, counties are required to manage records in accordance with state-approved retention and destruction schedules. These schedules, as published by the state, outline the retention periods for various records to meet the administrative, financial, and historical needs of the county. Records cannot be destroyed unless allowed under a specific schedule.
- B. **Definitions**

1. **“Public Record”:** A public record is defined as “a writing prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by a public body in the performance of an official function, from the time it is created. Public record does not include computer software.”
- C. **Record Formats:** Records can exist in a wide variety of formats, including but not limited to paper, maps, photographs, digital images, email messages, and databases. The retention periods listed on this general schedule do not specify the format in which the records may exist, as each department may choose to retain its records using different recording media. Elected officials and department heads are responsible for ensuring that their records, regardless of format, are properly retained and remain accessible during the entire retention period.
 - D. **Destruction of Records:** It is in the best interest of the county for records to be destroyed in accordance with the appropriate retention and destruction schedules. If departments are not diligent about the proper destruction of records, there are additional associated costs to the county, including physical and server storage space. There may be additional burdens, such as gathering records that should have been destroyed in response to FOIA or subpoena requests.
 - E. **Record Management:** Elected officials and department heads are responsible for the proper management, including retention or destruction, of records within their department’s possession.
 - F. If you have questions regarding records management, consult with the county administrator.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

901 | Facilities Use

- A. Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to establish administrative regulations that standardize the procedures utilized for the temporary and occasional use of conference and meeting rooms in county-owned facilities and the grounds of the various buildings by county employees and outside organizations/groups with a public purpose.
- B. Authority:** Mason County Board of Commissioners. Administrative policies shall be subject to revision or termination by the Board of Commissioners at its discretion.
- C. Application:** The regulations and procedures outlined in this policy statement apply to all county-owned facilities.
- D. Responsibility:** The authority to approve use of county-owned facilities is the responsibility of the Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee.
- E. Definitions**
 - 1. County-Owned Facilities - For this policy, county-owned facilities shall mean the:
 - a. Mason County Courthouse
 - b. Mason County Airport Terminal
 - c. Mason County Animal Control Building,
 - d. Mason County Scottville Office Building.
 - e.
 - f. The following county-owned buildings are not available for public meeting purposes due to security concerns, inadequate accommodations, or personnel to effectively monitor their use:
 - i. Mason County Jail
 - ii. Mason County Sheriff Storage Building
 - iii. District Health Department Facility
 - iv. Department of Health & Human Services Buildings
 - g. The use of the Mason County Fairgrounds will be governed by the Western Michigan Fair Association, so long as it follows this policy.
 - h. Mason County Parks Facilities shall be governed by the policies established by the Parks and Recreation Commission.
 - 2. Public Purpose - For the purpose of the policy, an activity will be considered to have a public purpose if it is sponsored by, conducted on behalf of, or at the request of the governing board, a department, or an agency of a governmental unit; or if it is sponsored by,

conducted on behalf of, or at the request of a private, non-profit organization whose board includes representatives appointed by the Board of Commissioners or the Chair of the Board of Commissioners, or non-profit organization that provides services for the community as a whole.

3. Local Governmental Unit - A township, village, or city government agency based in Mason County.
4. Other Governmental Unit - A township, village, or city, government agency based outside the boundaries of Mason County, or a county, state, or federal government agency.
5. Outside Organization - Any organization not under the jurisdiction or budgetary control of the Mason County Board of Commissioners.

F. Policy

1. General Statement

- a. The basic guideline of this policy shall be to provide temporary, occasional use of conference and meeting rooms in county-owned facilities by other organizations for activities with a stated public purpose. The Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee shall determine whether the request to use the facility serves a public purpose.
- b. No facility may be used for economic or for-profit purposes.
- c. Use of county-owned equipment within the building by an outside organization may be permitted when scheduling permits and the requesting organization provides sufficient personnel, supplies and/or funding to operate the equipment.
- d. The outside organization utilizing any county facility shall indemnify and hold harmless the County of Mason, its elected and appointed officials, employees and others working on behalf of Mason County against any and all claims, demands, suits, or loss, including all costs and any fees connected therewith, brought by anyone and for any damages, which may be asserted, claimed or recovered against, by reason of personal injury, including bodily injury and death and/or property damage, including loss of use thereof, brought by anyone which arises out the sole, comparative or partial negligence, error, omission or commission of any party associated with the utilization of a county facility.
- e. Liability for damage to county property and/or facilities will be assessed at 100% of the amount of damages, regardless of whether there was a deposit on the use or not.
- f. Conflicts in the interpretation of this policy will be determined by the Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee or the County Board of Commissioners when appropriate.

- g.** The County Board of Commissioners may consider requests to waive any requirement or guidelines contained in this policy.

2. Prohibitions on County Facilities Use

- a.** Hunting on county-owned or leased property is strictly prohibited.
- b.** Alcohol beverages on county-owned or leased property is strictly prohibited.
- c.** No weapons shall be allowed in any county-owned facility except for authorized law enforcement personnel, subject to written policies and procedures established by the Mason County Sheriff's Department and Mason County Trial Court, and authorization granted by state or federal law.

 - i.** Use of the Mason County Courthouse shall be pursuant to the September 19, 2001 Mason County Security Policy for Court Facilities and the Michigan Supreme Court Administrative Order 2001-1 as related to Public Act 381 of 2000 that no weapons are allowed in the courthouse, courtroom, office or space used for official court business or by judicial employees. This prohibition does not apply to court security personnel in the performance of their official duties or to law enforcement officers who are transporting prisoners. The Chief Judge may authorize additional exceptions in extraordinary circumstances.

G. Procedures And Standards:

1. Use of Facilities:

- a.** The Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee shall review and approve the use of meeting rooms in the Mason County Courthouse, Mason County Animal Control Building, Mason County Scottville Office Building.
 - b.** The Mason County Parks and Recreation Ranger shall be responsible for review and approval of the use of County Parks Facilities according to the policies established by the Mason County Parks and Recreation Commission, in addition to the pertinent policies established in this document.
- 2.** All requests by outside organizations for temporary use of a county-owned facility require completion of a Facility Use Request Form developed by the Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee. The Facility Use Request Form must be completed and submitted to the Mason County Administrator at least sixty (60) days before the date of the event.
- 3.** The appropriate contact person for the county-owned facility being considered for use shall base their decision for approval or denial depending on availability and conflicts with county business, and the following:
- a.** The meeting/assembly is open to the general public.
 - b.** The meeting/assembly is for legal purposes.

- c. The meeting/assembly is supervised by a responsible adult.
 - d. The meeting/assembly has been determined to comply with this policy.
 - e. Reservations for the meeting/assembly may require a security deposit.
 - f. Execution of a facility use agreement that includes provisions of this policy.
 - g. Payment of fees assessed in compliance with a facility-use fee schedule approved by the Board of Commissioners upon approval of an application for facility use.
 - h. Decisions of the designated contacts may be appealed to the Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee, or if applicable, to the County Board of Commissioners.
4. The county may assess charges for extraordinary cleaning or repairs.
- a. An additional, non-refundable fee may be charged if the meeting/assembly is held at a time that requires the building to be opened and staffed by a county employee.
 - b. Such fees shall not be required if an official county department or agency sponsors the group, and a representative of that department or agency will open the building, remain with the group, and close the building at the termination of the meeting.

H. Administrative Procedures

1. Exceptions - Any exceptions or unusual circumstances not addressed in this policy must receive specific approval from the Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee.
- I. **Administrator - Legal Counsel Review:** The Mason County Administrator has determined that this policy, as submitted to the Mason County Board of Commissioners, contains the necessary substance to carry out the purpose of the policy. The County Prosecuting Attorney has determined that this policy, as submitted, contains content that appears to be legal activities of the Mason County Board of Commissioners.

903 | Marksmanship Training for Employees Required to Carry a Firearm

- A. Employees required to carry a firearm as part of their county employment must meet qualification requirements. If allowed by the Sheriff, they may qualify with the Sheriff Department using the current MCOLES Qualification Standard. If the Sheriff Department is not available, then the following training requirements are to be used and documented. Documentation of compliance is filed with the county administrator on an annual basis.

1. MANDATORY HANDGUN PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

Targets – TCQ-94

Score – On all phases 100% of specified shots must be within the Center of Mass ring. Must pass each course (marksmanship, full light combat, low light combat, and shotgun) 2 out of 3 times.

2. ALL HOT LINE MARKSMANSHIP COURSE (FULL LIGHT ONLY)

Distance: 15 yards

Time: 90 seconds

Single target

12 rounds total

Position: Standing or kneeling, shooters' choice

3. COMBAT COURSE(FULL LIGHT)

TARGET – TCQ –94

18 ROUNDS TOTAL

SCORE – 100% of the specified shot must be within the Center of Mass ring. Must pass course 2 out of 3 times.

4. CLOSE COMBAT STAGE

Distance: 4 yards

Rounds: 6

Time: 3 seconds per target exposure

2 Targets (minimum 3' apart laterally)

Exposure 1 – Starting with the handgun secured in the holster, draw and fire 1 round on each target

Exposure 2 – Starting in the ready position, fire 1 round on each target

Exposure 3 – Starting with the handgun in the secondary hand only, from the ready position, fire one round on each target

a. INTERMEDIATE COMBAT STAGE

Rounds: 12

On command, move the barricade then draw for first stage

2 Targets (minimum 3' apart laterally)

Distance: 1 target at 7 yards, 1 target at 10 yards

* Must appear from different position on each exposure, one exposure required from off-hand side of cover, one exposure must be from the covered kneeling position. Two-hand shooting position for all stages – no “weak” hand firing

Time: 4 second exposure per 2 shot stage

6 second exposure per 4 shot stage

Start from exposed area away from cover.

Exposure 1 – Safely draw while moving to cover – Identify and challenge, but do not engage

Exposure 2 – 1 round on each target – 4 seconds

Exposure 3 – 2 rounds on each target – 6 seconds, mandatory reload at end of this stage

Exposure 4 – 2 rounds on each target – 6 seconds

5. REDUCED LIGHT COMBAT COURSE (No flash lights)

NOTE: For low-light firing there must be the minimum amount of light to identify each target as a threat. Flashlights may not be used to illuminate the targets or the firearm.

TARGET – TCQ-94

SCORE – 100% of specified shots must be within the Center of Mass ring. Must pass course 2 out of 3 times.

a. CLOSE COMBAT STATE

Distance: 4 yards

Rounds: 6

Time: 3 seconds per target exposure

2 Targets (minimum 3' apart laterally)

Exposure 1 – Starting with the handgun secured in the holster, draw and fire 1 round on each target

Exposure 2 – Starting in the ready position, fire 1 round on each target

Exposure 3 – Starting with the handgun in the secondary hand only, from the ready position, fire one round on each target

b. INTERMEDIATE COMBAT STAGE

Rounds: 12

On command, move to the barricade then draw for first stage

2 Targets (minimum 3' apart laterally)

Distance: 1 target at 7 yards, 1 target at 10 yards

* Must appear from different position on each exposure, one exposure required from off-hand side of cover, one exposure must be from the covered kneeling position.

Two-hand shooting position for all stages – no “weak” hand firing

Time: 4 second exposure per 2 shot stage

6 second exposure per 4 shot stage

Start from exposed area away from cover.

Exposure 1 – Safely draw while moving to cover – Identify and challenge, but do not engage

Exposure 2 – 1 round on each target – 4 seconds

Exposure 3 – 2 rounds on each target – 6 seconds, mandatory reload at the end of this stage

Exposure 4 – 2 rounds on each target – 6 seconds

Exposure 5 – 1 round on each target – 4 seconds

6. MANDATORY SHOTGUN PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

TARGET: TCQ-94

DISTANCE: All fired at 15 yards

SCORE – STAGE 1 (“00B” standard 9 pellet load): 70% on silhouette (32 pellets)

STAGE 2 (SLUG): 100% (5 slugs) within Center of Mass Ring

Must pass course 2 out of 3 times.

- a. **STAGE 1:** 25 seconds to fire each 5 rounds (loading and unloading evaluated, but not timed)

5 rounds “00B” (have 5 slugs available for immediate combat reload)

Administrative load 4 rounds “00B”

Under direction, chamber round and add 5th round

On command, fire 5 rounds from stand position\

Immediate combat load with 5 slugs

Unload under supervision for evaluation

- b. **STAGE 2:**

Time: 25 seconds to fire each 5 rounds

Combat load 5 slugs

Fire 5 rounds from standing position