COUNTY OF AROOSTOOK

(AROOSTOOK COUNTY GOVERNMENT)

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

Effective July 14, 2016

This Personnel Policy Manual supersedes all prior policies and amendments.

FOREWORD

The intent of this Personnel Policy Manual is to promote a clear understanding between the employee and the Aroostook County Government. It points out the Aroostook County Government's obligation to the employee and where appropriate, the employee's obligation to the Aroostook County Government and fellow employees.

This manual should answer most questions that will arise in the course of your employment. It covers the most important policies and working rules, but it cannot cover every situation. If you have questions that are not answered in the manual, please consult your Department Head.

We believe that if employees are familiar with the Aroostook County Government policies and rules and know the reasons for them, it will help avoid confusion and misunderstanding. All employees are responsible for adherence to all policies and procedures of the Aroostook County Personnel Policy Manual.

Changes and additions to policies and rules will be made from time to time, and as changes are made, employees will be informed.

The policies presented in this manual shall not in any way violate, supersede or contradict any state or federal statute. Any statutory changes made by the local, state or federal governments shall immediately take precedence over any areas where conflict or difference may exist.

This manual shall apply to all Aroostook County Government employees and officials. However, in cases where any employee is represented by a certified bargaining unit, which operates under a signed and approved bargaining contract, any conflict between the applicable policy terms of this manual and the bargaining contract shall be resolved in. favor of the bargaining contract.

Aroostook County Personnel Policy Manual
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THIS PUBLICATION DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

The contents of this manual have been approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

It is the purpose of the Aroostook County Personnel Policy Manual to establish guidelines which will serve as a basis for administrative action concerning the various personnel activities and transactions. The policies are intended to indicate the customary and most reasonable method of carrying out the aims of the personnel program. It is also the purpose of this Personnel Policy Manual to inform fully the Department Heads and employees of Aroostook County Government of work conditions.

The contents of this Aroostook County Personnel Policy Manual summarize current Aroostook County Government policies, programs and procedures.

B. Changes and Amendments to the Personnel Policy Manual

At appropriate times, the County Administrator will review the entire contents of this Personnel Policy Manual and will be responsible for the incorporation of any changes, additions or deletions to said manual. The County Administrator will be responsible for the selection of the personnel to carry these responsibilities. Any employee may suggest changes or additions to the County Administrator,

The County Administrator shall present any proposed changes to the Board of County Commissioners for their review and approval. Any suggested changes or additions to the policy may or may not be adopted by the Commissioners in their discretion.

All employees shall be advised in writing, of any changes as enacted. Each employee is expected to note such changes to avoid later misunderstanding.

C. Gender

Whenever the context may require, any pronouns used herein shall include the corresponding masculine, feminine or neuter forms, and the singular forms of nouns and pronouns shall include the plural and vice-versa.

D. Applicability

The policies and procedures stated in this document shall apply to all employees of Aroostook County Government. In those instances where employees are covered under an approved bargaining contract any differences shall be resolved in favor of the approved bargaining contract language.

II. ADMINISTRATION: RESPONSIBILITIES OF SYSTEM PARTICIPANTS

A. Responsibilities of the Board of County Commissioners

1. The Board of County Commissioners is responsible for the establishment and administration of the Aroostook County Personnel Policy Manual through the promulgation of the policies and procedures contained in this manual. The County Administrator is responsible for promulgating any subsequent modifications to the manual.

2. All suggested changes will be presented to, reviewed by and approved by the Board of County Commissioners. There shall be no deviation of this process.

B. Responsibilities of Department Heads

1. Each Department Head will be responsible to recruit and staff his/her department in accordance with state statutes and in accordance with the County Charter.

2. Each Department Head will endeavor to evaluate each employee not less than once per year using established and approved procedures. Failure to schedule an evaluation within a year because of scheduling conflicts, work duties or emergencies should not be construed as the Department Head's approval, consent or evaluation of an employee's conduct or performance. The evaluation will be in writing, with a copy to be seen, acknowledged and offered to the employee. The copy will be forwarded to the County Commissioners' Office.

3. Appropriate training to carry out the normal job functions shall be made available to each employee.

4. When necessary, the Department Head will perform the necessary disciplinary actions. Such actions will be in accordance with established procedures.

5. Each Department Head will be responsible for the proper documentation of personnel transactions such as, but not limited to: leave, resignations and final disciplinary actions. A copy of all transactions will be forwarded to the County Commissioners' Office and one copy kept in the employee's personnel file.

6. It is the responsibility of the Department Head to give new employees a copy of the Aroostook County Personnel Policy Manual and obtain an acknowledgement of receipt form from the employee to be kept in the employee's personnel file.

7. All department levels are responsible to carry out and follow the policies and procedures of the Aroostook County Personnel Policy Manual.

8. All department levels are encouraged to provide input so as to constantly improve and keep up to date the Aroostook County Personnel Policy Manual.

9. All Department Heads are responsible for the maintenance and updating of job descriptions. Such job descriptions must be filed with the County Administrator prior to approval. Upon the review and approval by the County Administrator, the new job description will then be in place.

III. EMPLOYMENT

A. General

1. All new employees will be given a copy of the Aroostook County Personnel Policy Manual at the time of hiring. It is the responsibility of the Department Head to see that this is done. A copy of the appropriate job description, if available, will also be given to the employee at the time of hire. Acknowledgement of receipt of the manual and a signed copy of the job description will be placed in the individual's personnel file.

2. The County Commissioners' Office shall maintain a personnel file for each employee. The employee's personnel file shall contain those materials as permitted by the Maine Personnel Record Statute, 30-A M.R.S.A., Section 2702. This file is confidential and is available only to the employee, the Department Head, the County Commissioners' Office, and others as required by law.

3. Access to Personnel Files

   a. Insofar as permitted by law, all personnel records, including home addresses, telephone numbers and pictures of members shall be confidential and shall not be released to any person other than officials of the Department, the County's legal counsel and staff, and other designated Aroostook County Government officials, except upon a legally authorized subpoena or written consent of the employee.

   b. Employees will be allowed to review their personnel file on a timely basis. Any employee who wishes to examine their personnel file must submit a request in writing to the County Administrator.

c. The review of the personnel file will be in an office provided by the County Administrator during normal work hours. The County Administrator retains the right to have a designated employee or a witness to the review. The employee or witness will not change, remove or alter any documents in the file and upon completion, such file shall be returned to its original place.

B. Definitions: Work Week, Work Day, Normal Work Day, Starting Time

The Aroostook County Government defines the above terms as follows:

1. Work Week

The term "work week" used in this policy manual means seven (7) consecutive days of twenty-four (24) hour periods starting at 12:00 midnight on Friday and ending at 12:00 midnight the following Friday. Saturday and Sunday are ordinary workdays.

2. Work Day

The tern "work day" used in this policy manual means any of the seven (7) consecutive twenty-four (24) hour periods within the work week, beginning when the employee reports for work.

3. Normal Work Day

The work day for all employees consists of eight (8) hours of employment, excluding lunch.

4. Starting Time

The normal starting time shall be 8:00 a.m. or at the beginning of the assigned shift.

5. Standard Work Week

The standard week for Aroostook County Government employees will be forty (40) hours.

C. Classification Plan

The County Commissioners' Office shall maintain a detailed description of each Aroostook County Government employee's position, which shall include skills required. Each position shall be assigned a specific classification and category.

D. Status of Employment

1. Full-Time Employees

Full-time employees fill an established position, which is year round in nature and has a standard work week of 40 hours or more. These employees are paid on an established wage scale and are eligible for fringe benefits.

2. Part-Time Employees

Part-time employees are employed to fill positions which are not established full-time positions (less than 40 hours weekly) or are used on a call-in basis to fill the temporary needs of various County Government Departments. These employees are paid on an established wage scale. All regularly scheduled, part-time employees, not on-call, working 30 hours or more per week are eligible for fringe benefits, on a pro-rated basis, according to the number of hours worked. All other part-time employees, working less than 30 hours per week, are ineligible for fringe benefits.

Part-time employees who are receiving fringe benefits upon the adoption date of this policy will continue to receive these benefits for the duration of their uninterrupted employment with County Government.

E Hiring Policies

1. Selection Authority

a. It will be the policy of Aroostook County Government to have employees selected by the personnel who will be responsible for their supervision and evaluation. The County Administrator shall fulfill statutory requirements as it may pertain to hiring and termination procedures, as noted in 30-A, M.R.S.A. Section 501.

b. It is the responsibility of each selecting authority to keep on file a written employment application stating the applicant's experience and qualifications. Upon hiring the employee, such application shall be part of the employee's personnel file.

c. Aroostook County Government reserves the right to contact each reference of new or prospective employees supplied by the prospective employee and to ask the prospective employee to furnish additional references if requested by the Department Head. The County reserves the right to conduct a background check as permitted by, and in accordance with applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations.

d. All applicants for a position with Aroostook County Government shall be required to complete, as a minimum, an application form and provide suitable references.

e. After selection has been made, all candidates interviewed will be notified as to the decision of hire.

2. Applicant Testing

a. Department Heads may establish appropriate testing procedures to facilitate the determination of employee qualifications.

b. The tests shall be non-discriminatory and will not violate any local, state, or federal statutes for testing procedures.

c. The employee may, upon request, be made aware of his/her testing results.

3. Physical Capability

a. Physician's Examination Upon Request by Aroostook County Government.

All applicants for the positions listed below who have been offered employment with Aroostook County will be required to submit to a medical examination (for both physical and mental health) prior to the commencement of employment. Offers of employment to applicants for those positions listed below will be conditioned on the results of the examination.

Medical examinations of the following positions are job-related and consistent with business necessity: None at this time.

The Aroostook County Government will make all reasonable accommodations available for disabled employees and applicants as described under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008.

b. Physical Examination - Incapable of Performing Regular Duties

If an employee becomes incapable of performing his regular duties through accident, illness or other causes, the Aroostook County Government may require the employee to submit to a physical examination to determine the possibility of continued employment. In the event of a controversy arising from the decision of the Aroostook County Government's physician, the employer may select a physician to make an examination of the employee at the Aroostook County Government's expense, and in the event of controversy of opinions on the part of these two (2) physicians, then the two (2) physicians shall mutually select a third physician to re-examine the employee and the

decision of the majority shall govern. Expenses of the third physician will be shared by the Aroostook County Government and the employee.

4. Probationary Period

   a. New Employees

      1. The period of probation is the first six (6) months of employment, unless required by applicable statute, collective bargaining agreement or express written contract signed by the Commissioners.

      2. During this period employment is "at will" and the employee may be terminated by the County at any time and for any reason. Alternatively, the employee may terminate his/her employment at any time or for any reason. Such termination is final and will not be subject to review or appeal.

      3. Within two (2) weeks prior to the end of the probationary period, the employee's supervisor will complete a written evaluation of the employee's performance. The evaluation will contain the necessary information in order that a proper evaluation can be made on the suitability of the employee for continued employment. In the case of a temporary employee, such written evaluation will be used as a basis for permanent hiring. The written evaluation will be sent to the County Commissioners' office and placed in the employee's personnel file. The employee will not have the right to appeal the evaluation.

      4. The probationary period may be extended if the employee, the Department Head and the County Administrator agree that it is desirable in order to reach a fair decision concerning the employee's future employment status. Extensions may not exceed a six (6) month period. This extension shall be in writing and signed by the employee, the Department Head and the County Administrator and shall be placed in the employee's personnel file. If the Department Head, with the approval of the County Administrator, decides to extend the probationary period beyond the normal six (6) month period, then the employee does not progress to Step 1.

      5. Vacation time will be calculated during the probationary period, but may not be used until probationary period is successfully completed.

      6. Sick leave will accrue during the probationary period but may not be used until probation is successfully completed. Upon termination or resignation during this period, all accrued sick leave benefits are forfeited.

b. Promotion

An employee who is promoted to a higher pay classification will serve a six (6) month probationary period. During their probationary period, the newly promoted employee will be paid their new rate of pay. If during the probationary period, the newly promoted employee wishes to be returned to their former classification (grade level), they must notify the department head in writing, The department head, with consultation from the County Administrator, may offer the employee a position to his/her former classification (grade level) if a vacancy exists.

c. Part-Time Employment

If a full-time, probationary employee is permitted to work part-time, the probationary period will be extended until the equivalent of six months of full-time service has been worked.

F. Recruitment

1. Selecting authorities will notify the County Administrator of:

   a. any existing or potential position vacancies.

   b. recommendation for in-house promotion to fill higher level vacancies.

2. In his discretion, the County Administrator may either post existing vacancies internally and/or on our website, and/or advertise the vacancy in local weekly newspapers.

G. Equal Employment Opportunity

It shall be the policy of the Aroostook County Government to recruit, select, train, promote, retain and discipline employees, without regard to race, sex, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, genetic information, national origin, ancestry, political affiliation, age, physical or mental handicap, unless related to a bona fide occupational qualification.

H. Employee Disability

In accordance with the "Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992" (ADA), and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, the employment application shall not ask any disability related questions.

I Payroll Release

The County Treasurer will disburse payroll checks no later than 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday. The checks will cover the previous work week as defined in the "Work Week" section of this manual.

If a holiday falls on a Wednesday, the Aroostook County Government will release checks on the prior working day before that Wednesday.

Payroll checks for the other shifts will be released by the County Treasurer to accommodate receipt of such checks in an efficient manner.

If a relative or co-worker is asked by an employee to pick-up a check, the Aroostook County Government will require that the recipient sign a standard form for cheek receipt.

The County Treasurer is responsible for check disbursement and any changes in the handling of payroll matters must be approved by that office.

IV. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

A. Responsibility for Evaluation

1. Each Department Head is responsible for evaluating employee's performance annually. Each employee in a probationary status will be evaluated prior to the end of the probation period. All evaluations will be filed in the County Commissioners' Office and be filed in the employee's personnel file.

2. Department Heads must use the appropriate evaluation form.

B Evaluation Procedures

1. Probationary Report - shall be due within two (2) weeks prior to the end of the probation period.

2. The County evaluates appointed employees annually on their anniversary date. By definition, an employee's anniversary date is their initial date of hire or when their employment status with the County changes; i.e., promotion, transfer, demotion, change to full-time status, etc.

   Part-time employees who are regularly scheduled are evaluated on their anniversary date. Part-time employees who are not regularly scheduled may be evaluated at the discretion of the Department Head.

3. An evaluation may be filed at any time, when, at the discretion of the Department Head, the employee's conduct warrants such a report. A formal notation will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

V. COMPENSATION PLAN

A. Compensation Schedule Assignment and Review

The Board of County Commissioners has an approved compensation plan. On January 1st of each year, the Board of County Commissioners, as a result of the budget process, will adopt a Salary Structure for that given year. Copies will be available through the County Commissioners' Office.

B. Overtime Compensation

No employee will work overtime without prior approval of the Department Head.

C. Termination of Compensation

A terminating employee, regardless of the nature of the separation, shall be paid for accumulated annual leave as described in Section VII-A, "Annual Leave", except if the termination is during a probationary period. In this circumstance, no annual leave will be paid.

VI. HOURS OF WORK

A. Standard Work Week

1. The standard work week for full-time employees is forty (40) hours, Monday through Friday.

2. Deviations from this schedule must be approved by the County Administrator in writing.

3. All full-time Sheriff's Department employees are scheduled for a minimum of 40 hours during a seven-day period (Saturday-Friday) to provide for the operational and administrative needs of each division.

4. Every Department Head must file and certify with the County Commissioners' Office, a weekly report of hours worked by the Department Head and each department employee.

    a. The weekly attendance record shall include the hours worked and/or leave taken, on a daily basis. It will be the responsibility of the employee to record the hours worked and/or appropriate leave; i.e., annual, sick, leave without pay and etc. The weekly attendance record must be signed by the employee and turned in to the County Commissioners' Office by 10:00 a.m. on Mondays.

B. Tardiness

1. Due to emergencies or unexpected circumstances, tardiness of less than one (1) hour may be excused at the discretion of the Department Head. Such discretion must be applied consistently to all employees.

2. Time not worked due to tardiness may result in pay or accrued leave adjustment for non-exempt employees.

3. Repeated tardiness is grounds for disciplinary action.

C. Lunch Breaks

1. The lunch break for all employees will be one half hour in length and taken in a staggered fashion to provide continuous service to the public.

2. The department head, with approval from the County Administrator, may approve deviations from this schedule.

3. Employees who work at emergency stations may be required to take their lunch meal at their duty station during the working shift.

D. Break Periods

1. Employees who work at emergency stations will be given rest breaks as operational circumstances allow.

E. Illness

If an employee becomes ill during working hours, the employee should request permission from the supervisor to leave if the employee feels it is necessary to go home early. The employee will be paid for the number of hours actually worked. The policies relating to the use of sick leave are on pages 19 & 20.

VII. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

A. Annual Leave

1 Annual leave for all full-time employees and full-time elected officials will be calculated from the date of initial employment, but will only be earned after the successful completion of that employee's probationary period. All regularly scheduled, part-time employees, not on-call, working 30 hours or more per week, will be eligible for fringe benefits, on a pro-rated basis, according to the number of hours worked. After either the successful completion of the probationary period or after six (6) months of employment, whichever is later, an employee may use accrued leave.

2 All full-time employees and full-time elected officials will accrue annual paid leave at the following rate:

a. From 1- 5 years of service, 1.848 hours accrued per week.

b. After 5- 10 years of service, 2.308 hours accrued per week.

c. After 10 - 15 years of service, 2.772 hours accrued per week.

d. After 15 - 20 years of service, 3.385 hours accrued per week.

e. After 20 - 25 years of service, 3.693 hours accrued per week.

f. After 25 years of service, 4.156 hours accrued per week.

3 Annual leave may not be taken unless it has been earned and accrued as defined in this manual. Leave will accrue on a weekly basis.

4 While vacation leaves are granted with the intent of permitting an employee the opportunity to be away from the job, they must at the same time be approved by the Department Head so as not to interfere with normal Aroostook County Government operations. In cases of duplicate or conflicting vacation time in the same department, the senior person's choice may be honored provided that normal Aroostook County Government operations are not compromised. The department head will make the final decision.

5. Employees having less than fifteen (15) years of completed service may accumulate vacation leave to a total of 192 hours. Those employees having more than fifteen years of continuous service may accumulate vacation time to a total of 240 hours. Any vacation time beyond these earned limits must be used or that vacation leave time will be forfeited.

6. Any employee who leaves Aroostook County Government employment for any period of time and returns to Aroostook County Government employment at a later period of time must work five (5) continuous years in order to receive credit for prior service.

7. Employees may not elect to receive cash payments for unused leave time while continuing in the employ of the Aroostook County Government without written permission from the Board of County Commissioners.

8. In case of termination or resignation, accrued vacation benefits will be paid. However, probationary employees who resign or are terminated during their probationary period will not be paid vacation time.

9. Annual leave is a benefit. It is not pay for work performed. Such time shall not be counted as part of the forty hour (40) week.

10. Annual leave must be earned. It cannot be taken in advance.

11. Annual leave balance, usage and accruals are listed on employee pay stubs.

B. Sick Leave

1. Sick leave will be earned by all full-time employees and full-time elected officials at the rate of 1.848 hours per week. All regularly scheduled, part-time employees, not on-call, working 30 hours or more per week, will be eligible for fringe benefits, on a pro-rated basis, according to the number of hours worked. A maximum of 720 hours of sick leave can be accrued and carried forward from one calendar year to the next. Any additional sick days beyond 720 hours will be forfeited.

2. When illness occurs during a period of annual leave and lasts three or more consecutive days, sick leave may be granted to cover the period of illness, without loss of vacation time, provided it is reported immediately to the employee's Department Head and a doctor's statement is submitted upon return to work.

3. Except as set forth in Section XI(B)(3) of this manual, when an employee is separated from the Aroostook County Government, no form of compensation shall be given for accrued sick leave.

4. Sick leave must be accrued. It cannot be taken in advance. The employee will receive the benefit of regular wages for sick leave.

5. Sick leave is a benefit. It is not pay for work performed. Such time cannot be counted as part of the forty hour week.

6. Sick leave can be taken when:

   a. the Department Head has been notified by the employee or representative that the employee is incapacitated by sickness, injury or disability. This must be done no later than one-half hour prior to the start of the employee's work day.

   b. an employee is exposed to a contagious disease and a physician recommends that employee remain off duty.

   c. an employee who has illness in the immediate family (including the employee's spouse, children, mother and father) necessitating taking time off from work to attend to that family member with approval from the Department Head. If an employee is entitled to leave for this purpose under the Family Medical Leave Act (Section VII (D)), and subject to any additional time designated required under the FMLA, sick leave under this section will be considered concurrently as FMLA leave.

7. The County Administrator reserves the right to request a medical certificate if an employee calls in sick on days preceding or following a holiday weekend.

8. After extended sick leave (three (3) days or greater) is taken, a physician's certificate is required when the employee returns to work. The physician will certify that the employee is able to return to work and assume all regular duties.

9. It is understood that paid sick leave is for a verified illness or injury. Sick leave benefits will not be paid to any employee receiving benefits under workers' compensation.

10. Sick leave balance, usage and accruals are listed on employee pay stubs.

C. Family Medical Leave

1. The County follows the state and federal Family Medical Leave Act. Under the federal FMLA, employees are eligible if they have worked for at least one year for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles. Under the federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), authorized employees may be granted up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks leave for any of the following reasons:

   a. to care for the employee's child after the birth, or adoption or placement for foster care;

   b. to care for the employees spouse, son or daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition;

   c. for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job; this covers both workers' compensation related as well as non work-related health conditions.

   d. because of a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that your spouse; son or daughter; parent is on active duty or call to active duty status in support of a contingency operation as a member of the National Guard or Reserves.

   e. because you are the spouse; son or daughter; parent; next of kin of covered service member with a serious injury or illness.

   Military Family Leave Entitlements

   Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12 week leave entitlement.

   FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave for a covered service member during a single 12 month period.

2. A FMLA leave may be granted under the following conditions:

   a. Employees on FMLA leave may use unused vacation and sick leave time (if applicable) during the leave.

   b. While on a FMLA leave, an employee will have the opportunity of

continuing any group health insurance plan coverage for which the employee is eligible on the same conditions as coverage would have been provided if the employee had been continuously employed during the entire leave.

c. Medical certification is required for a Family Medical Leave Act leave due to serious health conditions of the employee or family member.

d. A return to work release from the employee's doctor is required if the leave is due to the employee's serious health conditions.

3. Annual leave, retirement credits and sick leave will not accrue during an unpaid medical leave.

4. The twelve (12) month period in which the twelve (12) weeks of entitlement occurs is a "rolling" twelve (12) month period measured backward from the date the employee uses any FMLA leave.

5. Notice

Employees are required to give the County 30 days advance notice of any need for leave. However, the County recognizes that there may be instances where the employee is unable, due to unforeseeable circumstances, to give 30 days notice. In such instances, the employee must give notice of the need for leave as soon as possible. Where advance notice has not been given, the County will, in those instances where it believes that the employee is eligible for FMLA leave, or where the employee has been absent for a period of more than five consecutive days, automatically treat such absence as a request for FMLA leave, and forward to the employee the necessary forms.

The above information summarizes our FMLA policy. Please contact the Human Resources Office for forms and further information,

6. Non — FMLA Leave

a. Some County employees may have sick leave, vacation leave, or CTO ("accrued leave time") available after they have exhausted their FMLA leave. In such instances the employee may request additional leave beyond their FMLA leave for the number of days for which they have accrued leave time available. Employees may be responsible for paying 100% of various insurances and fringe benefits while on a Non — FMLA leave.

b. Upon the expiration of employee's leave covered by accrued leave time, the employee shall be returned to his/her original or equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits and other employment terms.

The above information summarizes our Non - FMLA Leave Policy. Please contact the Human Resources Office for further information.

D. Military Leave

In accordance with applicable federal and state laws, such as the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, USERRA, employees called to active military duty or to reserve or to National Guard training, or who volunteer for such duty or training, will be granted military leave.

In order for the County to plan for its staffing needs, employees should provide their Department Head and/or the County Administrator with as much notice as possible for the need of military leave. In addition, employees must immediately provide their Department Heads and/or the County Administrator with copies or originals of all orders received from the military authority that provides details as to the beginning and concluding dates of their military training and/or service and expected duration of service.

Employees returning from military leave are eligible for reinstatement in accordance with all state and federal requirements.

E. Jury and Witness Duty

Any employee required to perform jury duty or as a subpoenaed witness will apply for leave of absence and will be paid the rate of their regular assigned classification for work time lost due to jury or witness service. The employee will furnish the Department Head evidence of amount paid for jury duty and in no event shall the amount paid by the Aroostook County Government and the jury duty exceed the amount the employee would have received in a normal work week.

Jury duty leave shall be granted to any full-time employee at no loss of pay. An employee will need to have completed by the Clerk of Courts, an affidavit certifying attendance.

F. Bereavement Leave

Employees may receive up to three (3) days leave with pay if required to make necessary arrangement and attend the funeral of a member of their immediate family. The immediate family includes: spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, grandparent, spouse's grandparent, present in-laws, grandchild, and dependent resident in employee's home. In-laws will include brother, sister, father, mother, son and daughter.

For a funeral attendance of the following relative, the employee will be given one (1) day off with pay: uncle, aunt, nephew, niece and first cousin.

G. Leave without Pay

1. Leave without pay is a non-FMLA absence from work on a short-term basis of not less than one day and not more than twelve months. Leave of absences under the FMLA are not covered by this subsection.

2. Employees may request a leave without pay for approved obligations.

3. Each request must be in writing and will be considered on its own merits in light of factors such as the nature of the employee's job, the ability to accomplish the Department or County's work if the employee is absent, staffing levels, ability to secure temporary services, budget impacts and other factors. The decision to grant or refuse leave without pay is at the sole discretion of the Board of County Commissioners.

4. At the conclusion of the leave without pay period, the employee may return to a position to that which he or she left, provided such an opening exists.

5. Annual leave and sick leave or any other benefits will not accrue during the leave period.

6. Any employee who is granted leave without pay must first use all of his/her annual leave and sick leave, if applicable, before beginning leave without pay under this subsection H.

7. Employees will be required to pay 100% of their insurances and fringe benefits while on leave without pay.

8. Maine Public Employees Retirement System credit will not accrue during leave without pay.

H. Educational Leave

1. Each employee may request educational leave which will enhance and improve their ability as an Aroostook County Government employee. This leave request must be for training, which is essential for current job performance.

2. The request must be in writing to the Department Head and the County Administrator then must approve it. Requests in excess of five (5) consecutive working days must be approved by the Board of County Commissioners. Approval for educational leave in excess of five (5) working days is at the sole discretion of the Board of County Commissioners.

3. The approval for such a request will be conditional upon, but not limited to, the following:

a. applicability of the education to the current duties.

b. such educational opportunities are not available to the employee during non-working hours.

c. the absence of the employee will not disrupt the normal activities of the employee's department.

d. the length of the educational opportunity shall not be of such length or duration so as to cause other employees to be deprived of an equal opportunity.

4. Refusal of educational leave by the Board of County Commissioners shall not be subject to appeal rights.

5. The County Administrator shall have the discretion as to whether or not educational leave of five consecutive days or less is paid. The Board of County Commissioners shall decide on educational leave in excess of five consecutive days.

I Leave Records

The County Commissioners' Office is responsible for maintaining all leave records. Leave actions will be reported to this office by the Department Head when submitting the weekly attendance record. It will be the responsibility of the employee to record the appropriate leave; i.e., annual, sick, leave without pay and etc.

J. Holidays

The following holidays will be observed:
all legal holidays as enumerated in 4, M.R.S.A., Section 1051, and any other day declared by the President of the United States or the Governor of the State of Maine.

Employees who are in pay status will receive holiday pay. Employees who are not in pay status will not receive holiday pay.

K. Storm Day Provision

1. Employees are expected to make every effort to report to work on all days that Aroostook County Government Offices are open. If, due to inclement weather, an employee is unable to report to work, annual leave, at the discretion of the Department Head, may be granted.

2 When the office is officially closed due to the weather conditions, employees will be paid for the time they would have worked had the office remained open.

3. The County Administrator shall advise each Department Head of the closing of offices due to inclement weather and/or choose to advise the local media of such closure.

VIII. INSURANCE, RETIREMENT AND OTHER BENEFITS

A. Insurance

1 Workers' Compensation

a. Workers' compensation insurance is provided for all Aroostook County Government employees to protect each employee from medical expenses and loss of income in the event of injury on the job or job related disability. This program is effective on the first day of employment and is defined in 39-A, M.R.S.A., Workers' Compensation Act of 1992.

b. If a work related injury occurs, the Department Head must be notified by the employee immediately and report the injury to the Human Resources Office within 72 hours of the incident. The employee's supervisor will complete a written report immediately. The employee will later submit a written report of the details of the incident to the Human Resources Office as soon as the employee is physically able.

c. If non-emergency medical attention is needed, employees should contact the Human Resources Office to set up an appointment with an Occupational Healthcare Provider. If emergency medical attention is needed, employees should go to the nearest Emergency Room and report such action to the Human Resources Office when physically able or as soon as possible.

d. All employees are expected to cooperate with the Aroostook County Government in the investigation of all accidents or injuries.

2 Health Insurance

a Full-time employees, working forty (40) hours or more per week on a regular basis, and elected officials are eligible for health insurance. Health insurance will be effective the first of the month following thirty (30) days of employment.

Part-time employees who are receiving fringe benefits/health insurance upon the adoption of this policy will continue to receive these benefits for the duration of their uninterrupted employment with County Government.

All regularly scheduled, part-time employees, not on-call, working 30 hours or more per week, will be eligible for health insurance, on a pro-rated basis, according to the number of hours worked.

b. Group health insurance benefits continue to the end of the month in which separation occurs.

c. Employees who desire to participate in the Group Health Insurance Plan must complete the required forms for participation or sign a statement declining such insurance.

d. All employees, taking advantage of the provisions of this Group Health Insurance, hereby agree to a monthly withholding of premium rates as follows:

Effective until December 31, 1996:

(1) The County will pay one hundred (100) percent of the total premium for the dependent and single coverage employee.

Effective on January 1, 1997:

(1) The County will pay one hundred (100) percent of the total premium for the dependent and single coverage employee for employees employed as of December 31, 1996.

(2) The Employee will pay 20% of the difference between the single rate and the other rates for those employees hired on or after January 1, 1997, and the County will pay the balance.

Effective on January 1, 2000:

(1) Employees hired on or after January 1, 2000, will contribute 20% of the premium for the health insurance plan, regardless of the type of plan selected (single, family or other)*.

Effective on January 1, 2016:

(1) All employees selecting POS-A plan will contribute 10% more of their premium, regardless of the plan selected. All employees selecting POS-C or PPO-500 plans will contribute to the plan as referenced above in section d.

* Employees hired on or after September 18, 2003, were contributing 32% of the premium, regardless of the type of plan selected. However, this provision was repealed effective January 1, 2006.

(1) Any employee separating from Aroostook County employment is eligible for the opportunity to continue health benefits under the provisions of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (COBRA). Separating employees should check with the County Commissioners' Office for current details within thirty (30) days after leaving.

e. The Aroostook County Government will offer stipends to full-time employees and full-time elected officials who do not participate in the County's health insurance to the fullest. Stipends are awarded on an annual basis and do not become part of the employee's wages. It is the employee's responsibility to request the stipend. After stipend request has been received and approved, that request will be honored prospectively until a change of status occurs. Stipends are subject to all applicable federal and state taxes. Stipends are pro-rated on a monthly basis and will be paid to the employee through payroll on the last pay week of each month that the employee qualifies. Employees are not provided stipends for dropping dependents that are no longer eligible for health insurance coverage under the County's group plan. Employees who qualify for a stipend by dropping the County's health insurance for themselves or dependents (eligible for health insurance coverage with the County) must be able to demonstrate that they or their dependents have other health insurance coverage. Stipends will not be implemented until verification of insurance is provided to Aroostook County Government.

Please note: stipend amounts are subject to change. Please contact the Human Resources Office to get up-to-date stipend amounts.

Stipends are as follows:

An employee, with no dependents eligible for the County's health insurance, who does not take coverage for himself, shall receive:

$1,092.73 per year

An employee, eligible for Employee/Child coverage, who drops the child coverage, reverting the employee to single coverage, shall receive:

$1,147.37 per year

An employee drops his coverage and child coverage, and therefore is not covered on the County's insurance,
shall receive:

$1,966.91 per year

An employee who has spouse eligible for family coverage on the County's insurance and does not cover the
spouse, shall receive:

$874.18 per year

An employee who has dependents eligible for family coverage on the County's health insurance and does not cover those dependents (employees would have single rate coverage), shall receive:

$1,693.73 per year

An employee along with dependents who are eligible for family coverage on the County's health insurance and does not cover himself and dependents shall receive:

$2,895.73 per year

An employee whose spouse works for the County, and both qualify separately for the County's health insurance (the stipend will be paid to the employee who is not the contract employee on the health insurance) shall receive:

$874.18 per year

3. Health Insurance for Retirees

a Effective January 1, 2000:

Employees, and elected officials, retiring from Aroostook County Government may receive health insurance benefits as follows:

- must be retired from Aroostook County Government on or after January 1, 2000;
- must have twenty (20) years of service with the Aroostook County Government;
- cannot be covered by more than one health insurance policy;
- Aroostook County Government will contribute 50% of the cost of the single plan coverage and the retiree will contribute 50%;
- The retiree will pay the full premium for the single plan and the County will reimburse the retiree 50% of the cost of the single plan;
- At age 65, or Medicare eligible age, the retiree may elect to continue coverage by paying for the full cost of the plan.

4. Term Life Insurance

a Full-time employees, working forty (40) hours or more per week on a regular basis, and elected officials are eligible for coverage under a term life policy. The policy shall not be less than twenty thousand ($20,000) and will be fully paid for by the Aroostook County Government, Coverage will be effective the first of the month following thirty (30) days of employment.

Part-time employees who are receiving term life insurance upon the adoption date of this policy will continue to receive these benefits for the duration of their uninterrupted employment with County Government.

All regularly scheduled, part-time employees, not on-call, working 30 hours or more per week, will be eligible for term life insurance, on a pro-rated basis, according to the number of hours worked.

5 Additional Insurance

a Payroll deduction for additional insurance may be available at the discretion of the Board of County Commissioners.

B. Retirement Benefits

1. All full-time employees must participate in the Maine Public Employees Retirement System (MainePERS). This is an employer/employee shared contribution program. Full-time and part-time elected officials and the Chief Administrative Officer have the option of participating in MainePERS.

2. Part-time employees, who are regularly scheduled twenty (20) hours a week or more, must participate in MainePERS . Other employees who do not meet this criteria must participate in the Social Security System. Full-time and part-time elected officials and the Chief Administrative Officer, who elect not to participate in MainePERS, must participate in the Social Security System.

3. Deferred Compensation Plan. All full-time employees and elected officials are entitled to participate in a deferred compensation plan at the employee's expense. Any changes to the plan will be submitted by the County Administrator for approval by the Board of County Commissioners.

C Other Payroll Deduction Plans

1. Christmas Club: Full-time and regularly scheduled part-time employees, working twenty (20) hours a week or more, may elect to participate in the Christmas Club Program.

2 The Aroostook County Government may offer, at no cost to the County, a group cancer insurance, group term life insurance, accident insurance, and short-term disability insurance provided by a vendor selected by the County. Aroostook County Government does not administer these plans.

3. The Aroostook County Government may offer, at no cost to the County, a group income protection program.

4. The Aroostook County Government may offer, at no cost to the County, a dental insurance plan.

5. The Aroostook County Government may offer, at no cost to the County, a vision plan.

6. All other payroll deduction plans must be approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

7. The County has a section 125 plan, which allows deductions to be pre-tax for health insurance, cancer insurance, accident, vision and dental insurance. Deferred compensation plans offered by the County are also pre-tax.

IX. TRAVEL POLICY

A. Lodging and Meal Expenses

Employees on authorized travel shall be entitled to expenses of necessary meals. The County Administrator will notify Department Heads of the maximum allowable expenses for in-state and out-of-state travel.

All authorized Aroostook County Government employees shall use an Aroostook County Government credit card for payment. When an Aroostook County Government credit card is used, all purchases are tax exempt. Receipts shall be required for reimbursement of lodging and meals.

Reimbursement claims for lodging and meal expenses must be filled out by the employee on proper expense forms, reviewed and approved by the Department Head at least monthly. Expense accounts that exceed the forty-five (45) day limit may not be reimbursed.

B. Vehicle Mileage

The rate of reimbursement for travel mileage will be at rates as established by the Board of County Commissioners. Mileage will be charged only for official Aroostook County Government business. This does not include to or from home to established work site.

Whenever possible, travel should be with an Aroostook County Government-owned vehicle, particularly for out-of-County travel. Aroostook County Government employees are encouraged to car pool and schedule business trips to reduce costs.

Reimbursement claims for mileage must be filled out by the employee on proper expense forms and reviewed and approved by the Department Head at least monthly. Expense accounts that exceed the forty-five (45) day limit may not be reimbursed.

C. Out-of-State Travel

All out-of-state travel must be approved by the County Administrator prior to departure.

X. EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

A. General

The nature of the services provided by Aroostook County Government places a high degree of responsibility upon all employees. Their actions have a direct influence upon the quality of services provided and upon the total effectiveness of the Aroostook County Government, Therefore, employees engaging in activities damaging to the goals set by the Board of County Commissioners may be subject to disciplinary action.

B. Nepotism

Aroostook County Government is committed to a policy of employment and advancement based on qualifications and merit. Due to potential, perceived or actual conflicts, such as favoritism or personal conflicts from outside the work environment which can be carried into the daily working relationship, the following restrictions apply to the hiring of family members/relatives.

Family members of current County employees may be hired if they meet the following criteria: family members cannot supervise family members and family members cannot work in the same department or division, in any capacity. Current employees who are in this situation at the time of this policy takes effect are exempt. However, current employees who are related may not be transferred or promoted into positions where they will be supervised by a family member/relative as defined below. Family member is defined as any of the following:

-spouse	-present-in-laws(includes brother, sister, father, mother, son and daughter)	
-child	-grandchild	-nephew
-parent	-step relatives	-niece
-brother	-first cousin	-domestic partner (as defined by state law)
-sister	-aunt	-couple/significant others
-spouse's grandparent	-uncle	-fiance

Employees are responsible for immediately reporting any changes in relationships, relevant to this policy, to their supervisor. This policy applies to all current and potential employees. This policy excludes volunteers.

C. Public Announcements

All public announcements concerning Aroostook County Government, with the exception of direct law enforcement matters, must be cleared through the County Administrator's Office. Should an employee wish to make a public announcement as a private citizen, the employee shall not speak for the Aroostook County Government. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

D. Outside Employment

An Aroostook County Government employee may engage in outside employment if it does not interfere with job performance and does not conflict or appear to conflict with the interests of the Aroostook County Government. The Aroostook County Government will not adjust hours or place of employment if such are necessary for the outside employment by the Aroostook County Government employee.

E. Political Activities

Political activities must conform with State and Federal rules and regulations, and 30-A, M.R.S.A., Section 355.

F. Telephone

Much of our business is conducted over the telephone with our citizens. We ask your cooperation in restricting personal phone calls to those of an emergency nature. Whenever possible, please make necessary calls during your break or lunch time.

Telephone courtesy is essential. When you answer your phone, state the name of your department and then your name. Always find out the person you are speaking with in case any follow-up action is required. Be concise in your conversation and always advise if you are unable to keep a commitment. Remember, to the person with whom you are talking, you are representing Aroostook County Government.

G. Habitual Absence

Employees who are habitually absent from work due to illness or physical impairment shall, at request of the Aroostook County Government, furnish

proof of such illness or impairment and statement of physical fitness signed by an accredited physician prior to being returned to a work assignment. Habitual absence without proper written medical proof may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

H. Non-Solicitation/Non-Distribution

Non-employees are not permitted to engage in solicitation or distribution of literature for any purpose in or on County property. Employees may not engage in solicitation of another employee for any purpose during that employee's work time, or during their own working time. In addition, employees may not distribute literature to another employee during that employee's working time, or during their own working time, in any working area.

Occasionally, the County may conduct charitable solicitations for the purpose of acquiring or maintaining good will in the community, consistent with its business interests. Any questions regarding charitable solicitations should be directed to the County Administrator.

XI. SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

A. Employee Resignation

1. All employees will provide written notification of their intent to resign ten (10) working days prior to the final date of employment. This notification shall be presented to the Department Head who, in turn, will notify the County Administrator.

2. If an employee fails to give proper notice, the occurrence shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

B. Employee Retirement/Separation

1. All employees will provide written notification of their intent to retire thirty (30) calendar days prior to final date of employment.

2. An employee submitting proper retirement notification will receive payment for accrued vacation time.

3. An employee who separates, in good standing, after ten (10)

years of continuous employment shall receive twenty-five (25) percent of the employee's accumulated sick leave. Employees with hire dates prior to August 31, 1993, may receive fifty (50) percent of their accumulated sick leave upon retirement if they have completed at least ten (10) years of continuous service.

4. Retired employees may be eligible for health insurance benefits, See Article VIII, A.3.

5. Retirement from Aroostook County Government and re-employment for appointed officials may be permitted for part-time employment at the discretion of the County Commissioners.

C. Lay-off

1. Any full-time or part-time employee may be laid off whenever it is necessary to reduce the number of employees because of lack of funds, budgetary reasons or decisions, change of program, shortage of work or for related reasons.

2. No full-time or part-time employee shall be laid off except upon written notice not less than two (2) weeks before the effective date of the lay-off.

3. The employee will not accrue sick leave or annual leave during a lay-off period.

4. Laid-off regular employees who are rehired within twelve (12) months following lay-off shall be reinstated with no loss of seniority.

XII. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

A. Reasonable Cause

1. Any action(s) which reflect discredit upon Aroostook County Government or hinders the effective performance of the Aroostook County Government's duties and services will be considered to be reasonable cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Such action may include inefficiency, incompetence, insubordination, misconduct, immoral conduct, intoxication, illicit use of drugs, offenses against the law, violation of the personnel rules of Aroostook County Government, or willful or repeated violations of any rules or requirements set forth in this manual or otherwise in effect.

B. Administering Disciplinary Action

1. General

Aroostook County Government seeks to maintain fair and consistent handling of all cases of disciplinary action. The Board of County Commissioners, County Administrator, along with the Department Head, will, therefore, weigh carefully all of the circumstances before initiating disciplinary action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, written warning, suspensions, demotions and termination of employment. The Aroostook County Government reserves the right, in its discretion and depending upon the circumstances, to bypass any and all of these steps and to proceed immediately to greater discipline, including termination, if warranted by the circumstances.

2. Warnings

The following disciplinary measures are for illustrative purposes only. The Aroostook County Government, in sole discretion, reserves the right to bypass any or all of the following levels of discipline and proceed immediately to greater discipline, including but not limited to terminations, as circumstances warrant. Warnings will be given by the Department Head.

a. Oral Warnings

An oral warning is an oral statement by the Department Head to an employee, pointing out an unsatisfactory element(s) of job performance. It is intended to be corrective or cautionary. It defines the area of needed improvement, and informs the employee that failure to improve may result in more serious action(s). Oral warnings will be noted in writing in the employee's personnel file.

b Written Warnings

A written warning shall state why the employee's conduct was unsatisfactory, suggesting remedies and goals by the Department Head, and a timetable for resolving the conduct. If a written warning is provided, the employee may respond to the warning in writing. The written warning will be placed in the employee's personnel file and is not subject to appeal.

3. Demotions

a. A demotion is a lowering of the employee's position within Aroostook County Government.

b. Department Heads may, with the advice and consent of the County Administrator, reduce the salary of any employee within their range on the

compensation plan or demote an employee to a lower category on the compensation plan.

c. Procedure:

(1) Demotions will be made by the Department Head, with the advice and consent of the County Administrator. The Department Head will include all the facts concerning said demotion in a written statement.

(2) A written notice of the reason for pay reduction or demotion shall be furnished to the employee and a copy filed with the County Administrator within five (5) days prior to the effective date of the reduction or demotion.

(3) If the employee is not satisfied with the demotion, the right of appeal is guaranteed.

4. Suspension and/or Administrative Leave

Suspension is a temporary absence from work that is required of an employee for disciplinary reasons. Any employee may be suspended with or without pay and benefits as warranted by the circumstances. Suspension shall be for a period not to exceed thirty (30) calendar days in any twelve (12) month period. Administrative leave is a temporary absence from work that is required of any employee for administrative and/or non-disciplinary reasons.

a Procedure:

(1) Suspensions will be made by the Department Head, with the advice and consent of the County Administrator. The Department Head will include all facts concerning said suspension in a written statement. Written notice of suspension from the Department Head to the employee will list the reasons for such action. A copy of the notice will be filed with the County Administrator within five (5) days after the effective date of such suspension.

(2) If the employee is not satisfied with the suspension, the right of appeal is guaranteed.

(3) Under emergency conditions, a Department Head may suspend an employee with pay. A written notification must be made to the County Administrator within forty- eight (48) hours of any suspension. All other suspension policies remain in force.

5. Termination

a. Termination or dismissal from employment is the most severe action the Aroostook County Government can impose for disciplinary reasons. The Department Head will generally take whatever steps are necessary before termination, but if a serious situation arises and the employee's conduct warrants, the employee will be terminated.

b. When termination is being considered, the Department Head will discuss all the facts of the case with the County Administrator. The facts will be filed in writing.

c. The County Administrator will review the facts and circumstances. If warranted, the County Administrator with prior approval from County Commissioners may issue the employee a written notice of termination, clearly stating the reasons for said termination.

d. A terminated employee will be afforded notice of the cause of the decision and a hearing. Such hearing will be held in accordance with the County's appeal process.

e. Employees terminated, for reasons other than disciplinary, will not be afforded the opportunity of a hearing under the County's appeal process.

XIII. GRIEVANCE AND APPEALS

A. Policy

It shall be the policy of Aroostook County Government to attempt to anticipate grievances or to discover them as soon as they arise. Furthermore, opportunity will be provided for every employee to discuss problems with Department Heads and to find mutually satisfactory solutions as rapidly as possible. In the presentation of grievances, employees are assured freedom from restraint, interference, discrimination or reprisal.

B. Grievance Procedure

Any employee, who believes that they have received inequitable treatment because of some condition of employment, may personally appeal for relief from that condition through the following process:

1. Petition the Department Head:

   An employee is expected to discuss any grievance initially with the Department Head and to submit said grievance in writing. Grievances must be presented within five (5) working days of the alleged incident.

2. If the matter is resolved:

   The Department Head is to submit a dated report to the County Administrator, who shall include the grievance and said Department Head's decision. This report shall be signed by both the employee and the Department Head and shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

3. If the matter is not resolved:

   a. The Department Head is to submit a written, dated report to the County Administrator, which shall include a copy of the grievance, the Department Head's findings and decisions.

   b. The employee may choose to submit the grievance to the County Administrator. This would be applicable in the case of a Department Head wishing to file a grievance.

   c. The grievance must be filed in writing, dated and signed by the employee.

   d. The County Administrator will meet with the parties and attempt to resolve the grievance. If the matter is resolved, the Department Head and employee shall follow the same procedure as if the Department Head and employee had resolved the matter.

e. If the employee does not agree with the decision of the County Administrator, the employee may file an appeal with the Board of County Commissioners.

f. The appeal to the Board of County Commissioners shall be in writing and the decision of the Board of County Commissioners shall be final.

C Appeal Process

The following procedures are established to permit the employee to appeal the Department Head's decisions regarding termination, suspension or demotion. Employees terminated, for reasons other than disciplinary, will not be afforded the opportunity of an appeal of that termination.

1. If an employee is not satisfied with the Department Head's decision, the employee may appeal to the County Administrator.

2. The employee files a written request to the County Administrator for appeal and hearing stating the reasons for disagreeing with the Department Head's decision. The appeal must be made within three (3) working days of the date of the notice of decision by the Department Head.

3. The County Administrator will schedule a meeting. The meeting must be held within five (5) working days of the receipt of appeal, unless both parties agree mutually to extend the time period.

4. The County Administrator shall conduct a meeting with the Department Head and employee in attendance.

5. The County Administrator will attempt to resolve the matter. If the employee does not accept the decision, the employee shall have the right of appeal to the Board of County Commissioners. Appeal by employee shall be made within five (5) days after receiving the decision.

6. The employee will be entitled to counsel at the employee's expense. The District Attorney's Office or other counsel shall represent the interests of Aroostook County Government. Strict rules of evidence need not be followed in conducting the hearing.

7. The Board of County Commissioners will have access to all of the written documents, statements and all material pertinent to the case. In addition, the County Administrator has the power to request the appearance of any other employee or any other witnesses.

8. The Board of County Commissioners' decision must be made, in writing, within fifteen (15) working days of the hearing. The Board of County Commissioners shall notify the Department Head. A copy of the final written decision shall be placed in the employee's personnel file. The decision of the Board of County Commissioners shall be final.

XIV. ETHICAL PRACTICES

All Aroostook County Government employees must recognize that they are public servants and that their actions and behavior influence the image of Aroostook County Government. In contact with the public and other outside areas, the employee must act in such a manner to instill a favorable and positive image and opinion of our organization.

Aroostook County Government employees will not accept gifts, personal loans, entertainment, meals or other consideration from an individual or firm doing business with Aroostook County Government.

Employees will make every effort not to allow actual or apparent influence to exist, which may conflict with the best interests of County Government.

Any employee who receives any payment or gift from a person dealing with the Aroostook County Government will refuse it or return it to the offeror. Repeated attempts by the offeror will be reported to the County Administrator and/or the Board of County Commissioners.

Employees must be aware of any interest or relationship with anyone that may knowingly or unknowingly influence that employee's decisions. In such circumstances, employees who are faced with actual or potential conflicts of interest, must exempt themselves from any decision making process.

Employees must not use Aroostook County Government equipment or property for personal use or gain. Employees will not sell or assign Aroostook County Government property without proper approval, such approval being consistent with approved policies and procedures.

Employees, in the process of performing their work, will often receive or hear information which is considered confidential. The employee should endeavor not to discuss such information publicly, except with those persons whose position it is to receive such information, and otherwise to the extent permitted under the law.

XV. SMOKING POLICY

Aroostook County Government recognizes its responsibility to promote and provide a safe and healthy environment for employees, inmates, visitors and the general public.

Therefore, effective August 1, 1993, Aroostook County Government will become a smoke-free workplace by prohibiting smoking within the confines of County owned and leased buildings/facilities and surrounding grounds.

POLICY

There will be no smoking or use of any tobacco product or any other substance by anyone in the buildings or grounds owned or leased by the County or any County owned vehicle.

Rules governing our position regarding non-smoking are as follows:

A. Adherence to this policy is a condition of employment with Aroostook County Government.

B. Failure to adhere to this non-smoking policy will lead to progressive discipline, including dismissal if necessary.

Everyone associated with Aroostook County Government has a responsibility to promote this policy. The Facilities Manager shall be responsible for ensuring compliance by visitors and the general public. The role of Aroostook County Government is not to force individuals to quit smoking, but provide a safe workplace for everyone, assistance and support to those who do wish to quit, and understanding for those who do not choose to quit.

XVI. ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

It is Aroostook County Government's desire to provide a drug-free, healthful, and safe workplace. To promote this goal, employees are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their jobs in a satisfactory manner.

While representing Aroostook County Government and while conducting business-related activities on Aroostook County Government premises, no employee may use, possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol or engage in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of illegal drugs. Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment. Such violations may also have legal consequences.

The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted on the job only if it does not impair an employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the job effectively and in a safe manner that does not endanger other individuals in the workplace.

Employees with drug or alcohol problems that have not resulted in, and are not the immediate subject of, disciplinary action may request approval to take time off to participate in a rehabilitation or treatment program. Unpaid leave may be granted if the employee agrees to abstain from use of the problem substance; abides by all Aroostook County Government's policies, rules, and prohibitions relating to conduct in the workplace; and if granting the leave will not cause Aroostook County Government any undue hardship.

Employees with questions on this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use in the workplace should raise their concerns with their Supervisor, Department Head or the County Administrator without fear of reprisal.

XVII. SAFETY POLICY

The safety of each employee is of paramount importance to Aroostook County Government.

Aroostook County Government recognizes and will adhere to all safety rules of the State of Maine and those described under the Federal Occupational, Health and Safety Act (OSHA), Maine Department of Labor, the Americans with Disabilities Act and Amendments Act of 2008, and Workers Right to Know Regulations.

Each Department Head will be responsible to incorporate the following practices into the operations of the Aroostook County Government:

1. A periodic safety inspection to find and eliminate unsafe working conditions.
2. Train all employees in good safety practices.
3. Provide employees with the necessary safety equipment when required.
4. Develop and enforce safety rules.
5. Investigate and report both accidents and "near-accidents" and develop specific recommendations to the County Administrator so as to avoid reoccurrence of the same.

Employees who violate the safety practices are subject to disciplinary action by the Department Heads.

Employees are also encouraged to report safety problems along with possible recommendations for corrective action. Individual employees will be recognized for positive participation in this area.

The County Administrator will appoint five (5) employees, utilizing both Department Heads and other staff, to a Safety Committee.

The Safety Committee will select a chair and meet at times designated by the said chair.

The purpose of the Safety Committee shall be to investigate actual and near accidents, tour and review Aroostook County Government facilities and develop recommendations for proper correction of safe and potentially unsafe areas. The Safety Committee chair will be responsible to report, in writing, to the County Administrator on the activities and accomplishment of the Committee.

XVIII. EMPLOYEE HARASSMENT

The Aroostook County Government recognizes the dignity of the individual employee and the essential right of each employee to work in an environment free from intimidation, hostility and offensiveness. Employees may not harass anyone based upon religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, race, ancestry, national origin and physical or mental handicaps. Any such harassment may violate Aroostook County Government policy, and may also constitute discrimination in the conditions of employment.

Examples of harassment related to race, color, sex, national origin, age, religion, or handicap include the following, which may be a series of incidents or a single occurrence:

1. Unwelcome sexual advances, gestures, comments or contact;

2. Threats;

3. Subjecting employees to ridicule, slurs or derogatory actions, offensive jokes;

4. Basing employment decisions or practices on submission to harassment;

5. Refusal to cooperate with employees in performing work assignments;

6. Inequitable disciplinary actions and work assignments.

Employees who believe that they are victims of harassment should promptly report such occurrences, so that they may be dealt with immediately. Under the County discrimination complaint procedures, employees may bring any complaints to their immediate supervisor, Human Resources Office or the County Administrator. Employees are not required to report any such complaints directly to their own supervisor or any other person who may be perceived as participating in the harassment. Complaints will be processed confidentially to the fullest extent possible. All complaints will be thoroughly investigated, and decided on a case-by-case basis. Any employee who believes he or she is being retaliated against for bringing a complaint should report such retaliation immediately to any of the persons listed above.

XIX. POLICY PROHIBITING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment in the workplace is unlawful, and it is also unlawful to retaliate against an employee for making a complaint of sexual harassment or for cooperating in an investigation of such a complaint. The County absolutely prohibits sexual harassment of any employee by a supervisor, a co-worker, a contractor, a vendor or a customer and prohibits retaliation against any employee for making such a complaint or cooperating in the investigation of such a complaint. All supervisory personnel are responsible for enforcing this policy. Failure to do so will be considered a failure to fulfill all the responsibilities of the position.

"Sexual harassment" is defined as "Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of any individual's employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment."

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior which is unwelcome.

Examples of sexual harassment may include but are not limited to: 1) repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions; 2) continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature; 3) graphic or degrading verbal comments about an individual or his or her appearance; 4) the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and 5) any offensive or abusive physical contact.

In addition, no one should imply or threaten that an applicant or employee's "cooperation" of a sexual nature (or refusal thereof) will have any effect on the individual's employment, assignment, compensation, advancement, career development, or any other condition of employment.

Any employee who experiences sexual harassment is requested to immediately report the matter to one of the following persons:

- Your immediate supervisor **OR**
- Directly to Human Resources Office 144 Sweden Street, Suite 1, Caribou, Maine 04736 (207) 493-3318 **OR**
- Directly to County Administrator **144** Sweden Street, Suite 1, Caribou, Maine 04736 (207) 493-3318.

The County will immediately investigate any complaint of sexual harassment. Any employee who is determined, after investigation, to have harassed another employee in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Employees have the legal right to file a complaint of sexual harassment with the Maine Human Rights Commission, and are protected by law from retaliation for exercising this right:

Maine Human Rights Commission
51 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0051
207-624-6050

XX. HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

1. Any employee who feels he/she has been a victim of harassment of any kind should contact the Human Resources Office or County Administrator within fifteen (15) days of the incident. Investigations will be conducted with as much confidentiality as possible, respecting the rights of all parties involved. All employees are expected to cooperate in any investigation of harassment.

   This initial complaint of harassment can be oral or written, but a written and signed statement of the complaint must be submitted by the complainant within three (3) days of the initial complaint before an investigation can proceed. Failure to provide the written and signed statement in the designated time limit will be considered a withdrawal of the complaint.

2. Upon receipt of the written complaint from the complainant, the Human Resources Office, County Administrator or in unique circumstances, a designated investigator, will contact the person who allegedly initiated the harassment and inform the person of the basis of the complaint and provide the opportunity to respond within five (5) days to the complaint, in writing.

   Failure of the respondent to comply with the five (5) day time limit, will be considered a waiver of their right to dispute the allegation(s) and the appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, if circumstances warrant such action(s).

3. The Human Resources Office, the County Administrator or a designated investigator will conduct a thorough investigation into the complaint, including interviews with any potential witnesses, as necessary. The investigation will be done as confidentially as possible and all necessary parties are expected to cooperate.

4. The investigator will have fourteen (14) days from the receipt of the respondent's written statement to complete the investigation. At the discretion of the investigator, the fourteen (14) day time frame may be extended.

   A confidential report will be submitted to the County Commissioners. The County Commissioners will conduct a thorough review of the facts of the report and determine whether harassment has occurred and an appropriate course of action, if warranted. Both the complainant and the respondent will be notified of the County Commissioners' decision. The decision shall be final and binding.

XXI. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The County complies with all affirmative action policies and practices required by law and applies equal opportunity law and principles to all employment decisions. Inquiries or concerns regarding affirmative action or equal opportunity should be directed to the Human Resources Office.

XXII. HIV INFECTION AND OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Existence of HIV Infection and other communicable diseases will not preclude hiring of an individual, either as a part-time or full-time employee.

Existence of HIV Infection and other communicable diseases will not preclude the advancement of an individual.

Individuals who make it known that they are HIV positive or have other communicable infections will not be prevented from working for Aroostook County Government as long as they are able to perform their assigned duties and not jeopardize the health of other employees.

As with any other prolonged or special medical condition, a staff member with AIDS or positive HIV antibody tests is expected to inform their supervisor of such condition, which may prevent regular and reliable work attendance or performance. This information, by law and by Aroostook County Government policy, will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. The State of Maine law prohibits disclosing a positive HIV antibody test result without the person's written permission. **Any violation in confidentiality, therefore, will be cause for strong disciplinary action including the likely result of dismissal of the person responsible for the violation.**

Unless there is new, positive medical evidence to the contrary, requests for transfer to avoid another employee who may be HIV or other communicable disease positive, will be denied.

XXIII. ENERGY CONSERVATION

Each employee is encouraged to develop and execute practices that conserve and reduce energy usage.

Suggestions and recommendations for energy conservation should be submitted to the Department Head. Any outstanding recommendations will be recognized and may be adopted by the Aroostook County Government.

A copy of all written energy conservation recommendations submitted by the employee and actually adopted by the Aroostook County Government will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

XXIV. PURCHASING AND DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY POLICY

A. Bids, Awards and Contracts

1. The County Administrator shall act as the purchasing agent for all departments and offices of the Aroostook County Government.

2. The County Administrator is responsible for the proper bid procedures as described in Title 30-A, section 124, "bids, awards and contracts".

   a. Any contract for construction, renovation or improvement of county buildings or facilities involving a total cost of $2,500.00 or more must be awarded by a system of competitive bidding.

   b. Except for purchases through the State, the County Administrator shall make all purchases over $2,500.00 of services, supplies, material and equipment needed by the county, or any department or agency of the county, by competitive bidding. Title 5, section 1825-A governs these purchases as far as applicable. Title 5, section 1825-B, subsection 2, paragraph A governs purchases through the State.

   c. The procurement of goods or services that involves the expenditure of $10,000.00 or less may be accepted by oral proposal or bids. The Board of County Commissioners shall have sole discretion on whether oral proposal or bids as opposed to sealed proposal or bids shall be accepted.

B. Sale and Disposition of Surplus Property and Equipment

1. The County Administrator shall be responsible for the proper sale and disposition of county owned surplus property and equipment.

2. The following shall govern the sale and disposition of county owned surplus property and equipment.

a. Estimated value up to and including $2,500.00

   Notice of sale shall be posted in county facilities, and published in at least one (1) local weekly newspaper and/or on the County's website at the discretion of the County Administrator. Notice shall contain description and quantity of items to be sold, and the date and time of said sale.

b. Estimated value of more than $2,500.00

   Sale or disposition of surplus property and equipment shall be by sealed bids. Notice shall be posted in all county owned facilities, and published in at least one (1) local weekly newspaper and on the County's website. Notice shall contain description and quantity of items to be sold. Notice shall also list when and where bids are due, and date, time and place of bid opening. Bids shall be awarded to highest bidder.

c. The County Administrator may authorize "garage sales" on a regular basis for the sale and disposition of surplus property and equipment.

d. The Board of County Commissioners reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids.

XXV. E-MAIL & INTERNET USAGE

E-mail is for business use, not personal use. It is property of Aroostook County Government. The Aroostook County Government may from time to time examine e-mail or other computer files or documents of any employee within the organization. For this reason, employees should not commit anything to e-mail which is so personal or private that they would not wish others to see it. E-mail is not to be used to solicit others for commercial or non-commercial purpose including, but not limited to, bake sales, Girl Scout cookies, Tupperware, charities, social, political or other purposes.

All County employees required to use a computer and email for County business will be required to use the County email address assigned to the employee. This email address will be used for County business and is the property of Aroostook County Government.

Internet access to global electronic information resources on the World Wide Web is provided by the Aroostook County Government to assist employees in obtaining work-related data and technology. The following guidelines have been established to help ensure responsible and productive Internet usage. While Internet usage is intended for job-related activities, incidental and occasional brief personal use is permitted within reasonable limits.

All Internet data that is composed, transmitted, or received via our computer communications systems is considered to be part of the official record of the Aroostook County Government and, as such, is subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties. Consequently, employees should always ensure that the business information contained in Internet email messages and other transmissions is accurate, appropriate, ethical, and lawful.

The equipment, services, and technology provided to access the Internet remain at all times the property of the Aroostook County Government. As such, the Aroostook County Government reserves the right to monitor Internet traffic, and retrieve and read any data composed, sent, or received through our online connections and stored in our computer systems.

Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed, or received via the Internet must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or disruptive to any employee or other person. Examples of unacceptable content may include, but are not limited to, sexual comments or images, racial slurs, or any other comments or images that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, national origin, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

The unauthorized use, installation, copying, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or patented material on the Internet is expressly prohibited. As a general rule, if an employee did not create material, does not own the rights to it, or has not gotten' authorization for its use, it should not be put on the Internet. Employees are also responsible for ensuring that the person sending any material over the Internet has the appropriate distribution rights.

Internet users should take the necessary anti-virus precautions before downloading or copying any file from the Internet. All downloaded files are to be checked for viruses; all compressed files are to be checked before and after decompression.

Abuse of the Internet access provided by the Aroostook County Government in violation of law or the Aroostook County Government policies will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees may also be held personally liable for any violations of this policy. The following behaviors are examples of previously stated or additional actions and activities that are prohibited and can result in disciplinary action:

- Sending, forwarding or posting discriminatory, harassing, or threatening messages or images;
- Stealing, using, or disclosing someone else's code or password without authorization;
- Violating copyright law;
- Failing to observe licensing agreements;
- Engaging in unauthorized transactions that may incur a cost to the organization or initiate unwanted Internet services and transmissions;

- Sending, forwarding or posting messages or material that could damage the organization's image or reputation;
- Participating in the viewing or exchange of pornography or obscene materials;
- Sending, forwarding or posting messages that defame or slander other individuals;
- Sending, forwarding or posting chain letters, solicitations, or advertisements not related to business purposes or activities;
- Using the Internet for political causes or activities, religious activities, or any sort of gambling;
- Jeopardizing the security of the organization's electronic communications systems;
- Sending anonymous email messages;
- Engaging in any illegal activities;
- Engaging in social networking sites such as, but not limited to MySpace, Facebook, etc., for personal use during work time and using the County's computer equipment.

APPENDIX A-1
CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PLAN

A well-administered program of salary administration helps any organization attract and retain competent employees. It clarifies for employees what is expected of them and motivates employees to improve their performance in the responsibilities assigned to them. A well-administered program also ensures that the salaries paid are internally fair and externally competitive, and provides a means for budgeting and controlling salary expense.

The Classification and Compensation Plan adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on April 1, 1998 is fair, competitive and responsive. The Plan may be modified to compensate for cost of living adjustments.

1. JOB DESCRIPTIONS

A. Appointed Officials and Non-Union Employees
- Administration
- District Attorney's Office
- Sheriff's Department
- Registry of Deeds
- Registry of Probate
- Emergency Management Agency
- Buildings and Grounds

B. Union Employees Assigned to the Sheriff's Department

Individual position job descriptions are filed with the County Commissioners' Office and are available from the Human Resources Coordinator.

2. WAGE/SALARY STRUCTURE

   A. Full-Time Exempt Positions

   B. Full-Time Non-Exempt Positions

   C. Full-Time Union Positions

   D. Part-Time Exempt and Non-Exempt Positions

      1. Judge of Probate

      2. County Treasurer

      3. Fire Marshal

      4. Deputy Sheriff, Corrections Officer, Dispatch

      5. Cook, Transport Aide, All Others

      6. Victim/Witness Advocate, Hazard Mitigation Planner, EMA Secretary

A copy of the salary structure is on file in the County Commissioners' Office or Human Resources Office.

APPENDIX B

AROOSTOOK COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICY
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I have received a copy of the Aroostook County Personnel Policy Manual ("Manual"). I understand that this Manual supercedes and replaces all other policies, procedures, guides, statements and understandings previously issued by the Aroostook County Commissioners concerning the terms and conditions of my employment with the County.

I understand that it is my responsibility to read the Manual and to discuss anything in this Manual I do not understand with the County Administrator.

I understand that during my probationary period, as set forth in the Manual, my employment with the County is "at will". I understand that during the probationary period, I have the right to terminate my employment with the County at any time, for any reason or no reason, with or without cause, with or without prior notice, and with no right of hearing. I understand and acknowledge that the Aroostook County Commissioners retain the same rights.

I understand and acknowledge that the provisions of this Manual, and any other Aroostook County Commissioner's policies, procedures and statements, are not intended to create, or do not create, any contractual rights of any kind on the part of any employee of the County. I understand that no implied contract concerning any term or condition of employment can be established by any conduct or practice of the Aroostook County Commissioners.

I understand that the Aroostook County Commissioners reserve the right, in the sole discretion of the County, to modify, revoke, suspend, terminate or deviate from any of its policies or procedures, including this Personnel Policy, in whole or in part, at any time, with or without cause, and with or without prior notice. The interpretation, application and administration of all Aroostook County policies and procedures, including those in this Manual, shall rest exclusively with the Aroostook County Commissioners.

I understand that no agent, employee or representative of the County has the authority to make any promise or agreement contrary to the foregoing, unless it is in writing and signed by the Aroostook County Commissioners.

I understand that this Acknowledgement Form will be kept in my personnel file.

_____
Employee Name (Print)

_____
Employee Signature

_____
Date