



OTSEGO COUNTY EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

OTSEGO COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES
225 WEST MAIN STREET, SUITE 203
GAYLORD, MICHIGAN 49735

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page Number
HISTORY	1-2
MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT AND CORE VALUES	
Mission Statement	3
Vision Statement	3
Core Values	3
APPLICABILITY FOR UNION CONTRACT EMPLOYEES	4
CONTRACT DISCLAIMER AND AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT	5
MANAGEMENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
General	6
Board of Commissioners	6
Personnel Committee	6
Department Managers	6
ETHICS AND CONDUCT	
Code of Ethics	7
Professionalism	7
Fraud	8-10
Disciplinary Action	10-11
Confidentiality	11
Drug-Free Work Environment	11-12
Open Door Policy	12
Anti-Harassment Policy	12-13
Examples of Harassment	13
Complaint Procedures	14
Conclusion	14
EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES	
Equal Employment Opportunity	15
New Employee Orientation	15
Job Vacancies	15
Department Head Hiring Process	16
Promotion	16
Physical Examination/Background Check	16
Resignation Procedures	16-17

Exit Interview	17
Re-Employment	17
Internal Complaint Procedures	17-18
EMPLOYEE STATUS	
Probationary	19
Regular Full-time	19
Regular Part-time	19-20
Temporary	20
Irregular Part-time	20
Provisional	20
Exempt	20
Non-Exempt	20
SALARY STRUCTURE	
Total Compensation	21
Initial Salary	21
Salaried Employees	21
Step Increases	22
Merit Increases	22
Pay Rates in Transfer, Promotion and Demotion	22
Position Reclassification Policy	23
EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS	
Attendance Policy	24
Office Hours	24
Work Breaks	24
Employee Time Report Sheets	24
Overtime Work and Pay	25
Compensatory Time	25-26
On-Call/Emergency Call Back Pay	26
Inclement Weather Policy	26-27
Pay Day	27
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	
Unemployment Compensation Insurance	28
Disability and Accident Insurance Policy	28
Direct Deposit	28
Hospitalization/Medical Coverage	28
Healthcare Opt Out Stipend	28
Dental and Vision Insurance	29
HIPAA Policy and Procedure	29
HIPAA Disciplinary Policy and Procedure	29
Retirement	30

Vacation	30-31
Holiday Observances/Pay	31-32
LEAVES OF ABSENCES AND OTHER TIME OFF	
Personal Leave	33
Funeral Leave	34
Military Leave	34
Family and Medical Leave	34-37
Jury Duty and Court Appearances	37
Illness	37
Administrative Inquiry Leave	37
Returning From Leave	37
EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS	
Bulletin Boards	38
Email Communication	38
Payroll Inserts	38
COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S COMPENSATION	
Salary	39
Benefits	39
Per Diem	39
Definitions, Inclusions and Exclusions	39-40
ACTIONS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	
Personnel Actions	41
Departmental Rules and Regulations	41
Departmental Program/Policy Implementation	41
Vehicle Policy	42-43
Electronic Communications/Internet Policy	43-46
Laptop Computer Policy	46-47
Lawsuits	47
Emergency Service Request	48
Citizen Complaints	48-49
Implementation	49
Complaint Administration	49
Documentation	49
Acceptance of Complaint	49
Preliminary Findings	49-50
Procedure	50-51
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	52
BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT POLICY	53-54

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Safety Committee	55
Safety Boot Allowance Policy	55
Workplace Accidents	55
Violence Free Workplace Policy	55-56

GENERAL INFORMATION

Attire and Appearance	57
Employee Identification Cards	57
Keys	57
Personnel Files	57-58
Record Retention	59
Solicitation	59
Employment of Relatives	59-60
Secondary Employment	60
Employment of Minors	60-61
Smoking	61
Telephone Courtesy	61
Cell Phone Usage Policy	62-64

TRAVEL AND OTHER OFFICIAL EXPENDITURES

Conventions, Education, Seminars, Etc.	65
Travel and Expense Reimbursements	65-67

FORMS

Employee Harassment Complaint Form	68
Family/Medical Leave Request Form	
Vacation Request Form	

HISTORY

Otsego County occupies the highest lands of the great central plateau of Northern Michigan, comprising the main watershed that sends the headwaters of the Cheboygan River toward the North, the Au Sable toward the East and the Manistee toward the West.

Our county was first laid out in 1840 and given the name Okkudo; a Native American word for “sickly” or “stomach pain” by Henry Schoolcraft. The name was changed to Otsego by an act of legislature in March 1843. There are several interpretations as to the origin of the name Otsego. Schoolcraft, thought Otsego was a derivation of the Iroquois words denoting “bodies of water” and “beautiful”. In the first issue of the New York Otsego Herald published in 1795, the opinion is that the word conveys the idea of a spot where meetings are held. The historical marker in front of our courthouse and several short local histories define Otsego as meaning “clear water”.

It is believed there was once an Indian village on the southern shore of Otsego Lake. However, Otsego County remained a vast, unpopulated wilderness, safe for the occasional visiting trapper until A. A. Dwight brought a logging crew to the county in 1868 and constructed log cabins along Crooked Lake, now known as Manuka Lake.

By the spring of 1869 Charles Brink and a crew of 14 men cleared acreage for farming and Brink’s wife, Jane was the first white woman in the county.

Otsego County was one of the last counties opened for settlement due to problems of inaccessibility. The first attempts at permanent settlement did not occur until 1868 and the first state road in the county, from Mancelona to Otsego Lake was cut through the southern section of the county in 1869 and 1870.

Otsego County lost a portion of land before its first settlers had arrived. Hudson Township, which made up the Northwest corner of the county was removed and added to the Charlevoix area to give them enough land to establish their own county government after a dispute with Petoskey over the location of the county seat in Emmet County.

In the fall of 1872, the Village of Otsego Lake was established and the railroad reached the Otsego Lake area about this same time. Shortly after, the first settlers located on the present site of Gaylord. The village was platted in 1873 by O. M. Barnes of Lansing and was first named Barnes in his honor. The name soon changed to Gaylord in honor of Augustine Smith Gaylord, an attorney for the Jackson, Lansing, Saginaw railroad, although the reason for doing so is not clear.

Within three years the Otsego area had progressed to the point that it could organize itself as a county and on March 12, 1875 Otsego Lake Township detached itself from Antrim County and organized into the County of Otsego. The county at that time consisted of four townships: Otsego Lake, Charlton, Livingston and Elmira. In 1876, the citizens of Gaylord began a campaign to move the county seat and emerged victorious in the spring of 1877 election, but it took a ruling from the Michigan Supreme Court to end the dispute. Five more townships were later established, for a total of nine: Corwith (1877), Hayes (1877), Dover (1879), Bagley (1882) and Chester (1888).

Located on the 45th parallel, Otsego County has continued to grow and flourish and now boasts of its nine townships, the City of Gaylord and the villages of Waters, Elmira, Vanderbilt and Johannesburg. Latest census population for the county is 24,164 with nearly 4,500 residing in the City of Gaylord.

Farming continues to be a major economic activity. However, the county is well known as a popular four-season vacation spot, attracting thousands to the area for golfing, swimming, boating, skiing, snowmobiling, fishing, hunting and in general the opportunity to experience northern Michigan at its finest. From the chilly waters of the rivers, which flow through the area to its many lakes, to the miles of untainted forest area, Otsego County represents not only clear waters but clean living and community pride.

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT AND CORE VALUES

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Otsego County Government is to provide effective services to all our citizens in the most efficient manner to enhance the quality of life for all.

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to guide future growth for the betterment of the entire County. To enable us to do this, we will respond in an innovative and progressive manner. Individuals will be trained to become cooperative team members and will be guided by strong role models that will display commitment, cooperation and communication. By promoting a workforce that will provide leadership, both internally and externally, we will be able to facilitate the development of a staff that will meet the needs of emerging technology and ever-changing job requirements.

CORE VALUES

We believe that structure should not conflict with what is best for our employees. We believe in a structure that will allow individuals the maximum amount of freedom to perform and participate. We feel that this will stimulate initiative, innovation and a spirit that we believe will become the cornerstone of our success as a County.

We will communicate regularly with our employees and our constituents in the County. Quality is expected from every employee in all forms of work they perform.

We will re-evaluate ways we are doing things today; rather than defend the ways we have always done things.

APPLICABILITY WHERE UNION CONTRACT COVERS YOUR EMPLOYMENT

This employee handbook is not intended to supersede provisions in a Union contract that is currently enforced with any and all of the represented Unions. If you are an employee whose position with the County falls under a Union contract, please consult your contract for specific details. Many of the policies set forth in this Policy Manual which are not covered by a Union contract do apply to the members of bargaining units and have been previously enforced and distributed.

Employees represented by a Union contract will be compensated according to the specifications of their contract. The following Unions represent employees of Otsego County:

- Teamsters State, County and Municipal Workers, Local 214, Clerical
- Teamsters State, County and Municipal Workers, Local 214, Incentive Bus
- Police Officers Labor Council
- Police Officers Association of Michigan (Corrections)

Union contracts may be secured from the Human Resources Director.

The policies in this handbook do not apply to the following positions: Prosecuting Attorney, Sheriff, Clerk, Treasurer, Commissioners and the County Administrator. It is, however, the hope of the Board of Commissioners that the people in these positions will follow the policies set forth.

CONTRACT DISCLAIMER AND AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

Otsego County employees serve at the will of the County. The County issues personnel policies and this handbook to acquaint employees with the benefits, philosophies, procedures and policies of the County. The language in this handbook is not intended to create, nor is it to be construed to constitute a contract between the County and any of its employees for either employment or the providing of any benefit.

The County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to alter, modify, amend or discontinue any policy and benefit in any manner, at any time. In addition, both the County and its employees retain the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice.

Nothing contained in any document published by the County shall in any way modify the above provisions nor can these terms be modified in any way by any oral or written representations other than an action taken by the Board of Commissioners.

MANAGEMENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

GENERAL

The County Government is charged with the responsibility to coordinate, plan and control County operations, the direction of its employees, including determining the size and composition of its workforce and the method by which services are delivered. Management's rights include, but are not limited to the following:

To hire, suspend, discipline and discharge employees; promote or transfer employees; relieve employees from duty because of lack of work for other legitimate reasons at its sole discretion; to determine the method and delivery of services and what services will be delivered by the County; establish rules of conduct; determine job content; evaluate efficiency and performance of employees, schedule hours; assign and re-assign work duties, control County property; set wages, policies and fringe benefits and any and all other rights without limitations authorized by Law.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The Board is solely authorized to establish, modify and maintain personnel policies.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee consists of 4 County Commissioners appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. The County Administrator is also a voting member of the committee, but is not intended to serve in the capacity of Chairman of the Committee. The County Administrator determines which issues need committee action prior to board action. The committee shall make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners concerning all personnel items such as: determining the number of employees in a department; employing personnel; termination of personnel, other than department heads; establishing new positions; salary or wages for positions; personnel policies; benefits for elected and non-elected personnel; serve as the collective bargaining committee including involvement in grievance procedures; and any duties assigned by the Board of Commissioners. The committee's responsibilities also include serving as a liaison to the following county departments, offices and agencies: MSU Extension, Sportsplex, University Center and M-TEC.

DEPARTMENT MANAGERS

The department managers have the responsibility, within the scope of the established policies, for the day to day management of work and the employees who carry out the basic assignments of the County. Department managers may use the Human Resources Director and/or the County Administrator as resources.

ETHICS AND CONDUCT

CODE OF ETHICS

As a government agency, we will aspire to serve the constituents with our County limits to the best of our ability. We will maintain diversity and excellence in our service as we continue to grow, making sure we meet the needs of our employees and those of the communities. We will employ a highly motivated staff, with a strong work ethic, that will be expected to work together to meet the goals and objectives of our organization as a whole and for the communities that we serve.

Individuals should be trained to become team members. They will be guided by strong role models that will display commitment, cooperation and positive communication. Employees are expected to arrive at work on time, participate actively and possess the ability to work with the most honest effort they can give. We believe in our employees and in their ability to always do the right thing.

A positive attitude is expected and required to be productive and creative in supporting our environment and in obtaining our goals. We will support goal orientated teams that will work together to create positive results. Our teams are expected to keep the lines of communication open. By keeping the lines of communication open we will be able to ensure complete and thorough understanding of information to enable appropriate discussions and decision making.

PROFESSIONALISM POLICY

Employees and visitors deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. Otsego County supports an open door policy and is an equal opportunity employer. The County does not support discrimination in any form.

Employees should conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times as it relates to their employment.

Employees are expected to:

1. Competently fulfill their role and function with integrity and in an impartial manner.
2. Adhere to the policies and procedures established with their Department.
3. Adhere to supervisory directives.
4. Refrain from discussing Department/County personnel issues with persons other than those who have a right to know.
5. Respect and maintain client/customer confidentiality by not discussing cases in public areas or divulging identifying or pertinent case information to persons other than those who have a right to know.
6. Refrain from misusing one's position or knowledge gained from that position for personal profit or gain or for the gain of one's family or friends.
7. Treat other people with dignity and respect.
8. Maintain behavior that is within the confines of the law.
9. Maintain proper behavior, proper appearance and attire commensurate with one's duties as they relate to public contact and responsibilities to the Employer.

If an employee witnesses and/or is the subject of an unprofessional act, they are to report it to their department manager immediately.

Failure to follow the above policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

FRAUD POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Otsego county Fraud Policy is established to facilitate the development of controls which will aid in the detection and prevention of fraud against Otsego County. It is the intent of Otsego County to promote consistent organizational behavior by providing guidelines and assigning responsibility for the development of controls and conduct of investigations.

SCOPE OF POLICY

The policy applies to any fraud, or suspected fraud, involving employees as well as consultants, vendors, contractors, outside agencies, doing business with employees of such agencies, and/or any other parties with a business relationship with Otsego County.

Any investigative activity required will be conducted without regard to the suspected wrongdoer's length of service, position/title or relationship to Otsego County.

POLICY

Otsego County is responsible for the detection and prevention of fraud, misappropriations and other inappropriate conduct. Fraud is defined as the intentional, false representation or concealment of a material fact for the purpose of inducing another to act upon it to his or her injury. Each member of the Otsego County Management Team (which includes all department heads, managers and elected officials of Otsego County) will be familiar with the types of improprieties that might occur within his or her area of responsibility and be alert for any indication or irregularity.

Any fraud that is detected or suspected must be reported immediately to the County Administrator, who coordinates all investigations, both internal and external.

ACTIONS CONSTITUTING FRAUD

The terms defalcations, misappropriation and other fiscal wrongdoings refer to, but are limited to:

- Any dishonest or fraudulent act.
- Forgery or alteration of any document or account belonging to Otsego County.
- Forgery or alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document.
- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies or other assets.
- Impropriety in the handling or reporting of money or financial transactions.
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of Otsego County activities.
- Disclosing confidential and propriety information to outside parties.
- Disclosing to other person's securities activities engaged in or contemplated by Otsego County.
- An Otsego County employee accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors or persons providing services/materials to Otsego County (exception: gifts less than \$100 in value) for personal gain.
- Contractors, vendors or persons may from time to time donate goods, services or money to Otsego County programs or services. No preferential treatment of any kind shall be extended by Otsego County to contractors, vendors or persons who choose to donate goods, services or money to Otsego County.

- Otsego County will cease to do business with any individual or vendor who attempts to exert undue influence on an Otsego County employee or public official for the purpose of circumventing or breaking any Otsego County policies or state or federal laws.
- Destruction, removal or inappropriate use of records, furniture, fixtures and equipment, and/or
- Any similar or related inappropriate conduct.

OTHER INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT

Suspected improprieties concerning an employee’s moral, ethical or behavioral conduct should be resolved by departmental management and Otsego County Administration.

If there is any question as to whether an action constitutes fraud, contact the Otsego County Administrator for guidance.

INVESTIGATION RESPONSIBILITIES

The Otsego County Administrator has the primary responsibility for the investigation of all suspected fraudulent acts as defined in the policy. If the investigation substantiates that fraudulent activities have occurred, the Otsego County Administrator will issue reports to appropriate personnel and if appropriate, to the Board of Commissioners. In the event that the suspected fraudulent act was committed by an employee of an elected official, the investigative responsibility will be shared between the County Administrator and the elected official as co-employers.

Decisions to prosecute or refer the examination to the appropriate law enforcement and/or regulatory agencies for independent investigation will be made in conjunction with legal counsel, the Otsego County Administrator, any affected elected official and the Board of Commissioners, if deemed appropriate, as will final decisions on the disposition of the case.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The department head/manager/elected official and the Otsego County Administrator will treat all information received confidentially. Any employee who suspects dishonest or fraudulent activity will report the behavior immediately. The employee or other complainant may remain anonymous. All inquiries concerning the activity under investigation from the suspected individual, his or her attorney or representative or any other inquirer should be directed to the Otsego County Administrator. No information concerning the status of an investigation will be given out. The proper response to any inquiries is: “I am not at liberty to discuss this matter.” Under no circumstances should any reference be made to “the allegation”, “the crime”, “the fraud”, “the forgery”, “the misappropriation”, or any other specific reference.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

The reporting individual should be informed of the following:

- The reporting individual has the option of first reporting the behavior/incident to the department head/manager/elected official. The behavior/incident **must** then be reported to

the Otsego County Administrator within 24 hours of becoming aware of the suspected fraud (the matter cannot be dismissed by the department head/manager/elected official).

- In the event that the suspected fraud involves another local unit of government, the County Administrator will report the suspected fraud to the State Department of Treasury.
- If it is not deemed appropriate to discuss the matter with the department head/manager/elected official first, the Otsego County Administrator must be contacted directly.
- Do not contact the suspected individual in an effort to determine facts or demand restitution.
- Do not discuss the case, facts, suspicions or allegations with anyone unless specifically asked to do so by the Otsego County Administrator.

TERMINATION

If an investigation results in a recommendation to terminate an individual, the recommendation will be reviewed for approval by Otsego County Administration and if necessary, by outside counsel, before any such action is taken. The decision to terminate an employee is made by either the department head/manager/elected official or by the Otsego County Administrator.

ADMINISTRATION

The Otsego County Administrator and the Otsego County Board of Commissioners are responsible for the administration, revision, interpretation and application of this policy. The policy will be reviewed annually and revised as needed.

If the Otsego County Administrator is the person suspected of the inappropriate behavior, the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners shall assume the responsibilities of the Otsego County Administrator in relation to this policy as stated above, during all phases of the process.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION POLICY

Otsego County reserves the right to terminate an employee at any time for any reason with or without prior disciplinary counseling or notice. Nothing in this Handbook or any other Otsego County document is intended to:

- Modify the employment of any “at-will” employees of Otsego County.
- Promise progressive discipline or disciplinary counseling.
- Promise notice in circumstances where Otsego County considers immediate termination or discipline to be appropriate.

Disciplinary actions may entail verbal, written, final warnings, suspension or termination. All of these actions may not be followed in some instances. Otsego County reserves the right to exercise discretion in discipline. Prior warning is not a requirement for termination. If you are disciplined in writing, copies of your warnings are placed in your personnel file.

Otsego County reserves the right to take any disciplinary action it considers appropriate, including termination, at any time. In addition to those situations discussed elsewhere in this handbook, listed below are some other examples where immediate termination could result. This list is general in nature and is not intended to be all-inclusive:

- Discourtesy to a customer, provider or the general public resulting in a complaint or loss of goodwill.
- Refusal or failure to follow directives from a supervisor, manager or Otsego County officer.
- Breach of confidentiality relating to employer, employee and customer or provider information.
- Altering, damaging or destroying County property or records, or another employee's property.
- Dishonesty.
- Providing false or misleading information to any Otsego County representative or on any Otsego County records including the employment application, benefit forms, time cards, expense reimbursement forms, etc.
- Fighting or engaging in disorderly conduct on Otsego County's premises.
- Violations of any of Otsego County's employment policies including, but not limited to, professionalism, confidentiality, security, conflict of interest and code of conduct.
- Conduct or performance issues of a serious nature.

CONFIDENTIALITY

During employment with the County, employees may gain access to records and/or other personal information about County business or employees. Employees must not discuss or disclose this information with anyone without proper authorization. Violating this policy can be cause for disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

DRUG-FREE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Otsego County is committed to establishing and maintaining a drug-free work environment for the benefit of its employees and the community. "Controlled substances" shall mean any controlled substance as defined under Federal and/or Michigan law. In order to achieve this goal, Otsego County has adopted the following policy:

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of illegal drugs, unauthorized prescription drugs, controlled substances including marijuana (cannabis) or alcohol by any employee while in a County facility or on/in County property, while performing assigned duties for the County or if it interferes with an employee's ability to perform their job is prohibited.

As a condition of employment, employees shall abide by the terms of this policy and notify the Human Resources Director of any criminal drug statute conviction no later than 5 calendar days after such conviction. The term "conviction" means a finding of guilt (including a plea of nolo contendere) or imposition of a sentence, or both, by any judicial body charged with the responsibility to determine violations of federal or state criminal drug statutes. "Criminal drug statute" means a federal or non-federal criminal statute involving the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, use or possession of any controlled substance.

Any employee who is arrested and charged with violation of any of the above statutes shall also notify the Human Resource Director of the pendency of the charges within five (5) days of the charges. The County

reserves the right to take appropriate action if warranted, based upon the pending charges and the underlying factual circumstances.

Within 30 calendar days of receiving notice of a criminal drug statute conviction for a violation, the County shall take the appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination.

The Human Resources Director shall establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about (1) the danger of substance abuse in the workplace, (2) the County policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace, (3) any available drug counseling, rehabilitation and employee assistance programs, (4) the penalties that may be imposed upon employees for substance abuse violations and referral for prosecution, and (5) a disciplinary sanction may include the completion of appropriate rehabilitation program and work re-entry program.

The Human Resources Director shall take all steps necessary to ensure that all County employees are aware of and understand the terms of this policy. The Human Resources Director shall ensure the distribution of this policy to all employees. Any employee who requests assistance for controlled substance counseling or work re-entry rehabilitation program shall contact the Human Resources Director.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Employee opinions, suggestions and questions are important and encouraged and are basic to good government. The County will make every attempt to provide honest, clear responses.

Department managers are expected to listen to employee concerns, to encourage their input, and to seek implementation/resolution of suggestions/issues. In addition, from time to time, the County may request employees to cooperate in sharing their suggestions with County representatives in open forums and through periodic opinion surveys.

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to promote a quality of work environment while simultaneously informing individual employees of their rights to and responsibilities for working conditions devoid of sexual harassment or discrimination. The Board of Commissioners emphatically affirms that employees have an inherent right to be free from intimidation, humiliation, insult or being subjected to offensive physical or verbal abuse or actions, direct or insinuated, based on a person's sex.

Otsego County endorses and complies with Title VII of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended and the Michigan Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended and the Michigan Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, PA 453 as amended and all other acts enacted to protect and safeguard individual rights to seek, obtain and enjoy employment without being subjected or exposed to harassment or discrimination.

Otsego County will:

Not discriminate on the basis of sex with respect to compensation, terms, conditions or privileges of employment.

Not tolerate any type of sexual harassment or discrimination.

Encourage employees to make issue regarding sexual harassment or discrimination by making timely complaints.

Act immediately to investigate complaints.

Consider the complaints seriously.

Keep accurate records of investigations from receipt of complaint through final determination regarding the merit of the complaint to include, if appropriate, any remedial action.

Act promptly concerning any action, or failure to act, which results in retaliation against a County employee, who in good faith files a sexual harassment or discrimination complaint. Retaliation violates this policy and subjects the violating employee to discipline up to and including discharge. Any employee who has a good faith belief he/she has been subjected to retaliation for exercising a right conferred by this policy may file a complaint following complaint procedures of this policy.

Sexual Harassment is defined as an unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of employment.

Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions, such as discharge, promotion, transfer, work assignments, etc.

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

EXAMPLES OF HARASSMENT

Any harassment that violates State or Federal law will be unacceptable.

Examples of harassment include:

Making derogatory comments, insults, suggestive remarks or jokes based on a person's sex.

Display of photographs, cartoons or drawings that would be offensive to a reasonable person.

Conduct which when viewed by a reasonable person would have the purpose or effect of degrading or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Propositions or requests for sexual favors.

Physical contact which is sexual in nature.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

An employee who believes he/she has been sexually harassed should make an oral report of the incident to the Human Resources Director, or designee, within 2 business days. A detailed written report of the incident shall be submitted to the Human Resources Director within 3 working days of the oral report.

Any supervisory employee who receives a written or oral sexual harassment complaint shall notify his/her department manager or the complaint. A department manager shall notify the Director of Human Resources of the complaint. The Director of Human Resources will investigate all sexual harassment complaints received and shall submit a detailed written report to the Personnel Committee Chairperson within 3 business days, unless good cause for additional time exists and a written statement of good cause is submitted. If the complaint involves the Director of Human Resources, notice shall be given to the County Administrator, who then will conduct the investigation.

The Personnel Committee shall receive all sexual harassment complaint investigation reports and determine whether a violation of the policy has occurred. This review may include witnesses and exhibits, or any other trustworthy source of information, and shall be made within 14 days unless good cause is shown. Copies of the complaint investigation report shall be made available, upon request, to the complaining and accused employees prior to the review hearing. Where a violation is shown to have occurred by a preponderance of the evidence, immediate action, in proportion to the violation, shall be taken to remedy the reoccurrences. The complaint investigation report and the review hearing information are deemed to be confidential.

CONCLUSION

It is expected that all employees will fully cooperate and give their support to these policies and practices. Violations of this policy will not be permitted. Any employee or department manager who violates this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including discharge.

Although the investigation process is not confidential, every effort shall be made to limit both the number of people who need to know the extent of any discussion with others during an investigation.

Any employee who knowingly or recklessly files a false complaint of harassment shall be disciplined accordingly, up to and including discharge from employment.

EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of the County to provide equal employment opportunities to all individuals. The policy is that an individual's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, disability, or other protected classification under State and Federal law are not and will not be considered in any personnel or management decisions. All employment decisions will be based solely on the applicant's qualifications such as knowledge, skills and abilities as well as previous work experience including demonstrated ability, performance, length of employment and attendance.

Otsego County will comply with the Michigan Handicapper's Civil Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The County will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in undue hardship. Any employee with a disability which requires accommodation pursuant to the Michigan Handicapper's Civil Rights Act must notify their department manager and the Human Resources Director in writing immediately but not later than 182 days after the need for accommodation becomes known.

NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

To enable a new employee to become familiar with their employment with the County, they will be required to meet with the Human Resources Director on or before their first day of employment to receive and complete the necessary orientation and benefits information as outlined in this handbook. Department specific training and orientation is to be arranged by the department manager.

JOB VACANCIES

Department managers are to notify the Human Resources Director of impending vacancies or job openings within their departments as early as possible. To fill an open position, Department Managers must complete an Otsego County Employment Requisition per Resolution No. OCR 06-18.

All non-union positions will be posted on the Otsego County website under employment opportunities.

All union positions will be posted as provided by the specific union contract.

The following information will be provided when posting a job position for the County:

- Position Title
- Job Description
- Minimal, desired, and/or preferred background experience required
- Salary Range
- Equal Employment Opportunity Statement
- Closing Date

All applicants should apply for employment on the County website at www.otsegocountymi.gov. The Human Resources Director will review all employment applications and resumes and facilitate the competitive hiring process with the Department Manager.

DEPARTMENT HEAD HIRING PROCESS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set procedures for the hiring of non-elected department heads.

PROCESS

1. The County Administrator and the Human Resources Director will review applications, and possibly conduct an initial interview to determine qualified applicants.
2. The County Administrator will form a committee to interview qualified applicants.
3. The committee will be up to six members, made up of the following: County Administrator, Human Resources Director, Chairman of the Personnel Committee, County Commissioner liaison to the department committee (if relevant), other members will be appointed at the discretion of the County Administrator.
4. The purpose of the committee is to provide recommendations to the County Administrator concerning the hiring of the department head.
5. The County Administrator may conduct an additional interview at his/her discretion. The final decision on hiring department heads rests with the County Administrator.

PROMOTION

Insofar as it is practicable and in the best interest of the County, vacancies may be filled by the promotion of current, qualified employees.

All promoted employees shall be placed on probation. The probationary period will be twelve (12) months.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION, DRUG TEST AND BACKGROUND CHECK

Each new County employee must pass a pre-employment background check and drug screen and post offer physical examination. Depending on position, a driving record check and post offer psychological examination may also be required. All costs are borne by the County. Under no circumstances will a paycheck be issued until all pre-employment and post-offer checks are in the employee's file.

RESIGNATION PROCEDURES

The Board authorizes department managers to accept employee resignations on behalf of the Board of Commissioners.

Employees who desire to resign will be asked to submit a letter of resignation stating the effective date and the reason for leaving at least 2 weeks prior to the effective date. The employee's last day of employment will be the last day they are actively at work. An employee may not extend their termination date by utilizing paid time such as vacation, personal or compensatory time. Employees are responsible for returning any County property that may be in their possession prior to receiving a final paycheck.

EXIT INTERVIEW

Before leaving the employment of the County, all employees (except those who have not completed their probationary period) will be expected to complete an Exit Interview with the Human Resources Director. Leaving employees are encouraged to be honest and forthcoming in completing their exit interview. The information received is confidential; however, suggestions will be used to improve existing services, policies, procedures and the work environment whenever possible.

RE-EMPLOYMENT

There are circumstances when former employees seek re-employment with the County. In order for a former employee to be considered for re-employment, the former employee will need to reapply and be considered as any other applicant. Only individuals who have left previous employment with Otsego County in good standing will be considered for re-employment. An employee who has not provided advance written notice of resignation as required will not be eligible for re-employment with the County.

A former employee, who is subsequently rehired, shall be considered a "new hire" and is subject to the qualifying period for the newly acquired position.

INTERNAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Procedures for gaining redress for work related issues are outlined in the agreements between the County and Union Employee Unions.

It is the intent of the County to also allow non-union employees and opportunity to address work-related issues. In most instances, the supervisor will be able to give a prompt answer to your questions and will assist in solving the problem.

Should an employee feel that a problem is not being handled properly, the employee may use the following complaint procedure:

1. Discuss the matter with the employee's department manager. The department manager has the responsibility to solve problems as they arise. For disciplinary action, managers will consult with the Human Resources Director to ensure that the action is in accordance with County policy.
2. Should you believe that there are issues that continue to need clarification or resolution, the employee may request a meeting with the County Administrator. The County Administrator's decision is final, unless another County policy dictates further steps be taken.

Throughout the redress process, the departmental liaison will be consulted and updated as needed. Should the County Administrator seek action to terminate a Department Head, the County Administrator will first consult with the Personnel Committee and the Board Chairman.

EMPLOYEE STATUS

PROBATIONARY

The probationary period shall be regarded as an integral part of the selection process and shall be utilized for observing the employee's work. It shall be used for securing the most effective adjustment of the new employee to his or her position, and for rejecting any employee whose performance does not meet the required work standards. The probationary period shall last for twelve (12) months; if the employee falls under a union contract the time stipulated in the contract will be the probationary period.

At any time during the probationary period, a department manager or the Board of Commissioners in consultation with the Human Resources Director may terminate or demote an employee whose performance is deemed deficient and the employee notified.

Newly hired probationary employees may be eligible for fringe benefits unless otherwise specifically indicated elsewhere in this handbook.

REGULAR FULL-TIME

The employees of the County are hired as full-time employees, unless otherwise designated. They are regularly scheduled to work 37½ or 40 hours per week, whichever is considered to be the normal departmental workweek, and can become eligible for County benefits.

Departments that work a 37½ hour week include:

Administrator	Friend of the Court
Circuit Court	Equalization
Probate Court	Treasurer
County Clerk/Register of Deeds	Land Use Service
MSU Co-Op Extension	Housing/Veteran Affairs
Prosecuting Attorney (except Office Manager position)	

Departments that work a 40 hour week include:

Prosecuting Attorney (Office Manager position)	
Animal Control	Jail
Sheriff	Parks
Airport	

REGULAR PART-TIME

These employees are regularly scheduled to work less than the number of workweek hours that are considered to be the normal departmental workweek. Regular part-time employees that work 20 or more regularly scheduled hours per week are eligible for pro-rated fringe benefits as provided in the employee handbook. Regular part-time employees that work less than 20 regularly scheduled hours per week are only

covered by Social Security and workers' compensation and are not eligible for any other County fringe benefits.

TEMPORARY

These employees will receive definite, limited time appointments. Continuation beyond the expiration date of such appointments will be only as a result of specific personnel action. Temporary employees are covered only by Social Security and workers' compensation except those temporary employees hired on a contractual or independent contractor basis. Temporary employees cannot accrue seniority; they are not eligible for health insurance, personal leave, vacation time, holiday pay, funeral pay, jury duty leave or any other County fringe benefits.

IRREGULAR PART-TIME

These employees work a variable hour schedule. They only work when required. Irregular part-time employees are covered only by Social Security and workers' compensation and are not eligible for any other County fringe benefits.

PROVISIONAL

A provisional employee is funded by a source other than the County General Fund. Such employment shall terminate when the funding is no longer available. The employee shall be covered by those rules applying to Temporary employees and/or in compliance with the funding agency regulations.

EXEMPT

Exempt employees are paid a salary and are exempt from regulations of the Fair Labor Standards Act, and hence do not receive any overtime pay. Exempt employees' wages are calculated at an annual or monthly rate rather than an hourly rate, therefore, hours worked do not need to be recorded.

NON-EXEMPT

Non-exempt employees are paid an hourly wage and are covered by the regulations of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Non-exempt employees receive overtime pay for hours worked in excess of their normal weekly hours, either 37½ or 40 hours.

SALARY STRUCTURE

TOTAL COMPENSATION

Direct compensation includes base wages, merit increases, and cost of living adjustments. Indirect compensation is benefits and services employees receive such as: pensions, health insurance, and vacation leave. Total compensation refers to all forms of financial returns (direct) and tangible services and benefits (indirect) those employees receive as part of their work relationship with their employer.

INITIAL SALARY

Newly hired employees are paid at the entry level on the Salary Progression Schedule. Employee may be hired above the entry level upon the approval of the County Administrator in consultation with the Board of Commissioners. Approval is discretionary and can be based on the exceptional qualifications of the employee or the inability to employ eligible candidates at the minimum rate as well as the availability of budget funds.

SALARIED EMPLOYEES

Salaried employees are paid their salary over the course of 26 pays during the calendar year. Gross pay each pay period is calculated by taking the salary amount divided by 26. Gross pay is not calculated based on pay period dates or hours worked. **In years when there are 27 pays in a year, 27 will be used is the calculation.*

When a salaried employee is hired, his or her gross pay for each pay period is set at the salary for a full year, and the first pay is adjusted to reflect the actual percentage of the year worked.

For example, if a salaried employee is hired on May 1st, for a salary of \$40,000 per year, the first paycheck for that employee would be calculated as follows:

With a hire date of May 1st, the employee will work 245/365 days that year, or 67% of the year.

The total salary the employee will earn is $\$40,000 * 67\% = \$26,800$.

$\$40,000/26$ pays = \$1,538.46 gross pay each pay period.

There would be 18 pays remaining in that year, 17 of which will have a gross pay of the \$1,538.46, which will total \$26,153.82.

The amount of the first paycheck will be the total amount to be earned that year of \$26,800 – the amount earned on subsequent paychecks of $\$26,153.82 = \646.18 .

When a salaried employee terminates employment with Otsego County mid-year, the employee's final paycheck is adjusted to reflect the percentage of the year worked.

For example, if a salaried employee terminates employment on March 31st, and had an annual salary of \$40,000, the final paycheck for that employee would be calculated as follows:

Through March 31st, the employee has worked 90/365 days that year, or 25% of the year.

The total salary the employee earned is $\$40,000 * 25\% = \$10,000$.

$\$40,000/26$ pays = \$1,538.46 gross pay each pay period. The employee would have received 7 paychecks through March 31st, $\$1,538.46 * 7 = \$10,769.22$.

Due to the timing of the paychecks, the employee has actually been **overpaid** as of March 31st by \$769.22.

The overpayment **will be subtracted** from any leave banks that will be paid out upon termination.

STEP INCREASES

Step increases in accordance with the Board of Commissioners approved Salary Progression Schedule shall not be automatic, but shall be granted upon submission of a Pay Change Request Form by the department manager to Human Resources. Any employee whose job performance is satisfactory shall be advanced within the series of steps in their assigned pay range as determined by the Salary Progression Schedule approved each year by the Board of Commissioners. An exception to step increases is in the instance of a pay freeze imposed by the County Commissioners.

If the department manager does not believe that a step increase is warranted, he/she may recommend that the step increase be withheld for a specific period of time. Such time, except in unusual circumstances, should not exceed 6 months. The department manager should consult with the Human Resources Director to develop a performance improvement plan for the employee. If an employee does not then demonstrate the willingness or ability to perform the duties of the position in a satisfactory manner, he/she should be placed in a lesser position, or terminated at any time during the extension period at the sole discretion of the County.

When the employee demonstrates the ability to perform the duties of his/her position in a satisfactory manner during the extension period, he/she may be recommended for a step increase at such time as the department manager believes his/her performance will continue at an acceptable standard. In such cases, the employee's step date will be changed to coincide with the date he/she receives the step increase.

MERIT INCREASES

Merit increases recognize past work behaviors and accomplishments. Merit increases are usually given in increments with a step increase, and can vary with job performance. The Board of Commissioners may grant merit increases in exceptional cases in which the employee's productivity or rate of development warrant special recognition to stimulate continued growth or as a reward for specific accomplishments of major value to the County. Such actions require a special justification on the part of the department manager and approval of the County Administrator, Personnel Committee, and Board of Commissioners.

PAY RATES IN TRANSFER, PROMOTION, DEMOTION

If an employee is transferred, promoted, or demoted, his/her pay for the newly acquired position shall be determined as follows:

If the rate of pay in the former position is less than the minimum rate established for the new position, the rate of pay shall be advanced to the minimum rate for the new position.

If the rate of pay in the former position is more than the maximum rate established for the new position, the pay shall be reduced to the maximum rate or to an intermediate step of the new range as determined by the department manager, Human Resources Director and County Administrator.

POSITION RECLASSIFICATION POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set procedures for requesting reclassification of a position within a department. Position reclassifications are only based on the level of duties and responsibilities within a position and are not based on employee length of service within a position.

PROCESS

1. Department Directors will submit a written position reclassification request to the Human Resources Director. The request shall have the current approved job description for the position attached and list the additional duties and responsibilities which have been added to the position to warrant the reclassification request. The Human Resources Director will review the request and meet with the Department Director for clarification.
2. The Human Resources Director will forward the reclassification request and supporting documentation to the County Administrator for review and approval.
3. If approved by the County Administrator, the reclassification request will be presented to the Personnel Committee.
4. If approved by the Personnel Committee, the reclassification request will be presented to the Finance Committee.
5. If approved by the Finance Committee, the reclassification request will be presented to the Board of Commissioners.
6. If approved by the Board of Commissioners, the Human Resources Director will notify the Department Director and prepare related paperwork to reclassify the position.

EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Otsego County expects that every employee will be regular and punctual in attendance. This means being in the office, ready for work, at their starting time each day. Absenteeism and tardiness places a burden on other employees and on Otsego County.

When you are unable to work due to illness or an accident, please promptly notify your supervisor. In the event your immediate supervisor is unavailable, you must follow the established departmental attendance procedure for your department. Leaving a message with another staff member or on voicemail does not constitute an accepted notification of absence unless it is specifically allowed in your departmental policy. If you do not report for work and Otsego County is not notified of your status, it will be assumed after two consecutive days of absence that you have resigned, and you may be removed from the payroll at the discretion of your department manager in consultation with the Human Resources Director.

If you become ill at work or must leave the office for some other reason before the end of the workday, be sure to inform your supervisor of the situation.

You will be compensated for authorized absences according to the provisions described in this Employee Handbook.

In the event of inclement weather, we remain open for business during regularly scheduled working hours. You are expected to report for work in inclement weather if it is at all possible to do so safely. In the event we close due to inclement weather, your department manager will contact you. Please keep your manager informed on how to reach you on such occasions. Please refer to the Inclement Weather Policy for further details.

Should undue tardiness or absenteeism become apparent, disciplinary action up to and including discharge may be required.

OFFICE HOURS

The normal workweek for County employees shall be 37½ or 40 hours, depending on the department. The basic office hours for a 37½ hour workweek is Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with 1 hour for lunch scheduled within the department. The basic office hours for a 40 hour workweek is Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with 1 hour for lunch scheduled within the department. The department manager may vary these basic office hours to fit the needs of the individual department.

WORK BREAKS

Employees are permitted two 15 minute breaks, 1 during the first half of the day and 1 during the second half of the day. Breaks are to be taken at a time to allow for the continuous and effective operation of the department. Work breaks may not accumulate in any manner.

EMPLOYEE TIME REPORT SHEETS

Hours worked by employees are tracked through the use of Employee Time Report sheets maintained by the employee and authorized by their department manager. Employees must turn in their timesheets to their department manager every other Friday, in order to be paid on the following Thursday. Department managers are exempt.

OVERTIME WORK AND PAY

Employees who are considered non-exempt are entitled to overtime pay at the rate of 1½ times their regular pay for hours worked in excess of their normal departmental workweek (37.5 or 40 hours per week).

If you are an employee who is represented by a Union Contract, please consult your contract for terms and conditions of overtime and overtime payment.

The County will make every reasonable effort to distribute overtime as equitable as possible among employees qualified to do the work required. Overtime is considered a condition of employment and refusal to accept it when reasonable notice has been given is cause for discipline, up to and including termination.

No employee will work overtime without prior authorization from his/her department manager. Employees are prohibited from taking work home without authorization.

Payments to non-exempt employees will be made according to state or federal wages and hour laws. Employees classified as exempt are not entitled to extra compensation for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week.

COMPENSATORY TIME

NON-EXEMPT PERSONNEL

Non-exempt personnel may accrue compensatory time in lieu of overtime. Compensatory hours should be used as soon as possible following the pay periods in which they were earned. Employees may have up to 75 or 80 hours (depending on their standard workweek) of time in their Compensatory Accrual Bank at any one time.

No employee will work overtime/earn compensatory time without prior authorization from his/her department manager. Employees are prohibited from taking work home without prior authorization.

Department employees must submit their compensatory time off requests to their department manager for approval at least (2) two weeks in advance. The department manager must take into consideration the efficiency of the operation of the department and the wishes of the employee.

EXEMPT PERSONNEL

Salaried individuals are expected to accomplish their objectives and successfully manage their responsibilities within the established workday or week. In rare occasions where additional commitment is required to achieve desired goals, it is incumbent on management to complete the tasks without expecting a commensurate release from the workweek at some future date. However, the Board of Commissioners is cognizant of the inherent right of managers occasionally to utilize time for personal reasons. This is the counter balance that salaried individuals have earned.

The Board of Commissioners has a right to expect salaried employees to act in a business-like, professional, conscientious pattern so we may collectively improve the services afforded the citizen taxpayer, our ultimate employer.

Please observe the following guidelines:

- Plan to work the full workweek (37½ or 40 hours as appropriate).
- If out of the office for an extended period of time for personal reasons, notify the Human Resources Director. You need not give specifics, but at the same time, do not in any way distort facts.
- Timesheets should reflect the absence for personal reasons by noting personal business on the timesheet, being certain that the Human Resources Director was advised in advance.
- If there are extenuating circumstances regarding hours, discuss these with the Human Resources Director.

ON-CALL/EMERGENCY CALL-BACK PAY POLICY

An emergency call-back is defined as an unscheduled request made by an appropriate management official (appropriate authorization may be specific to a department policy) for an employee to return to work to do unforeseen or emergency work after leaving the building or work location at the end of his/her regular shift and before the beginning of the next regularly scheduled shift. An on-call employee is called back to work outside his/her normal work scheduled shall be paid for the time worked or a minimum of two (2) hours, whichever is greater. Department Directors shall establish reasonable maximum response times (between 15 and 60 minutes) for their departments.

Time worked while on call will be calculated at the employee's regular rate of pay. If an employee is called back to work, he/she will be paid for travel time. If an on-call employee is not called back, no pay will be earned. Overtime compensation is applicable only when total hours worked exceed the regular full-time work cycle.

Emergency call-backs that occur during paid holiday leave will be considered overtime. Justification must be provided to the Department Director to validate that the call-back is an emergency.

Employees who are on call must adhere to all of Otsego County's policies, including Substance Abuse and Testing. Any variance from such policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Otsego County is open for business unless there is a declared State of Emergency. There may be times, however, when we will delay opening. Use common sense and your best judgment when traveling to work in inclement weather.

If you arrive at work after the scheduled start of your shift, that time is charged to you as either (1) personal (2) vacation time, or (3) unpaid time, in that order. You may make up the hours within the pay period when you arrived late due to inclement weather with your supervisor's permission. You should always use your discretion in getting to work. Otsego County attempts to accommodate individual situations by allowing the use of personal time and vacation time in these situations.

When potentially dangerous weather develops during the day and a decision is made by the County Administrator to close before your normal department closing time, you will be compensated as if you had worked to the end of your regularly scheduled hours for that day. If you elect to leave prior to a decision being made by Otsego County to close early, you will be required to use accrued time at the same rate as if you arrived after your scheduled start time.

If the County is closed by the County Administrator before the official start of the business day, employees will be paid for the hours they were scheduled to work that day. If the County is able to reopen during the day, employees will be expected to report to work when contacted by the department manager.

Union employees should consult their union contract regarding inclement weather.

This policy does not apply to the Sheriff's Department employees as those departments will not close during emergencies or inclement weather.

PAYDAY

The County will provide for bi-weekly pay periods, which will end at midnight every other Sunday. Paydays will be the following Thursday by 4:00 p.m. There will be 26 pay periods per calendar year. Any questions relative to payment of wages should be directed to the department manager.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION INSURANCE

The County provides unemployment compensation insurance coverage and all employees are covered.

DISABILITY AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE POLICY

The County may provide a disability and accident insurance policy for its full-time employees. For an explanation on benefits contact the Human Resources Director.

DIRECT DEPOSIT

The County has made direct deposit available to its employees. Employees may choose to have the net amount of their paychecks deposited into one or more banking accounts with any banking institution with the United States that participates in electronic funds transfer. Direct deposit will automatically transfer your net funds to the account(s) you specified, making your money available for use on payday.

HOSPITALIZATION/MEDICAL COVERAGE

The County provides hospitalization/medical coverage for regular full-time employees and their families. The employee contribution cost of plans will be determined each plan year. The County reserves the right to select and/or change insurance coverage and carriers.

Dependents may participate in our hospitalization coverage up to age 26 under their parent's contract per dependent care guidelines of our healthcare providers and according to The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). The County will subsidize COBRA, if elected, by paying no more than 80% of health insurance coverage (not to include service fee) at the time of a termination due to a position elimination for a period of 3 months or as provided by law from the date of an eligible employee's layoff.

All full-time non-union employees participate in the MERS Post Employment Healthcare Savings Program. Participants must contribute a \$40 per month into the plan. Otsego County will match employee contributions of \$40 per month.

Our health plans and costs are evaluated on an annual basis so changes in coverage and costs are possible at the beginning of each plan year or more frequently if deemed appropriate by the Board of Commissioners.

HEALTHCARE OPT OUT STIPEND

Eligible regular full-time employees electing to not participate in the County's Group Healthcare coverage will receive an annual stipend of \$2,000 to be paid quarterly through payroll, subject to normal taxes. Non-participants will provide proof of coverage(s) from another source. Employees who elect to return to the County's Group Healthcare plan shall be added during the entry period as determined by guidelines established by our healthcare providers. Employees that are covered under the County's plan through a spouse that also works at the County are not eligible for the annual Medical Care Opt Out Stipend.

DENTAL AND VISION INSURANCE

The County will provide dental and vision insurance coverage for regular full-time employees and their families. The employee contribution cost of the plans will be determined each plan year. The County reserves the right to select and/or change insurance coverage and carriers.

HIPAA POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Otsego County Health Plans meet the “small plan” standard of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). The Privacy Rules are designed to protect the privacy of the employee’s health information. In general, the term “protected health information or PHI” refers to individually identifiable health information created or received by an entity subject to the Privacy Rules that relates to the past, present or future physical or mental health or condition of an individual, including information regarding the provision of and payment for healthcare, that is transmitted or maintained in any form or medium. The information must either identify the individual or provide a reasonable basis to believe that the information can be used to identify the individual.

Otsego County’s policy has always been and continues to be that the utmost care be used at all times to safeguard any information provided to Otsego County by or for its employees enrolled in our health plan. Otsego County provides a Notice of Privacy Practices to all enrollees in Otsego County Health Plans. The Human Resources Director is the designated Otsego County Privacy Officer and can be contacted for any information you need regarding HIPAA.

HIPAA DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

In accordance with 29 CFR 164.530 (e) (1), the covered entity (Otsego County) is required to apply appropriate sanctions against members of the workforce who fail to comply with the policies and procedures.

Procedure:

1. Upon receipt of a complaint, or a concern by the Privacy Officer, that a violation of the HIPAA rules has occurred, an investigation will be conducted.
2. If it is determined that a member of the covered entity has violated HIPAA, including the improper use or disclosure of protected health information, disciplinary measures up to and including possible termination will be taken.

RETIREMENT

The County provides a retirement program for its employees with the Municipal Employees' Retirement System of Michigan (MERS). Regular full-time and regular part-time status employees that were hired prior to December 31, 2019 who work 100 hours per month or more are eligible for the retirement program. Regular full-time and regular part-time employees hired on or after January 1, 2020, who are normally scheduled to work 30 or more hours per week will participate in the MERS Defined Contribution Plan.

VACATION TIME

Each regular full-time and regular part-time employee shall earn, on a pro-rated basis, vacation time as follows:

	<u>Base Time</u>
From start date up to and including 5 years of service	10 days
From 6 years and up to and including 10 years of service	15 days
From 11 years of service and up	20 days

Union employees should consult their union contract for a vacation breakdown.

Vacation time will be credited to the employee's bank on a bi-weekly basis. Employees can only have up to their base vacation plus five (5 days) accrued in their vacation bank at any one time and they may not use more than what is currently in their vacation bank.

Department managers must submit their vacation requests at least two (2) weeks in advance to the Otsego County Administrator. Department employees must submit their vacation requests at least two (2) weeks in advance to their department manager for approval. The department manager must take into consideration the efficiency of the operation of the department and the wishes of the employee.

Requests for unpaid vacation leave will be considered after an employee has exhausted all time in their vacation, compensatory and personal banks. Requests for unpaid vacation leave are subject to the same provisions and approval process as regular paid vacation leave requests.

All regular full-time employees having accumulated regular vacation time credit shall not be paid in lieu of vacation, unless employment is terminated. Employees leave County employment shall be compensated for vacation time accrued to the date of separation.

DONATED VACATION LEAVE POLICY

Employees may voluntarily donate vacation to other County employees who are disabled due to a non-compensable illness, impairment, injury, or physical or mental condition. County employees may also donate vacation time another employee who is not disabled themselves but rather off work due to the disablement, illness, impairment, injury, or physical or mental condition of their spouse, child, mother or father. The maximum allowable leave time an employee may receive for an approved event is four (4) weeks of pay.

An employee can donate any amount of vacation leave, as long as the donating employee retains a minimum balance of one week of vacation leave hours. The minimum unit of donated time is four (4) hours of vacation time.

An employee may use the equivalent of twenty (20) days of donated vacation time in a 12-month period. In order to utilize donated vacation leave, the receiving employee:

1. Must use all accrued vacation leave, compensatory time, personal leave, and any other County sources of paid time off including short and long term disability prior to receiving the donated hours.
2. Must have over one year of continuous regular service.
3. Must be classified as a regular full-time or part-time employee.
4. Cannot be on probationary or temporary status.
5. Must submit a written request to receive donated vacation hours to the Human Resources Director. Accompanying this request must be a written statement from the employee's physician certifying the leave is necessary, the length of time needed to be absent from work, and when the leave shall begin. This medical statement should not disclose detailed information about the medical condition or any long-term prognosis for the condition.

Also accompanying this request must be a written statement from the employee's supervising Elected Official or Department Director indicating their response to the employee's request. Based on the Human Resources Director's recommendation, the County Administrator must approve a request for donated vacation leave before Human Resources and Finance can initiate the program for the employee.

HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE/PAY

Non-union County employees will observe the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Veterans' Day
Presidents' Day	Thanksgiving Day
Good Friday	The day after Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve Day
Independence Day	Christmas Day
Labor Day	New Year's Eve Day

In addition to the above, one (1) floating holiday per year will be given to each regular full-time and regular part-time (on a pro-rated basis) employee. This floating holiday may be used anytime within the calendar year but does not carry forward into the next year or get paid out at termination if unused. If a new employee starts mid-year, they will receive a floating holiday if they begin employment prior to June 30th of that year. If they begin employment July 1st or after, they receive a floating holiday at the beginning of the next full calendar year.

Employees under a union contract will be compensated according to the specifications of their individual contracts.

When a holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday will be recognized as the holiday and all non-essential County offices will be closed in observance. When a holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday will be recognized as the holiday and all non-essential County offices will be closed in observance. A holiday falling on a Sunday, not recognized as a national holiday, will be celebrated on the following Tuesday if the Monday following the Sunday is celebrated as a national holiday (i.e. – Christmas Day falling on a Monday will result in Christmas Eve being celebrated on Tuesday).

To be paid for the holiday, employees must be present on the scheduled working day immediately preceding the holiday and the scheduled working day immediately following the holiday. To be eligible for holiday pay, employees must have regular full-time or regular part-time status. For regular part-time employees, they must have been scheduled to work on the day that the holiday is recognized by the County to be eligible for holiday pay. If a legal holiday falls during a period of time when an employee is off on authorized vacation time, the holiday will be paid as a holiday and will not be considered part of the employee's vacation time.

Eligible employees will receive 7½ or 8 hours pay at their straight time hourly rate exclusive of premiums, or the applicable pro-rated amount if less than full-time. If an employee is represented by a union contract, please consult your contract for the accurate amount of pay.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE AND OTHER TIME OFF

PERSONAL LEAVE

Every January, all regular full-time and regular part-time, non-management employees will be credited with personal hours. Employees that work a 37½ hour week will be credited with 52.50 personal leave hours and employees that work a 40 hour week will be credited with 56 personal leave hours. Regular part-time employees will be eligible for personal leave hours that are pro-rated based on their regularly scheduled work week. If an eligible employee begins employment mid-year, personal leave hours will be pro-rated based on their date of hire.

Personal leave may not be granted in anticipation of future service. Eligible employees should request Personal Leave at least two weeks in advance from their department manager using a Vacation/Personal Leave Request Form. If no advance notice is possible due to illness, employees must notify their department manager prior to the start of their scheduled work shift to request use of their personal leave hours and their department manager must approve the use of their time. If an employee has a personal leave absence in excess of three (3) consecutive working days, they must present medical documentation for the absence.

Recognized holidays falling within a period of personal leave will not be counted against personal leave. Personal leave may be allowed in cases of sickness or injury occurring during the vacation period, provided a doctor's statement is furnished as to the employee's sickness or injury.

There is no accumulation or carryover of personal leave hours. All hours remaining at the end of the year will be deleted and a new bank of hours will be allotted every January. Personal leave hours are not paid out at time of termination, retirement or death for non-management employees.

Should a full-time employee require time off longer than seven (7) days due to a non-work related medical condition, they would be eligible to apply for Short Term Disability for up to six (6) months from date of disability. Their medical condition must be validated and is subject to continued review by our disability carrier. Please see the Human Resources Director for Short Term Disability Plan Details.

PERSONAL LEAVE FOR MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES

Every January, regular full-time and regular part-time, management employees that work a 37½ hour week will be credited with 52.50 personal leave hours and employees that work a 40 hour week will be credited with 56 personal leave hours. Regular part-time employees will be eligible for personal leave hours that are pro-rated based on their regularly scheduled work week. If an eligible employee begins employment mid-year, personal leave hours will be pro-rated based on their date of hire.

Personal leave may not be granted in anticipation of future service. Management employees should request Personal Leave at least two weeks in advance from the County Administrator using a Vacation/Personal Leave Request Form. If no advance notice is possible due to illness, employees must notify the County Administrator prior to the start of their scheduled work day to request use of their personal leave hours and the County Administrator must approve the use of their time. If an employee has a personal leave absence in excess of three (3) consecutive working days, they must present medical documentation for the absence.

Recognized holidays falling within a period of personal leave will not be counted against personal leave. Personal leave may be allowed in cases of sickness or injury occurring during the vacation period, provided a doctor's statement is furnished as to the employee's sickness or injury.

There is no accumulation or carryover of personal leave hours. All hours remaining at the end of the year will be deleted and a new bank of hours will be allotted every January. Personal leave hours are not paid out at time of termination, retirement or death for non-management employees.

Should a management employee require time off longer than seven (7) days due to a non-work related medical condition, they would be eligible to apply for Short Term Disability for up to six (6) months from date of disability. After six (6) months, management employees still requiring time off would transfer to Long Term Disability for as long as necessary until age. 65. Their medical condition must be validated and is subject to continued review by our disability carrier. Please see the Human Resources Director for Short and Long Term Disability Plan Details.

FUNERAL LEAVE

An eligible employee shall be allowed 5 consecutive days for funeral leave, not to be deducted from personal leave or vacation time, for the death of the employee's spouse, parent, or child. An eligible employee shall be allowed 4 consecutive days for funeral leave for the death of a sibling, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandparent, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandchild, or a member of the employee's household. Employees will be compensated at their straight time rate of pay for actual scheduled workdays missed. An employee may be granted 1 unpaid funeral leave day to attend the funeral of a close friend, a distant relative, or another County employee. Regular part-time employee's funeral leave will be pro-rated based on the number of regularly scheduled hours they work per week.

Under unusual circumstances, additional paid funeral leave may be granted in addition to that noted above, and for the death of those relatives listed above at the discretion of the Chairman of the Board, or his/her designee.

MILITARY LEAVE

Military leaves without pay will be granted in accordance with applicable State and Federal statutes.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

This addition to the leave of absence policy is incorporated into the existing leave of absence policy pursuant to the implementing regulations for the federal Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA).

This policy is not meant to be all-inclusive and merely highlights the provisions of the FMLA, which are subject to detailed and specific implementing regulations. This Policy is not meant to conflict with either the FMLA or its implementing regulations, the statute and the regulation control.

Employees are entitled up to 12 weeks unpaid job protected leave for certain family and medical reasons if they have worked for at least 1 year and for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months.

Reasons for taking FMLA Leave are:

- To care for the employee's child after birth or placement for adoption by state supervised foster care,
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter or parent who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.
- Or other reasons as required by the FMLA statute.

The employee is required to provide advance leave notice and medical certification should an employee desire to use FMLA. FMLA leave may be denied if the notice and certification requirements are not met. The requirements are as follows:

The employee must ordinarily provide 30 days advance notice when the leave is “foreseeable.”

If 30 days’ notice is not practical, taking into account all facts and circumstances in the individual case, then notice must be given within 1 or 2 business days of when the need for leave becomes known to the employee.

Leave requests must be in writing and must set forth the reasons, anticipated duration, and anticipated start of the leave with medical certification attached. The County may require an employee to obtain a second medical opinion at County expense from a health care provider mutually agreed upon by the employer and employee.

Medical treatment must be scheduled so as to minimize loss of work time. Appointments scheduled during work hours must have written verification from the provider of the health care service that such provider does not offer appointment hours which do not conflict with the employees shift hours and does not offer Saturday hours.

Benefits of FMLA leave include:

For the duration of FMLA leave, health insurance coverage will be maintained.

Employees will be returned to their original or equivalent position upon return from FMLA leave.

Employees paid for time off, such as personal leave and vacation time, will be charged for FMLA leave pursuant to the statutory option granted to the employer.

Accrued benefit time, no matter when earned, will be charged for FMLA leave time taken.

The FMLA does not require that an employee actually ask for FMLA leave in order for the employer be permitted to charge paid time off programs if the purpose for the leave program is a purpose contemplated by the law.

Because FMLA leave time is otherwise unpaid, benefit time on family and medical leave does not accrue except as may be required under applicable collective bargaining agreements.

FMLA leave will be based on a calendar year.

Absences permitted by the FMLA will not be counted under the policy as absence incidents.

Notice of Employer Expectations and Obligations of Employee:

Paid and unpaid leave pursuant to the FMLA will be counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

An employee must furnish to the employer medical certification of necessity for the leave within 15 days of any request for FMLA leave. If the medical certification is found to be incomplete or insufficient, the employee will be notified, in writing, of the additional information necessary and allowed seven calendar days to cure the deficiency. In the case of foreseeable leave, failure to provide medical certification will cause the leave to be denied until the required certification is provided. When the need for FMLA leave is not foreseeable, certification must be provided at least 15 days after the employee gives notice of the need for the leave or as soon as practical under the facts and circumstances requiring the leave.

The employer requires the exhaustion of all paid leave prior to taking unpaid leave.

If the employee has an obligation to pay part of that employee's health care premiums as of the time of the FMLA leave, the employee must make provisions with the Payroll Department to continue such payments during the leave. Payments shall be made each pay period. Failure of the employee to make the required payments shall result in loss of coverage to the paid to date.

Upon return to work, the employee will be required to submit a fitness for duty certificate on the same basis as exists under current return from medical absences.

If an employee is designated as a "key employee", the employee will be so advised at the time a FMLA leave is requested. Upon determination by the employer that substantial and grievous economic injury to the operations of the employer will occur, reinstatement of such key employee may be denied. Adverse effects on health care entitlement may also occur.

A non-key employee will be reinstated to the same or an equivalent job upon return from leave.

Should an employee on FMLA leave decide not to return to work, the employer is entitled to recover its share of health plan premiums paid by the employer

during such period of FMLA leave subject to certain exceptions.

The Human Resources Director will provide an employee requesting FMLA leave with written notice detailing the specific expectations and obligations of the employee and explaining any consequences of a failure to meet these objectives. The employee will be provided with a Family Medical Leave Fact Sheet and the required forms for medical certifications. The Human Resources Director will answer all questions regarding FMLA leave rights, duties, and obligation of the employee.

Please see the back of the handbook or the Human Resources Director for request forms for FMLA leave.

JURY DUTY AND COURT APPEARANCES

Eligible employees who are summoned to serve jury duty on scheduled workdays shall receive pay for the difference between jury duty pay and their straight time pay with the County. All employees who must appear in court for County business shall receive pay for the time required in court.

The employee shall bring the summons notice or subpoena to their department manager and request the time off giving as much notice as possible. It is necessary that the payroll department be furnished with a copy of the voucher for jury duty pay in order for an eligible employee to receive the difference in pay.

ILLNESS

When using a personal leave day due to an illness, the employee must notify their department manager as early as possible prior to the start of their shift. The employee must follow their specific departmental attendance procedure. If an employee does not notify their department manager prior to the start of their shift, the time prior to calling will be considered an unexcused absence.

ADMINISTRATIVE INQUIRY LEAVE

If an employee is suspected of serious misconduct and the department manager believes that the employee should not be allowed to continue employment until an investigation has been conducted, the employee may be placed on administrative inquiry leave with pay. An employee on administrative inquiry leave with pay will be given a written notice explaining the alleged offense that resulted in the action that was taken and advised that the possibility of discipline, including termination, exists.

While the employee is on administrative leave the department manager in consultation with the Human Resources Director will conduct a fact-finding investigation. A decision regarding employment will be made and the employee notified as soon as possible.

RETURNING FROM LEAVE

Staffing requirements may require that an employee's position be filled while he/she is on a leave of absence. Although every attempt is made to return the employee to the same or equal position, neither guarantee of employee's current position nor any job with the County can be made when the employee is ready to return to work.

If an employee fails to return to work the first (1st) workday following the last day of their leave period, the employee will be considered a voluntary termination.

EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS

BULLETIN BOARDS

Announcements and required postings are posted on the bulletin boards throughout County buildings. Employees should check bulletin boards regularly.

EMAIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements and updates are regularly communicated to employees via the County email system. Employees should check their email daily.

PAYROLL INSERTS

Employees may receive notifications and requests for special information through payroll inserts. Employees are encouraged to cooperate with these requests; the County appreciates responses.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S COMPENSATION

SALARY

The Board of Commissioners will, from time to time, establish the annual salary for the Commissioners to be paid through the County payroll process.

BENEFITS

Each Commissioner is eligible for full family health, dental, and vision insurance with payment of 50% of illustrated rate to be paid by bi-weekly via pre-tax payroll deduction. If the Commissioner elects not to receive health insurance, he/she is eligible to participate in the Health Insurance Opt Out Program which provides a \$2,000 annual stipend paid on a quarterly basis. The stipend is subject to normal payroll taxes.

PER DIEM

A Commissioner and/or other authorized persons may be compensated with per diem pay at the rate established by the Board of Commissioners for the following circumstances:

Attending meetings of committees to which that Commissioner has been appointed.

Attending township meetings in the township(s) that the Commissioner represents.

Attending meetings the Board Chairperson requests that Commissioner to attend on behalf of the County.

Performing duties directly related to their district that requires County representation.

Substituting for another Commissioner to maintain County representation.

Attending committee meetings of which he/she is not a member when that particular committee Chairperson requests his/her presence for a special purpose.

Performing activities directly related to a committee that that particular Commissioner chairs.

Commissioners are not eligible for Per Diem for teleconference meetings.

DEFINITIONS, INCLUSIONS, AND EXCLUSIONS

A meeting that includes a luncheon or dinner and consists of 5 or more hours of the Commissioner's time is considered a full day.

A meeting or business that does not exceed 4 hours in time is considered one-half day. All meetings that exceed 4 hours is considered a full day.

Chairperson of the Board - may be compensated for attending any and all meetings pertaining to County business and for all services rendered to the County while serving as Board Chairperson.

It is understood that a County Commissioner will not always be compensated per diem pay for duties and services he/she might do as a representative of the County, but that he/she accepts this as a part of a Commissioner's responsibility.

Per Diem is determined from time to time by the Board of Commissioners. Per diem will be paid in half day increments with a maximum of a full days per diem set by the Board of Commissioners; except after a Commissioner has attended a full day's meeting and is scheduled for an evening meeting, then an additional half day per diem compensation may be paid.

If compensated from another agency (private or governmental), a Commissioner is not entitled to be paid a per diem allowance for this County.

The County Administrator shall review all claims for per diem compensation prior to payment. Per diem is paid bi-weekly through the normal payroll process.

Full-time employees shall not receive per diem.

ACTIONS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PERSONNEL ACTIONS

The Commissioners will continually review its policies and practices, taking action to ensure that any changes to wages, working conditions, employee benefits, demotions, layoffs, terminations, etc. will be made honoring all legal requirements. The Commissioners will maintain a working environment that is free of harassment, intimidation, and coercion at all sites and in all facilities. The following procedures will be followed:

Periodic inspection of all job sites will be conducted to ensure that working conditions and employee facilities do not allow discriminatory treatment of personnel.

The spread of wages paid within each job classification will be periodically evaluated to determine any evidence of a discriminatory wage practice. Findings will be shared with employee organizations as appropriate.

The Commission, through County Administration and its Personnel Committee, will periodically review personnel actions. Where evidence of discrimination is found prompt corrective action will be taken.

DEPARTMENTAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

POLICY

Each department head is responsible for developing reasonable Rules and Regulations, which are consistent with and supplement Board Policies. These shall include attendance and reporting procedures pertinent to a specific department's operation and guidelines for employees' conduct and dress in the workplace.

PROCEDURE

The Human Resources Director will verify that any proposed department rules/procedures are in compliance with Board Policies. The County Administrator's approval is also required prior to implementation.

DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAM/POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

POLICY

Each department head is responsible for developing policies and procedures for various department functions. It is incumbent upon department heads to ensure that new/changed policies and procedures not create an undue hardship on the public.

PROCEDURE

Prior to any new programs and/or procedure being implemented, department heads will obtain approval from the County Administrator. The County Administrator will determine whether any standing committees or the full Board of Commissioners need to approve or be notified of the program/procedure.

VEHICLE POLICY

1. Purpose

The intent of this policy is to establish a procedure for employees of the County of Otsego who operate county owned vehicles.
2. Authority

Otsego County Board of Commissioners.
3. Application

This policy will apply to all employees, elected or appointed, who may operate vehicles owned by the County of Otsego.
4. General Policy

All employees who are assigned County owned vehicles to carry out their duties as County employees shall leave all County-owned vehicles at their normal employment site or office location. Any County employee who operates a County owned vehicle shall use the vehicle assigned to them for county business purposes only. The use of County owned vehicles for personal use is prohibited, and shall result in referral to the Attorney General or disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

Use of County-owned vehicles must be in compliance with all state and federal laws, local ordinances and applicable county policies.

Adoption of this policy supersedes previously adopted county-wide or departmental policies which may be in conflict with this policy.

Failure to follow this policy may result in revocation of an assigned vehicle, or in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
5. Supervisory Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the County Administrator and Management Team members to:

 - A. Promote the safe operation of county vehicles.
 - B. Administer and enforce all state and federal laws, county and/or departmental policies and procedures regarding vehicle operation which may be applicable.
6. Employee Responsibilities
 - A. Safely operate county vehicles conforming to all state laws, local ordinances and county and/or departmental policies regarding the operation of a motor vehicle.
 - B. Maintain a valid and properly classified operator's license and provide proof of such license as required by county and/or departmental administration.
 - C. Advise an immediate supervisor immediately of the loss of a valid operator's license due to suspension, revocation or expiration.
 - D. Employees assigned county-owned vehicles are to take proper care of the interior and exterior appearance and services of county-owned vehicles at the scheduled times and/or every 4,000 miles. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. Upholding the maintenance requirement is the responsibility of the Department Director.

- E. Promptly report any and all vehicle safety defects found during such inspections. These shall be reported to the immediate supervisor and the person responsible for vehicle maintenance and repair.
- F. Require that all occupants utilize safety belts.
- G. Employees shall operate county vehicles in a safe and courteous manner. Employees shall not exceed the speed limit unless in pursuit or emergency.
- H. Violations, citations, fines, and other actions taken by any police jurisdiction against any employee while driving a county vehicle shall be the responsibility of the employee and may be cause for disciplinary action by the county.
- I. Employees shall notify his/her department director of any points incurred on their driver's license for situations including, but not limited to, accidents, speeding tickets, driving under the influence, and driver's license suspensions or revocations.
- J. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited in county-owned vehicles.
- K. Maintenance on county-owned vehicles will be performed by the Otsego County Bus System staff, unless the work can be performed at an equivalent or lesser cost, or if the timeliness of having the vehicle serviced by the Bus System would create a hardship for the department.
- L. The Department Director of each department shall turn into the Bus System Director the mileage of each county-owned vehicle yearly. Mileage must be turned into the Bus Director by January 31 of each year.
- M. All County vehicles will have an "official county vehicle" sticker placed on the vehicle, except for those vehicles that have an alternative sticker identifying their Department.

7. Prohibited Usage or Practices

- A. Allowing any non-county employees to operate a county vehicle.
- B. Operating the vehicle in contravention to applicable state laws, local ordinances or county and/or departmental policies or procedures.
- C. Using any assigned vehicle for any illegal purpose as defined by federal law, state law, county or local ordinance.
- D. No county vehicle shall be used for personal use, including commuting to and from the office, general recreation or vacations.

8. Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy must be reviewed and approved by the Board of Commissioners.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS / INTERNET POLICY

Otsego County recognizes that use of the Internet and e-mail is necessary in the workplace, and employees are encouraged to use the Internet and e-mail systems responsibly, as inappropriate use of technology can place Otsego County and others at risk. This policy outlines the guidelines for acceptable use of Otsego County's technology systems.

Scope

This policy must be followed in conjunction with any/all Otsego County policies governing appropriate workplace conduct and behavior. Any employee who abuses the company-provided access to e-mail, the Internet, or other electronic communications or networks, including social media, may be denied future access and, if appropriate, be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Otsego County complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws as they concern the employer/employee relationship, and nothing contained herein should be misconstrued to violate any of the rights or responsibilities contained in such laws.

Questions regarding the appropriate use of Otsego County's electronic communications equipment or systems, including e-mail and the Internet, should be directed to your supervisor or County Administration.

Policy

Otsego County has established the following guidelines for employee use of the company's technology and communications networks, including the Internet and e-mail, in an appropriate, ethical and professional manner.

Confidentiality and Monitoring

All technology provided by Otsego County, including computer systems, communication networks, company-related work records and other information stored electronically, is the property of Otsego and not the employee. Use of the company's technology systems and electronic communications should be job-related and not for personal convenience. Otsego County reserves the right to examine, monitor, audit, intercept, access and disclose e-mail and other electronic communications, directories, files and all other content, including Internet use, transmitted by or stored in its technology systems, whether onsite or offsite with or without notice to an employee. Access by the employer may occur at any time during or after work hours.

An employee's use of a password or code will not restrict the right to access electronic communications by the County.

All employees are notified that any communication or information placed in the County's system is not private and is subject to interception and/or receipt by any other employee of the County and the County's administration. All employees are also notified that any violations of the Electronic Communications Policy of the County may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge from employment. Further, in the event of a violation of this policy by any employee, access to either E-mail or the Internet may be restricted by Administration.

Internal and external e-mail, voice mail, text messages and other electronic communications are considered business records and may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and/or discovery in the event of litigation. Employees must be aware of this possibility when communicating electronically within and outside the company.

Appropriate Use

Otsego County employees are expected to use technology responsibly and productively as necessary for their jobs. Internet access and e-mail use is for job-related activities. Employees may not use Otsego County's Internet, e-mail or other electronic communications to transmit, retrieve or store any communications or other content of a defamatory, discriminatory, harassing or pornographic nature. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual's race, age, disability, religion, national origin, physical attributes or sexual preference may be transmitted. Harassment of any kind is prohibited.

Disparaging, abusive, profane or offensive language and any illegal activities—including piracy, cracking, extortion, blackmail, copyright infringement and unauthorized access to any computers on the Internet or e-mail—are forbidden.

Employees are prohibited from downloading software or other program files or online services from the Internet without prior approval from the IT department. All files or software opened including those received via email, downloaded from websites, or brought to the network via portable media (e.g. CD, Thumb drives, portable hard drives) should be through checked with the County's virus-protection programs prior to use. Even if the virus-protection reports a file as clean, caution should always be exercised with any file you did not expect to receive. Failure to detect viruses could result in corruption or damage to files or unauthorized entry into company systems and networks. Employees should only open emails from sources that they have verified. Opening emails with attachments from unknown and rogue sources puts the County's electronic systems at risk and will not be tolerated.

Every employee of Otsego County is responsible for the content of all text, audio, video or image files that he or she places or sends over the company's Internet and e-mail systems. No e-mail or other electronic communications may be sent that hide the identity of the sender or represent the sender as someone else. Otsego County's identity is attached to all outgoing e-mail communications, which should reflect the County's values and appropriate workplace language and conduct.

Social Media

Access to social media networks/sites for personal accounts from within Otsego County's IT infrastructure, and during County employee work hours, is strictly prohibited. Such sites include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter. LinkedIn is not covered by this policy.

The County Administrator, or her designee, is responsible for approving and creating rules for any official social media accounts related to the County or its departments.

Training

All employees will be required to complete mandatory training on appropriate use of our electronic systems. Training will take place upon hire and at required time intervals as determined by County Administration.

The County reserves the right to change or amend its Electronic Communications Policy at any time with or without notice.

LAPTOP COMPUTER POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide requirements for the home use of County-owned laptop computers.

POLICY

For purposes of this policy, laptop computers, or notebook computers, are a portable computer that is about the size of a large binder and has the same abilities as a standard home desktop computer but is small enough that it can be easily transported.

County employees will not take laptop computers home without written authorization from their department head. County Commissioners will not take laptop/notebook computers home without authorization from the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners.

All County-owned laptop computers will be affixed with a County property identification tag by the County's contracted IT vendor prior to using them outside of the County office environment.

All employees/commissioners using County-owned laptop computers are required to comply with the County's Electronic Communications Policy.

Any damaged laptop computers will be returned to the County. Employees/Commissioners may be charged for repair/replacement of damaged computers due to user negligence.

Employees/Commissioners may be required to reimburse the County for the replacement cost of any lost laptop computers in their care.

County-owned laptop computers are subject to search or inspection at any time by the County to investigate or enforce County computer and Internet policies.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of unacceptable uses for county-owned laptop computers:

A. Hardware

1. Do not install new computer hardware without first obtaining permission from the County Administrator and the County's contracted IT vendor.

B. Software

1. Only licensed versions of application software and/or operating system are permitted. Bootleg or pirated software is not permitted on county-owned computers at any time.
 2. Duplication of county-owned software through any medium (e.g., DVD/CD-ROM writer, diskettes) for personal use or unauthorized distribution is prohibited.
 3. No software or Internet utilities may be downloaded or installed without the express approval of the County Administrator and the County's contracted IT vendor.
- C. Otsego County Technology must not be used for knowingly transmitting, retrieving or storing any communications that contain:
1. Discriminatory or harassing language
 2. Obscene, pornographic or X-rated material
 3. Defamatory, abusive, threatening, profane or offensive language
 4. "Chain" letters and other non-business-oriented mass e-mails
 5. Derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual's race, age, disability, religion, national origin, physical attributes, or sexual preference.
 6. Racial and/or sexual slurs or jokes
 7. Any material which is against County policy
- D. Otsego County Technology may not be used for viewing or posting of messages, replies, or any type of announcements to the Internet via message boards, forums, chat rooms, on line classifieds, news groups, list serves, or any other type of public web site.
- E. Business Use: Except as specifically authorized, all use of Otsego County Technology must be for the benefit of Otsego County and must not be used:
1. For any personal profit
 2. For any non-County commercial or promotional purpose, including personal messages offering to buy or sell goods or services
 3. To sell or distribute Otsego County information, software, or services for personal gain or profit
 4. In such a way that causes Otsego County to be charged a fee by another person or entity

Violation of this policy may result in an employment sanction up to and including discharge.

County Administration and its designees reserve the right to monitor use of County Technology to ensure compliance with the requirements specified in this policy.

LAWSUITS

The Board of Commissioners, through the County Administrator, must be notified of all filed or anticipated lawsuits.

EMERGENCY SERVICE REQUEST

Otsego County will strive to provide emergency services in the form of personnel and/or equipment when requested by another governmental agency or emergency agency. The County's Emergency Management Director will coordinate the assistance.

The County recognizes that volunteers provide many emergency services to the general public. The County is aware that it may have employed civic-minded personnel that may provide their services as volunteers to various emergency response agencies. These agencies would include but not necessarily be limited to volunteer fire departments, county ambulance services and/or the sheriff's auxiliary.

It is the policy of the County to allow such personnel to assist, when part of an emergency organization, without a loss of pay if the emergency call comes during normal working hours. If the employee is compensated by the emergency organization they represent for work performed during normal business hours, the compensation they receive will be returned to the County.

CITIZEN COMPLAINTS

This policy shall apply to all employees of Otsego County. The purpose is to establish a procedure for the receipt, documentation, investigation, and resolution of citizen complaints related to the actions of County employees. It is the goal of Otsego County to handle all complaints in a fair and equitable manner and to assure that all concerned are aware of the County's complaint procedure.

This policy is an internal procedure and is in no way intended to affect any individual's civil or criminal liability.

The policy is as follows:

Otsego County wishes to continue to improve the quality of governmental service to its citizens. To accomplish this and to maintain citizen confidence in the integrity of County government, Otsego County will address all citizen complaints in a meaningful, fair, and effective manner.

Otsego County demands and expects the highest degree of integrity from all employees. Accordingly, it is assumed that employee actions are made in good faith, and are within the law as well as department and County policies, resolutions and ordinances.

The County will support an employee falsely accused and defend any legitimate directive issued to personnel. However, a thorough and immediate investigation will follow all citizen complaints.

Otsego County will accept and investigate all complaints concerning the job-related misconduct of County employees from any citizen, group, or agency.

Proper disposition of the complaint will be made upon completion of an investigation. The public focus shall be on the facts pertaining to the allegations and not the internal disciplinary steps taken by the County with the employee. However, if misconduct is determined to have occurred, then counseling, training, or discipline consistent with the circumstances will be administered.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Definitions

Supervisor - The Department Manager, or designee, directly in charge of an employee

Department Directive - An internal department policy not in conflict with County policy

Procedural Inquiry - An inquiry concerning a department or County policy

Personnel Complaint - Related to an employee's job-related misconduct

Misconduct - A violation of law, policy, resolution, or ordinance

Unfounded Complaint - The facts do not support that job-related misconduct occurred

Formal Complaint - A written citizen complaint regarding job-related misconduct by a County employee

Informal Complaint - A verbal citizen complaint regarding job-related misconduct by a County employee

Resolved at Intake - No additional investigation is required, but the complaint must be entered into a citizen complaint logbook

COMPLAINT ADMINISTRATION

A department manager shall assure that any complaint received is processed accordingly to this policy. Department managers are charged with the investigation of each citizen complaint except those complaints resolved at intake. The Human Resources Director shall make inquiries and investigations concerning a department manager.

DOCUMENTATION

Each complaint shall be assigned a unique sequential number by the department manager and recorded in a logbook. The logbook shall include a complaint number, nature of complaint, date investigation starts, dates and summary of all status reports, and final disposition. A complaint number shall not be voided or reassigned for any reason.

Each department manager shall maintain a Complaint File with all complaints maintained for a minimum of 10 years. Citizen complaint files must be secured and kept separate and distinct from personnel files. Citizen complaint data shall not be disclosed to the public except as directed by a court or statute. Access to a citizen complaint file with the County shall be on a need to know basis.

ACCEPTANCE OF COMPLAINT

Each citizen complaint shall receive prompt and polite attention in a professional manner by County personnel. Each complaint shall be referred to a department manager except where the complaint is resolved at intake. In the absence of a department manager, or if a complainant does not wish to speak to a department manager, the employee contacted will document the complaint and forward it to a department manager.

The complainant should be encouraged to reduce a complaint to writing. Legal actions and civil rights issues shall be forwarded to the County Administrator who shall assist the department manager in following

this policy. Allegations of a criminal nature shall be referred to the County Prosecutor who shall assist the department manager in following this policy.

No undue obstacles or hardships shall be presented to the complainant. An employee receiving a citizen complaint may, with the citizen's consent, attempt to explain department or County policy in an attempt to resolve the complaint at intake. Resolution at this stage shall only be with the consent of the complainant. The complainant and its resolution shall be noted in the citizen complaint logbook.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

The three preliminary findings include:

- a) Unfounded complaint
- b) Resolved at intake
- c) Additional investigation required

PROCEDURE

The department manager shall review the citizen complaint and make a preliminary finding viewing the allegations in light most favorable to the complainant. Where the complainant is unfounded or is resolved at intake, the complaint may be closed after explanation to the complainant and notation in the logbook. If additional investigation is required, the manager shall review all pertinent documents and question all pertinent witnesses to the incident(s), which gave, rise to the complaint.

The manager shall request, but not require, a statement from the employee who is the subject of the complaint. If an accused employee is questioned, the manager shall follow all applicable labor agreements.

No investigation is authorized to extend beyond 30 days commencing with the receipt of the complaint without the written consent of the Personnel Committee Chairperson. The Personnel Committee may request weekly status reports. Upon completion of the investigation, the department manager shall make a final determination, as noted below, based on all the facts and circumstances. A written summary of the pertinent facts and conclusions shall be prepared and submitted to the Personnel Committee and the County Administrator. Determinations are to be as follows:

Proper Conduct - The alleged act occurred but was justified, legal, and proper

Unfounded - The alleged act did not occur

Inconclusive - The allegations could not be clearly proved or disproved

Improper Conduct - The accused employee committed an act of misconduct by the standard of proof appropriate to the type of investigation

The department manager shall notify the employee and the complainant of the final determination of the complaint. The fact that disciplinary action, if warranted, will be taken may be divulged to the complainant. The precise nature of any discipline should not be made public. If the final determination is

that improper conduct occurred, reasonable discipline, in light of the type and severity of the misconduct, shall be imposed pursuant to the personnel policies of the County.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

To assure that citizens receive reasonable services, the Otsego County Board of Commissioners, under the laws of the State of Michigan, will from time to time appoint citizens to various Boards/Commissions/Agencies and Authorities.

It is possible individuals providing service may confront situations where they may have dual interest, which might be interpreted as conflict of interest. However, service to the public is not rendered impossible solely by reason of dual interest or possible conflict of interest.

Nonetheless, service to the public carries with it a requirement to act in a judicial manner, being open and honest and economically exercising their best case, skill, and judgment in the interest of the individual, the citizens, and the County.

Conflict of interest is best handled by full disclosure of possible conflict and abstaining if you or your Board/Commission/ Agency or Authority deems it appropriate.

In addition:

If one has a direct or indirect financial interest in a firm doing business with the County, the employee must advise his/her manager or the County Administrator and must not represent the County in any transaction with that firm.

No employee or member of the immediate family shall accept gifts from any person or firm doing or seeking business with the County wherein the acceptance of a gift would infer an attempt to influence the decision of the employee.

No employee shall, directly or indirectly, give, offer, or promise anything of value to any representative of any supplier in connection with any transaction they may have with the County.

No employee shall directly or indirectly engage in conduct that is disruptive or damaging to the County while on the job.

Employees handling confidential information are responsible for its security. Extreme care must be exercised to ensure that data is safeguarded to protect the County, its employees, its suppliers and the public.

Conflict of interest or possible conflict of interest shall be disclosed and made a matter of record. The individual may be excused; if excused the individual shall leave the room and take no part in proceedings. If the by-laws of the organization discuss conflict of interest the provisions of the by-laws shall prevail.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT POLICY

PURPOSE

Boards, Commissions and Committees are created, either through mandate or the will of the Otsego County Board of Commissioners, to aid them in the policy development and decision-making process. It is the intent of the Board to solicit public interest and to establish a fair and equitable procedure for appointments, reappointments or replacement of members to County Committees.

POLICY

1. The term of office for all appointments to committees shall begin on January 1, except as otherwise required by law.
2. County Commissioners may be appointed to serve on committees where such service is not prohibited by law or is mandated by law. Commissioners appointed to serve on committees shall be appointed annually and shall be deemed to serve by virtue of their position as County Commissioner. For such Commissioners, such appointment shall continue only so long as the Commissioner continues in office. At the point a Commissioner so appointed vacates the office of County Commissioner, all appointments enjoyed by virtue of that office shall also terminate.
3. Open positions, including openings due to term expirations or mid-term resignations, on committees shall be posted on the County's website for a period of four weeks prior to the Board of Commissioners taking action on a position. Such postings will list the deadline for applying for open positions. Open positions will also be announced at a regular County Board meeting, four weeks prior to the Board of Commissioners taking action on a position.
4. Citizens who are already serving on a committee, and whose terms are expiring will be notified of the expiration of their term approximately six weeks prior to the date of term expiration. They will be required to submit a letter of interest as to whether or not they wish to continue serving on said board. If a letter is not received from the individual whose term is expiring, it will be assumed that the individual no longer wishes to serve on this committee.
5. Vacancies created by individuals who resign prior to the expiration of their term will be viewed as new appointments and the procedure outline in item 3 will be followed. All resignations should be submitted in writing to the Board of Commissioners. The appointment of a position due to a mid-term resignation will be for the remainder of the original term.
6. All applications received prior to the established deadline will be forwarded to the respective committee to review for recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. Applications received after the deadline, but before the position is filled, may be considered at the Board of Commissioner's discretion. The Board will consider the committee's recommendation and appoint an individual to serve on the committee. All appointees must be residents and registered voters in Otsego County prior to the time the appointment is made. An exception to the residency requirement may be given in the case when no County resident could be found at the time of the initial appointment to the open position. The residency requirement will be waived for additional terms for individuals appointed in these circumstances.
7. After the appointment is made, all individuals who submitted applications will receive notification from the County Administrator's office advising whether or not they were selected for the particular position for which they indicated an interest.
8. Alternate County committee members, where alternate membership slots are provided, shall be appointed in the same manner as set forth in this policy.

9. All members appointed by the Board to serve on various committees are expected to attend each and every meeting of the committee. If a member is absent from three or more meetings of the committee in a calendar year, the Board of County Commissioners may consider removal of such members.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

To assure that the health and safety of employees has a high County priority, a Safety Committee will be established with members from various departments. The Human Resources Director will represent the Board.

Meetings will be called as needed, typically quarterly, to consider issues such as:

Accident and/or injury involving employees, Commission vehicles, equipment, or property.

Inspection of buildings, facilities, premises and equipment.

Safety issues, hazards and suggestions reported by employees or the public.

Short and long-term safety training needs, resources and opportunities.

Minutes of meetings shall be kept and a report made when requested to the County Administrator or the Board of Commissioners by the Human Resources Director.

SAFETY BOOT ALLOWANCE POLICY

Regular full-time and regular part-time employees that are in the following job classifications which require steel-toed safety boots: Parks and Recreation Community Center Monitors and Parks Rangers (excludes seasonal employees), Bus Mechanics, Building Inspectors, and Jail Cook are eligible for reimbursement up to \$50.00 annually for the purchase of steel-toed safety boots with submission of receipts through the normal expense reimbursement procedure. Positions that are already covered by a uniform, clothing or equipment allowance are not eligible for the safety boot allowance.

WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS

All Otsego County employees are covered under Otsego County's worker's compensation insurance policy. If an on-duty injury occurs, employees should immediately report the injury to their supervisor who will secure authorization for treatment when required, from Human Resources and complete the necessary administrative paperwork to document the injury. For injuries not requiring emergency treatment, employees must go to the Occupational Health Division of the Otsego Memorial Walk-In Clinic. If an employee does not go to the approved occupational health provider, payment for services is not guaranteed by our worker's compensation vendor.

VIOLENCE FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

It is Otsego County's policy to provide a workplace that is safe and free from all threatening and intimidating conduct. Therefore, Otsego County will not tolerate violence or threats of violence of any form in the workplace, at work-related functions, or outside of work if it affects the workplace. This policy applies to Otsego County employees, clients, customers, guests, vendors, and persons doing business with Otsego County.

It will be a violation of this policy for any individual to engage in any conduct, verbal or physical, which intimidates, endangers, or creates the perception of intent to harm persons or property. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Physical assaults or threats of physical assault, whether made in person or by other means (i.e., in writing, by phone, fax, or e-mail).
- Verbal conduct that is intimidating and has the purpose or effect of threatening the health or safety of a co-worker.
- Possession of firearms or any other lethal weapon by a County employee on County property, in a vehicle being used on County business, in any County owned or leased parking facility, or at a work-related function.
- Any other conduct or acts which management believes represents an imminent or potential danger to workplace safety/security.

Anyone with questions or complaints about workplace behaviors which fall under this policy may discuss them with a supervisor or the Human Resources Director. Otsego County will promptly and thoroughly investigate any reported occurrences or threats of violence. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employees. Where such actions involve non-employees, Otsego County will take action appropriate for the circumstances. Where appropriate and/or necessary, Otsego County will also take whatever legal actions are available and necessary to stop the conduct and protect Otsego County employees and property.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ATTIRE AND APPEARANCE

During normal business hours, employees are expected to present themselves in a clean and neat manner and to dress in accordance to the requirements of their position. Some employees will be subject to department-specific dress codes that may include style and color of uniform. Department managers will instruct their employees on the standards of dress within their department.

Some guidelines to consider:

Employees should use common sense rules in neatness, good taste, and comfort.

Provocative clothing is prohibited, as are extreme fads.

Skirts/Shorts must be a sensible length.

Clothing should not constitute a safety hazard.

Name badges must be worn at all times.

Fridays will be considered a “casual dress day” and, if permitted by department manager, jeans may be worn.

A manager may require an employee to leave the workplace, without pay, if the employee’s attire or appearance is inappropriate. The employee will not be compensated for their time away from the workplace and they must return to work as soon as possible.

EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION CARD

Each employee will receive a picture identification card that among other data will indicate their name and department. These cards must be worn at all times when representing the County. If an employee should lose the card they are to notify their department manager. Upon leaving County employment these cards are to be returned to the department manager.

KEYS

All employees are responsible for the security of issued keys. If keys are lost, the employee must notify their department manager immediately. All keys must be returned to department managers upon termination of employment.

PERSONNEL FILES

The Human Resources Department will maintain a personnel file on the employment of each employee. In accordance with State law, all of the information in these files is available to the employee and authorized personnel only. The file will be kept in a manner consistent with State or Federal law. If an employee wishes to view their file, they may contact the Human Resources Director to schedule an appointment during normal business hours.

It is necessary for the County to have each employee's correct name, address, telephone number, marital status, and number of dependents on file at all times for personnel, payroll, and benefit reasons. All employees are asked to please report any changes in status as soon as possible to the Human Resources Director.

The Human Resources Department retains and destroys personnel records in accordance with federal and state laws governing records retention. The following outlines the Human Resources Department's operating procedures for personnel records retention and destruction of documents when such retention periods have passed.

Human Resources maintains both employee record information and government compliance reports, both are subject to the retention requirements and destruction policies which follow:

Employee information records are maintained in segregated personnel files as noted:

I-9 forms,

General employees' personnel records,

Benefit plan and employee medical records,

And

Health and safety records.

All personnel records and confidential employee data maintained by Human Resources will be destroyed by shredding after retention dates have passed; this pertains to all personnel records, not just those governed by the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACTA). Application materials submitted by applicants for employment who were never employed are also to be shredded. Personnel records and confidential employee data will not be discarded and any employee found negligent in protecting these records will be subject to the company's disciplinary action policy.

Personnel records include electronic as well as paper records. Human Resources will interface with the IT Department periodically but no less than annually to review and ensure that Human Resources electronic records relating to employee information and compliance reports are properly purged.

The following set forth the periods of retention for Human Resources of terminated employee and applicant records and compliance reports:

Pre-employment Records

Resumes/applications and related employment materials 4 years after termination

Background checks, drug test results, driving records, company employment verifications, letters of reference, and related documents 4 years after termination.

Employee Records

Terminated employee I-9 Forms: **The latter of** three years from date of hire or one year following termination of employment.

Compensation, job history and timekeeping records 4 years after termination

FMLA/USERRA and related leave records 4 years after termination

Performance appraisal/disciplinary action records 4 years after termination

Benefit records 6 years after termination

Disputed issues (records relating to issues 2 years after resolution of dispute, involving external agencies or parties, wage charge, or suit hour investigation by DOL, EEOC charge, arbitrations, court actions, etc.)

OSHA & employee safety records 5 years after termination

Workers Compensation claims 30 years after date of injury/illness

Compliance Reports/Records

State New Hire reports 1 year after report filed

EEO-1/VETS-100 4 years after report filed

OSHA 300/300A 5 years after posting

Federal/State tax reports 4 years after report filed

SOLICITATION

In order to minimize distractions from our responsibility to serve the citizens and to shield County employees and visitors from the annoyance and pressure involved the County prohibits solicitation for any purpose during work hours in work areas. This does not include break or meal times. Employees are not permitted to distribute literature of any kind at any time in work areas.

Solicitation of any kind and distribution of literature on County property by any persons is prohibited. The only exceptions to this policy are activities expressly approved by the County Administrator or The Board of Commissioners.

OTSEGO COUNTY ANTI- NEPOTISM POLICY

This policy is established in order to: (a) prevent favoritism in hiring, promotion, discipline, transfer or layoff decisions; (b) avoid the possibility of an employee supervising a relative; (c) avoid a potential conflict of interest for a supervisor in the resolution of employee grievances or other employment decisions; and (d) prevent compounding morale problems if an employee, who is related to another employee in the same department, is disciplined, terminated or laid off.

- A. Employees who are related may not work in the same department for the County. For purposes of this policy, “related” shall cover the following relationships:
1. Parent (natural, step, or in-law)
 2. Child (natural or step)
 3. Brother/sister (natural, step, or in-law)
 4. Spouse
 5. Grandparent
 6. Legal guardian
- B. When two employees who work in the same department get married, they shall be allowed one (1) year from the date of their marriage for one of them to find alternative employment or transfer to another department of the County. If after one (1) year both employees are still working in the same department, the employee with the least seniority with the County shall be terminated.

SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT

Secondary employment, which interferes in any manner with an employee’s work schedule or the employee’s ability to perform his/her job with the County, will not be permitted. The employee’s job with the County will always be considered Primary. If the County determines that secondary employment interferes, the employee will be required to terminate the secondary employment if he/she wishes to remain a County employee.

Secondary employment is also prohibited if, in the judgment of the County, a conflict of interest exists.

Employees who are considering a second position, should notify their department manager in writing.

EMPLOYMENT OF MINORS

The County may employ minors, in part-time positions, under the following circumstances:

Employment must be outside of school hours.

Employee must not work more than 40 hours in any 1-week when school is not in session.

Employee must not work more than 18 hours in any 1-week when school is in session.

Employee must not work more than 8 hours in any 1-day when school is not in session.

Employee must not work more than 3 hours in any 1-day when school is in session.

Employee can only work between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. in any one day, except during the summer (June 1 through Labor Day) when the evening hour is 9:00 p.m.

No persons under the age of 18 shall be employed, until they procure a work permit as required by law. Under no circumstances whatsoever shall a minor under the age of 16 be employed.

In the vast majority of circumstances, minors will only be employed during periods when schools are not in session.

SMOKING

It is the policy of Otsego County to provide a smoke-free workplace for all employees. The County prohibits smoking in its facilities, vehicles, and all County property leased. This policy complies with Michigan Department of Public Health codes, Michigan Clean Indoor Air Act of 1986, Michigan Smoke-Free Air Law of 2010 or any other applicable law. All employees are responsible for ensuring compliance with this SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT policy. Anyone observing a violation is requested to courteously remind that person regarding the Smoke-Free Environment policy and suggest that smoking materials be extinguished. Noncompliance will be documented. Employees violating this policy will be disciplined in accordance with employee disciplinary guidelines.

TELEPHONE COURTESY

The County insists on good telephone habits, which supports a customer friendly policy. Please adhere to these principles:

Answer promptly.

Identify yourself and your department; also identify the caller.

Give accurate and concise answers.

Be as brief as possible.

Speak distinctly...vital information is often communicated by telephone.

Answer calls tactfully.

Conclude the conversation in a professional manner.

CELL PHONE USAGE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to promote a safe and productive work environment and increase public safety. This policy applies to both incoming and outgoing cellular calls.

Personal Cellular Phones

While at work, employees are expected to exercise the same discretion in using personal cellular phones as is expected for the use of company phones. Personal calls and text messaging during the work day, regardless of the phone used, can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others. Employees are expected to make personal calls or engaging in text messaging during non-work time and to ensure that friends and family members are aware of the Otsego County Cell Phone Usage policy. While excessive personal calls and text messaging is strictly prohibited, department heads may allow limited personal calls, text messaging, and other similar forms of communication, at their discretion.

Otsego County will not be liable for the loss of personal cellular phones brought into the workplace.

County-Provided Cellular Phones

Where job or business needs demand immediate access to an employee the County may issue a business cell phone to an employee for work-related communications.

Employees in possession of County issued cellular phones are expected to protect the equipment from loss, damage or theft. Upon resignation or termination of employment, or at any time upon request, the employee may be asked to produce the phone for return or inspection.

Safety Issues for Cellular Phone Usage

All employees are expected to follow applicable state or federal laws or regulations regarding the use of cell phones. Employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving and who are issued a cell phone for business use are expected to refrain from using their phone while driving – use of a cell phone while driving is not required by the County. Safety must come before all other concerns. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees are required to pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call.

Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their phone while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

Special Responsibilities for Managerial Staff

As with any policy, management staff is expected to serve as role models for proper compliance with the provisions above and are encouraged to regularly remind employees of their responsibilities in complying with this policy.

Failure to follow this policy may result disciplinary action up to and including termination

CELL PHONE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

Eligibility: To be eligible for a cell phone stipend, the employee must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- The job function of the employee (during normal working hours) requires considerable time outside of the assigned office or work area and it is important that the employee is accessible during this time.
- The job function of the employee requires them to be accessible outside of scheduled or normal working hours (while at home, out of town, etc.)

Should an employee require the use of a cell phone for essential functions of their position, but does not wish to have a personal cell phone, the County will continue to provide one to the employee.

All Cell Phone Allowance Reimbursement Requests must be pre-approved by the County Administrator.

A. Payment:

Employees who are eligible to receive a stipend for cell phone usage will receive the stipend in their payroll on a monthly basis. Approved stipend levels will be determined by County Administration and will be reviewed on a periodic basis. The allowance will show as a separate line on the employee's pay statement and will not increase the employee's base salary. This allowance will not be subject to taxes.

C. Responsibility:

The employee is responsible for the purchase of both the cell phone and the service plan. Costs for cosmetic or technical cell phones or any "extras" that have no business purpose are the responsibility of the employee.

In positions where advanced cell phone features such as email, Internet, or calendar access are required for business purposes, approval for additional stipend dollars may be obtained from County Administration.

All service contracts are to be between the employee and the service provider. All service fees, overage charges, termination charges, etc. are the responsibility of the employee.

Employees who receive the stipend will be required to maintain a coverage plan suitable for their needs (both business and personal) and to provide the phone number to both Human Resources and their department head. If discontinuation of service occurs for any reason, the employee must notify the County immediately.

Should an employee-owned phone be damaged or broken for any reason (even if while performing their job duties), it is the responsibility of the employee to repair or replace the phone.

The County will pay the employee a non-taxable stipend on a monthly basis as full reimbursement for County usage. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure the stipend level is appropriate.

Approved stipend levels are:

Standard: Voice
\$38.00/month

Premium: Voice and Data
\$60.00/month

TRAVEL AND OTHER OFFICIAL EXPENDITURES

CONVENTIONS, EDUCATION, SEMINARS, ETC.

The County will reimburse regular, full-time employees for work-related seminars, courses, classes, or workshops. Reimbursement will be made after the class is satisfactorily completed (passing grade or certificate of completion shall document satisfactory completion). Approval to attend must be obtained from the Human Resources Director in advance and in writing. The following criteria must be met before any approval can be considered:

The course schedule will allow attendance without disruption of the department's schedule or workload.

Funds are available for the course(s). Reimbursement will be made after the receipt of documented grade/completion reports and tuition receipts. Duplication of other forms of reimbursement shall not be allowed

The County may reimburse classes that an employee wishes to attend that would directly contribute to the continued development of the professional skills and knowledge of the employee's position with the County. Prior approval is required as discussed above and reimbursement will be made after satisfactory completion of class and/or activity.

TRAVEL AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS

General. To reimburse County employees for reasonable expenses incurred while in training or conducting official business for the benefit of the County.

B. Policy and Procedures.

1. **Original itemized receipts** shall accompany requests for reimbursement for expenses incurred in conjunction with official travel and business meal reimbursement.
2. When practical, employees should share transportation and lodging as economy measures.
3. Approval authority for travel plans and travel expense reimbursement claims is as follows:

Approval Authority

Elected Officials

Department Heads

County Administrator

Approval For

Persons in their Department(s)

Persons in their Department(s)

Board Members, Elected

Officials, Appointed Dept. Heads

4. Claims for travel and business meal reimbursement shall be submitted by the employee within 30 days after travel has been completed using either or both of the following forms. Travel and business meal expenses shall be reimbursed only in the budget year in which expenses are incurred. On approval by the authorizing official as outlined above, travel and business meal claims will be forwarded for payment.

- a. County Credit Card expense voucher.
 - b. Travel Expense voucher.
5. Employees must use a County owned vehicle during County business travel unless otherwise authorized by the designated approval authority.
 6. Out-of-state travel and any exceptions to this policy must be submitted in writing to the County Administrator for prior approval, with such approval being provided in writing.

C. Travel Reimbursement.

1. Accommodations: \$ 125.00 (tax included)
Reimbursement for accommodations may be higher when associated with a workshop or conference, with advance authorization from the designated approval authority.
2. Mileage cannot be incurred for travel of less than one mile and multiple trips of less than one mile shall not be accumulated for reimbursement purposes. Mileage will be reimbursed at 50 cents per mile, as approved by the County Board of Commissioners unless specified otherwise in a separate union contract. For out-of-county mileage, a copy of a MapQuest (or similar service) printout verifying the miles of travel requested for reimbursement must be submitted with the request form as supporting documentation.
3. Reimbursement of meals for out-of-county travel when the employee is on County business is addressed in the Business Meals while Traveling section below.

D. Reimbursement of Business Meals.

To be considered a business meal, such meals must be directly related to County business and purposes. The meal period must be planned for the purpose of and include substantive and bona fide business discussions or other business activities which directly and specifically benefit the County.

Documentation must include names of persons attending and the business purposes of the meal, or in the case of an organization or group, the name of the sponsoring organization, an original itemized receipt, and a description of the business purposes of the organization and meal. Cost of business meals may be paid or reimbursed if approved by the authorized department signatory with required documentation.

1. In-County Business Meals

- a. In-county business meals are those meals which are located within the county (and therefore not considered travel), but not at a County work site.
- b. Examples of in-county business meals may include the following: as part of an interview the County is conducting; or as part of a negotiation with potential business partners.

- c. In general, meals attended only by County staff will not be approved for reimbursement as business meals.
- d. All in-county business meals must be approved by the County Administrator prior to the meal taking place.

2. On-Site Business Meals

- a. On-site business meals are those meals which are located on County property. Meals may be provided at County offices and workplaces if the meals are for the convenience of the County in the conduct of substantive County business.
- b. Allowable on-site meals include occasions when the participants are meeting on-site and are conducting substantive County business during or immediately before or after the meals and it is necessary to provide the meals for the efficient conduct of County business. An example would be in-house training that goes through the lunch hour.
- c. All on-site business meals must be approved by the County Administrator prior to the meal taking place.

3. Business Meals while Traveling

Reimbursement of meals for out-of-county travel when the employee is on County business is as follows:

- a. Breakfast: Travel commences prior to 6:00 a.m. and extends beyond 8:00 a.m.
Allowance Reimbursement of actual meal expenses incurred, up to \$15.00, accompanied by the original itemized receipts.
- b. Lunch: Travel commences prior to 10:00 a.m. and extends beyond 2:30 p.m.
Allowance: Reimbursement of actual meal expenses incurred, up to \$20.00, accompanied by the original itemized receipts.
- c. Dinner: Travel commences prior to 3:00 p.m. and extends beyond 8:00 p.m.
Allowance: Reimbursement of actual meal expenses incurred, up to \$25.00, accompanied by the original itemized receipts.
- d. The above reimbursement amounts include gratuity. There is a limit of approximately 20% of meal cost for gratuity.
- e. Expenses related to alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable. Employees are prohibited from using an Otsego County credit card to purchase alcoholic beverages.
- f. The County Administrator may authorize meal charges in excess of the approved meal allowance upon receiving a written description of the necessity of the cost overage, which must be filed with the meal receipt in the Finance Department.



Vacation Request Form

Please submit the original to your direct supervisor at least ***two (2) weeks prior*** to the date(s) requested for approval. *This form is for record-keeping purposes.*

Employee Name (print): _____ Date: _____

I request time off for (check all that apply): Vacation Personal Floating Holiday Comp

I request vacation/personal/floating holiday/comp time on the following date(s):

I will return to work on date(s): _____

Total days to be taken: _____ Vacation _____ Personal _____ Floating Holiday _____ Comp

Employee Signature: _____

Department: _____

Approved by: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Not Approved by: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Reason for Disapproval _____

Vacation Policy

Vacations will, as often as possible, be granted at the time most desired by the employee. When more than one employee in the same department requests vacation at the same time, service time of the parties will generally be the determining factor.

Otsego County reserves the right to final allotment of vacation, including the right to limit the total number of employees on vacation at any one time to ensure the orderly and efficient operation of Otsego County business.

This policy may be discontinued or amended by Otsego County at any time, effective on notice to any employee or posting in the County building.