

# BLAINE COUNTY

*M a k i n g a D i f f e r e n c e*



## Employee/Manager Handbook

**REVISED 6/14/2022**

Blaine County Administrator • 206 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South • Hailey, Idaho 83333

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## 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1.1. WELCOME

Thank you for being a part of Blaine County government.

We are proud of those who work for us and employees can be proud of the positions of trust they hold within our community. Employees are our most valuable asset and are the means by which we carry out our service to the community.

As employees of Blaine County, we must earn the public's trust each and every day in everything we do. Employees are expected to maintain the highest degree of integrity and honesty. Blaine County's reputation in the community will be determined by the work we do and how we do it.

In order to ensure we are able to carry out our responsibilities and commitments to the community, it is critically important that Blaine County employees understand their roles, rights and responsibilities as public employees.

#### 1.1.2. OUR VISION

*“Blaine County government improves quality of life by providing efficient and effective public services. As stewards of citizens' resources, we serve our diverse community with teamwork, integrity and commitment to excellence.”*

#### 1.1.3. OUR VALUES





## 1.2. HANDBOOK

### 1.2.1. PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE

The purpose of the Blaine County Employee/Manager Handbook (hereafter referred to as “Handbook”) is to provide employees and managers with a clear and concise resource that details key policies and procedures in an understandable and logical manner. The policies included outline the rules and regulations set forth by Blaine County. Nothing in these policies should be construed as an employment contract or as a guarantee of continued employment.

The Handbook has been developed to familiarize employees with the Blaine County organization and to provide information about working conditions, key policies and benefits affecting them. It is also intended to be a resource for individuals with supervisory responsibilities.

The Handbook is broken down into the following chapters:

- [Chapter 1: General Information](#)
- [Chapter 2: Personnel Management](#)
- [Chapter 3: Compensation and Benefits](#)
- [Chapter 4: Forms](#)

### 1.2.2. TERMINOLOGY

To provide clarity of terms used within this document, the following definitions are provided:

The term “employee” is defined as any person in the employ of a department or office who is paid a salary or wage, excluding officials elected by popular vote.

The terms “supervisor” and “manager” are defined as any employee who is officially provided supervisory duties over at least one person, and/or employees with the official capacity to influence the employment status of employees within their direct line of supervision. The term manager includes supervisor, manager, department head and elected official.

The term “department head” is defined as any non-elected official in charge of any bureau, department, agency, or office of Blaine County government.

The term “elected official” is defined as any official or officer in Blaine County government elected by popular vote.

### 1.2.3. CHANGES TO THE HANDBOOK

The Handbook is an overall guide to the County personnel system. All previous personnel policies and handbooks have been repealed. Only the Board of County Commissioners may amend the Handbook for such reasons as they may determine. Once any amendments are made, written notice will be provided to all employees and managers by the County Administrator.

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#### 1.2.4. DISTRIBUTION OF THE HANDBOOK

The Handbook and all referenced forms are available on Blaine County's website on the Human Resources page. Electronic use of the Handbook is recommended for ease of reference, allowing the use of search functions and links throughout the document. Electronic use also ensures that all employees have the most current version. Managers are responsible for ensuring all of their employees have access to the Handbook, and for processing any requests for hard copies or other forms of access for their employees.

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#### 1.2.5. ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In addition to using the Handbook, elected officials and department heads may adopt further policies and procedures to meet the unique needs of the offices/departments they administer, provided they are not in conflict with the policies and procedures described in the Handbook or state or federal law.

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#### 1.2.6. MANAGER NOTES

Managers are essential to ensuring an effective and progressive workforce, as well as ensuring compliance with employment laws, regulations and policies. "Call-out boxes" with Manager Notes throughout this document provide assistance to managers. Manager Notes contain information to help managers understand their roles and responsibilities in implementing these policies.

**All managers are expected to have a working knowledge and understanding of the Employee/Manager Handbook.**

## 2. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

### 2.1. EMPLOYMENT LEGAL COMPLIANCE

It is Blaine County's policy to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws. This includes, but is not limited to: the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), the Equal Pay Act (EPA), the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Idaho Garnishment Law, the Idaho Wage Payment Law, the Idaho Public Records Law, the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), and the Idaho Workers' Compensation Law.

#### 2.1.1. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY/TITLE VII OF CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

Blaine County is an equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of Blaine County to prohibit discrimination and to afford equal employment opportunities to employees and applicants, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, citizenship (with valid work authorization), veteran status (beyond veterans' preference) or sexual orientation. The policy of equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination applies to all aspects of the relationship between Blaine County and its employees, including but not limited to:

- Recruitment and employment
- Promotion and transfer
- Training and working conditions
- Wages and salary administration
- Employee benefits and application of policies
- Discipline and termination

The policies and principles of equal employment opportunity also apply to the treatment of independent contractors, individuals working on Blaine County premises who are employed by temporary agencies and any other persons doing business for or with Blaine County.

### MANAGER NOTE 2.1.1.

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#### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY/TITLE VII OF CIVIL RIGHTS ACT**

Managers are responsible for implementing equal employment practices within each department or office. The Human Resources department is responsible for the County's overall compliance, and must maintain personnel records in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Blaine County will support this policy by maintaining the following business practices:

- Display equal employment opportunity notices in highly visible areas.
- Forbid retaliation against anyone who reports harassment, files a charge of discrimination, or who assists, testifies or participates in an equal employment proceeding.
- Require employees to report to a member of management or Human Resources any apparent discrimination or harassment. The report should be made within forty-eight (48) hours of the incident.

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#### 2.1.1.1. HARASSMENT

Blaine County is committed to providing a work environment where its employees and those served by the County are treated respectfully and are free from harassment. Employees are responsible for respecting the rights of coworkers and others to be free from harassment.

#### GENERAL HARASSMENT

General harassment is conduct that is insulting, degrading and shows hostility toward an individual such that it interferes with the individual's work environment and performance. General harassment is conduct that is so severe or occurs with sufficient frequency to create a hostile or offensive work environment. General harassment does not include management actions including duty assignments, disciplinary actions, and performance evaluations.

Prohibited general harassment includes the following types of behavior:

- Verbal or written communication that contains degrading comments or jokes.
- Intimidating or threatening conduct directed at an employee.

## DISCRIMINATION BASED HARASSMENT

Harassment based on an employee's sex, sexual orientation, age, color, race, national origin, religion, or disability is a form of discrimination and is a violation of this policy. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination and violates this policy.

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

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

## REPORTING

If an employee feels he or she is the target of harassment or discrimination, the employee may confront the offending party either in person or in writing. However, this action will not constitute notice to the County of the alleged harassment or discrimination. If the employee feels uncomfortable confronting the offending party, or if after doing so the behavior has not stopped, he or she must report the conduct as soon as possible to a manager or to Human Resources.

## RETALIATION

All employees are responsible for assisting managers in creating and sustaining a positive work environment by respecting the rights of others to be free from harassment and acts of retaliation. Retaliation against someone who reports harassment or discrimination, or who participates in an investigation, is prohibited. Retaliatory acts may include but are not limited to: unsubstantiated negative evaluations, inappropriate changes in job assignments or duties, exclusion from meetings, or negative treatment by coworkers. Retaliation does not include disciplinary actions taken against an employee for filing a fabricated claim of harassment, nor does it include disciplinary actions taken against an employee for performance issues not related to a harassment complaint or investigation.

Employees should report acts of retaliation to a manager or Human Resources. Reports of retaliation will be promptly investigated. Appropriate follow-up measures may be taken as necessary. Disciplinary action, up to and including termination, may be taken against anyone who violates this retaliation policy.

## VIOLATIONS

Violations of this policy, regardless of whether or not an actual law has been violated, will not be tolerated. Blaine County will investigate every issue that is brought to its attention in this area and will take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### MANAGER NOTE 2.1.1.1.

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##### **HARASSMENT**

Managers are required to take prompt, appropriate action upon observing or becoming aware of harassing behavior. The failure of a supervisor or manager to respond promptly to an observed or reported instance of harassment may result in disciplinary action against the manager.

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#### 2.1.2. BLAINE COUNTY NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Blaine County provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, citizenship (with valid work authorization), veteran status (beyond veterans' preference) or sexual orientation. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training. Unlawful employee discrimination that interferes with the ability of Blaine County employees to perform their expected job duties is not tolerated.

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#### 2.1.3. AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT (ADEA)

All employees are expected to comply with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) which prohibits discrimination against applicants and employees who are at least forty (40) years of age. The ADEA applies to all aspects of employment including: hiring, firing, compensation, benefits, work hours, job assignments, training opportunities, transfers, employee classifications, promotions, layoffs, retirement and leave. Employees who feel they may have been discriminated against due to their age should contact Human Resources immediately.

Practices prohibited by Blaine County include:

- Making decisions based on stereotypes of older workers.
- Refusing to hire, train, or promote older workers because of their age.
- Making age-related slurs or teasing older workers about their age.
- Printing job advertisements with preferences for younger workers.
- Retaliating against an individual for making or participating in an ADEA claim.

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#### 2.1.4. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with a disability. The ADA covers both applicants and employees who meet the qualification requirements for the position (education, experience, etc.), who can perform the essential functions of the position with or without a reasonable accommodation, and have a disability as defined by the ADA.

Employees who wish to request an accommodation under the ADA may submit a request to their manager or Human Resources. The request may be verbal or in writing but must contain enough information for Blaine County to determine that an accommodation is needed due to an underlying long-term medical condition or impairment. Human Resources will work with the employee and the manager to determine if the individual qualifies under the ADA, including the necessary qualifications for the position, having a disability as defined by the ADA, and the ability to perform the essential functions of the position, with or without an accommodation. Blaine County may request information from the employee and their health care provider to verify the disability and recommend possible ways to accommodate the disability.

The ADA requires an interactive process between the employee and the employer. If an employee fails to provide the necessary information for the request to be reviewed, the request for an accommodation may be delayed or denied pending more information.

Accommodation requests that would result in an undue hardship for Blaine County will be denied. However, alternative accommodations may be suggested in lieu of the requested accommodation. Accommodations may be implemented on a trial basis ranging from thirty (30) to ninety (90) days to determine if the accommodation is successful and does not disrupt the workplace. All accommodations should be periodically reviewed to ensure they are still necessary and still allow the employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the job.

All employees are required to comply with safety standards. Employees who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of themselves or others will be placed on leave without pay until the threat can be eliminated by reasonable accommodation or until a decision has been made in regard to the employee's continued employment.

#### MANAGER NOTE 2.1.4.

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##### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

Managers must comply with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Managers should work with Human Resources to determine the essential functions of the position and discuss possible reasonable accommodations. Human Resources will work with the manager and the applicant or employee to engage in the interactive process to see if the individual qualifies under the ADA, and if a reasonable accommodation is available to enable the individual to safely and successfully perform the essential functions of the position.

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#### 2.1.5. LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLAN (LEP)

Blaine County is committed to ensuring compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related regulations and directives. Blaine County assures that every effort will be made to prevent discrimination through the impacts of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. In addition, the County will take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency.

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#### 2.1.6. GENETIC INFORMATION NONDISCRIMINATION ACT (GINA)

Blaine County complies with the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of information derived from genetic tests. GINA prohibits employers from collecting and using employees' genetic information and from discriminating against employees in hiring, firing, or any other terms and conditions of employment based on a worker's genetic information.

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#### 2.1.7. EQUAL PAY ACT (EPA)

Blaine County complies with all provisions of the Equal Pay Act (EPA) which prohibits employers from paying workers of one gender more than workers of the other gender to do equal work. To be considered equal work, the jobs must require equal skill, effort, and responsibility and must be performed under similar working conditions. All department heads and elected officials must ensure their compensation practices are in compliance with the EPA.

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##### 2.1.7.1. EMPLOYEE CONCERNS

Blaine County complies with the Equal Pay Act and all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding employee compensation. An employee who perceives an issue in regard to compliance with the EPA should report concerns to his or her manager or to Human Resources.

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#### 2.1.8. CONSOLIDATED OMNIBUS BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT (COBRA)

Blaine County complies with all provisions of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) which allows employees, their spouses and children to continue health coverage under the County's health plan after their coverage ends due to a qualifying event such as termination of employment. COBRA allows qualified individuals to extend their health insurance coverage at the County's full premium rate, which includes the employers' portion paid for active employees plus an administrative fee.

Employees must notify Blaine County Payroll of qualifying events, such as termination of employment, divorce, or death. Once notified of a COBRA qualifying event, Blaine County Payroll will send out the COBRA notice and current COBRA rates to the affected parties. Only employees and dependents that were actively enrolled in the County's health plan are eligible to continue coverage under COBRA.



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### 2.1.9. FAIR CREDIT REPORTING ACT (FCRA)

Blaine County complies with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) which restricts access of consumer credit information to those who have a legitimate need for the information and have the written consent of the individual whose records are being reviewed. Blaine County may review consumer credit reports of applicants and employees in certain law enforcement and cash-handling positions. Prior to seeking the consumer credit report, Blaine County will notify the individual of his or her rights under FCRA and obtain his or her written consent.

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### 2.1.10. FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT (FLSA)

In keeping with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), Blaine County compensates non-exempt employees one and one-half (1.5) times their regular rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of forty (40) in a workweek. Paid leave time such as vacation and holiday pay does not count towards the forty (40) work hour threshold for overtime. For employees in some law enforcement and detention positions, overtime is calculated based on eighty five and one half (85.5) hours in a fourteen (14) day cycle.

Similarly, qualifying law enforcement officers receive straight overtime pay or straight compensatory time off for each hour of work above eighty (80) hours up to eighty five and one half (85.5) hours. They receive one and one-half (1.5) times their normal hourly rate or compensatory time off at 1.5 hours for each hour worked above eighty five and one half (85.5) hours.

As a public sector employer, Blaine County may elect to grant compensatory or “comp” time in lieu of overtime pay for covered employees, upon reaching an agreement in advance with the employee. Comp time is earned at the rate of either one (1.0) or one and a half (1.5) hours for every one (1) hour of overtime worked, depending on the number of hours worked.

**MANAGER NOTE 2.1.10.**

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**FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT (FLSA)**

Blaine County complies with all provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which established the federal minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and child labor laws. Blaine County will pay non-exempt employees not less than one and one-half times their regular rates of pay for all hours worked in excess of forty (40) in a workweek. Paid leave time such as vacation and holiday pay does not count towards the forty (40) work hour threshold.

The following are examples of employees exempt from both the minimum wage and overtime pay requirements under FLSA:

- Executive employees
- Administrative employees
- Professional employees
- Certain computer specialists

All job descriptions are reviewed by Human Resources to determine if they are covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) or if they are exempt from the Act due to one or more of the exemptions listed above. Exemptions are based on federal law and are determined by Human Resources. These determinations are based on job duties and responsibilities, not by job titles. Positions determined to be exempt from FLSA must be paid on a salary basis and are ineligible for overtime and comp time.

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**2.1.10.1. EMPLOYEE CONCERNS**

Blaine County complies with the Fair Labor Standards Act and all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding employee compensation. An employee, whether hourly or salaried, who perceives an issue in regard to hours of work or overtime compensation is encouraged to report the problem to his or her manager as soon as possible. If an employee feels he or she has been improperly designated as either covered by the FLSA or exempt from the FLSA, he/she should contact Human Resources.

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**2.1.11. IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT (IRCA)**

All new employees must complete the employee section, Section 1, of an I-9 form no later than close of business on the first day of work. The employee's signature holds him/her responsible for the accuracy of the information provided. The new employee is expected to provide appropriate documentation from the list of acceptable verification documents within the first three (3) days of employment. An employee who fails to provide the necessary documentation to complete the I-9 form in the first three (3) days of employment may not continue working until the documents have been supplied.

**MANAGER NOTE 2.1.11.**

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**EMPLOYEE CONCERNS**

Blaine County complies with all provisions of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) which prohibits employers from knowingly recruiting or hiring unauthorized aliens for employment in the United States, and prohibits discrimination based on citizenship status or national origin. Payroll will complete the required federal I-9 Form with any new employees. New employees must complete the employee section of the I-9 Form on the first day of employment.

Proper documentation establishes both that the employee is authorized to work in the U.S. and that the employee who presents the document is the person to whom it was issued. Payroll will supply the employee the official list of acceptable documents for establishing identity and work eligibility, as found on the I-9 Form. Requesting more or different documentation than the minimum necessary to meet this requirement may constitute a discriminatory employment practice and would violate this policy. If the documentation presented by an employee does not appear to be genuine or relate to the employee who presents them, Payroll must refuse acceptance and ask for other documentation from the list of acceptable documents. Blaine County cannot continue to employ an employee who cannot present documentation that meets the requirements.

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**2.1.12. UNIFORMED SERVICES EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT (USERRA)**

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) applies to persons who perform duty, voluntarily or involuntarily, in the "uniformed services," which include the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, and the reserve components of each of these services. Service in the Army National Guard and Air National Guard also provides rights under USERRA. Uniformed service includes active duty, active duty for training, inactive duty training (such as drills), initial active duty training, and funeral honors duty performed by National Guard and reserve members. USERRA prohibits employment discrimination against a person on the basis of past military service, current military obligations, or intent to serve.

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**2.1.12.1. BASIC REQUIREMENTS**

Blaine County will rehire service members returning from a period of service in the uniformed services if those members meet the following five criteria:

- The individual must have held a non-temporary job with Blaine County prior to his or her entry into the uniformed service for active duty or training.

- The individual must have given notice to Blaine County that he or she was leaving the job for service in the uniformed services.
- The cumulative period of service must not have exceeded five years.
- The individual must not have been released from service under dishonorable or other punitive conditions.
- The individual must have reported back to the job with Blaine County in a timely manner or have submitted a timely application for reemployment.

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#### 2.1.12.2. TIME LIMITS

Under USERRA, restoration rights are based on the duration of military service. The time limits for returning to work are as follows:

- Less than 31 days service: By the beginning of the first regularly scheduled work period after the end of the calendar day of duty, plus time required to return home safely and an eight hour rest period.
- 31 to 180 days: The employee must apply for reemployment no later than 14 days after completion of military service.
- 181 days or more: The employee must apply for reemployment no later than 90 days after completion of military service.
- Service-connected injury or illness: Reporting or application deadlines are extended for up to two years for persons who are hospitalized or convalescing.

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#### 2.1.12.3. BENEFITS

USERRA guarantees pension plan benefits that accrued during military service, and allows service members activated for duty to elect to extend their employer-sponsored health coverage for up to twenty-four (24) months. Blaine County requires these individuals to pay up to 102% of total premiums for that elective coverage.

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### 2.1.13. FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

The purpose of this policy is to provide Blaine County employees with a general description of their Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) rights. In the event that specific details are not contained in this policy, the federal law will be used to provide additional guidance. This policy covers the Basic and Military Family Leave entitlements and includes information on eligibility, employee responsibility, continuation of benefits, and other useful topics.

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#### 2.1.13.1. BASIC LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

The FMLA attempts to balance an employee's need for time off for family and medical reasons and the employer's need for a stable work force. The FMLA provides an eligible employee up to twelve (12) workweeks of unpaid, job protected leave during a twelve (12) month period for qualifying reasons. The twelve (12) month period is measured backward from the date an employee uses FMLA. Each time an employee takes FMLA leave, the remaining leave available is the balance of the twelve (12) weeks remaining during the preceding twelve (12) months.

## USE OF PAID TIME

Blaine County requires the use of paid leave (sick leave, compensatory time, holiday compensatory time, and vacation leave) before unpaid leave is taken under the FMLA.

Employees need to apply for FMLA leave even if there are accumulated sick/vacation/comp/holiday comp days to cover the absence.

## REASONS FOR TAKING LEAVE

Leave will be granted/designated as FMLA leave when taken:

- For the birth and care of the newborn child of the employee.
- For placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care.
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition.
- To take medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition.

A "Serious Health Condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the function of their job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities. The continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy or a chronic condition.

## DEFINITIONS OF SPOUSE, CHILD, AND PARENT FOR BASIC FMLA

- Spouse means a husband or wife as defined or recognized under State law for purposes of marriage in the state where the employee resides.
- Child means a biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in the place of a parent (in loco parentis), who is either under age eighteen (18), or age eighteen (18) or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability at the time that FMLA leave is to commence.
- Parent means a biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the employee. This term does not include parents "in-law."

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

The FMLA states that a serious health condition may result from injury to an employee on or off the job. As such, an employee who is off work on workers' compensation leave who also meets the eligibility requirements of the FMLA will have that time designated as FMLA leave, which will count towards the 12-week FMLA entitlement.

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### 2.1.13.2. MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

The FMLA attempts to balance an employee's need for time off for certain situations related to a covered family member's service in the Armed Forces and the employer's need for a stable work force.

## MILITARY EXIGENCY LEAVE

An eligible employee whose spouse, child, or parent is in the National Guard or Reserves may take FMLA leave due to a qualifying exigency resulting from the covered family member's active military duty or call to active duty status in support of a contingency operation. A qualifying exigency includes any one or more of the following non-medical, non-routine activities and no others:

- Short-notice deployment activities
- Military events and related activities
- Childcare and school activities
- Financial and legal arrangements
- Counseling activities
- Rest and recuperation activities
- Post-deployment activities, and/or
- Additional activities as mutually agreed upon by Blaine County and the employee

## AMOUNT OF MILITARY EXIGENCY LEAVE

An eligible employee is limited to a total of twelve (12) workweeks of all FMLA-qualifying leave, including Military Exigency Leave, in a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the starting date of the requested leave. Durations of leave periods for Military Exigency Leave vary by situation and qualifying exigency. The leave may commence as soon as the service member receives the call-up notice.

## MILITARY CAREGIVER LEAVE

An eligible employee who is the spouse, child, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member may take up to twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave in a 12-month period to care for the service member recovering from an illness or injury sustained while on active duty.

## AMOUNT OF MILITARY CAREGIVER LEAVE

The 26-week entitlement is determined by measuring forward from the date the employee first takes caregiver leave. During that single 12-month period, caregiver leave is combined with other FMLA leave and the total cannot exceed twenty-six (26) weeks.

## DEFINITIONS FOR MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE

- Covered service member means a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, or a member of the Armed Forces, the National Guard or Reserves who is on the temporary disability retired list.
- Active duty or call to active duty status means duty under a call or order to active duty (or impending call or order to active duty) in support of a contingency operation.
- Child on active duty or called to active duty status means the employee's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stood in loco parentis, who is on active duty or called to active duty status and who is of any age.
- Child of a covered service member means the service member's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the service member stood in loco parentis, and who is of any age.

- Parent of a covered service member means a covered service member's biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother, or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to the covered service member. This term does not include parents "in-law."
- Next of kin of a covered service member means the nearest blood relative other than the covered service member's spouse, parent or child in the following order of priority: blood relatives who have been granted legal custody of the service member, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins, unless the covered service member has specifically designated in writing another blood relative as his or her nearest blood relative for purposes of military caregiver leave under the FMLA.

### 2.1.13.3. FMLA ELIGIBILITY, EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY AND OTHER INFORMATION

While the previous information was specific to the type of FMLA leave, the following information is applicable to all FMLA leave.

#### ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for FMLA leave, an employee must have worked for the County for at least twelve (12) months (consecutive or nonconsecutive) and worked at least 1,250 hours during the twelve (12) months prior to the start of the leave. Employment periods preceding a break in service of seven (7) years or more must not be counted in determining whether the employee has been employed by Blaine County for at least twelve (12) months.

#### EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees must provide thirty (30) days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When thirty (30) days' notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable. When an employee becomes aware of a need for FMLA leave less than thirty (30) days in advance, it should be practicable for the employee to provide notice of the need for leave either the same day or the next business day. Failure to provide advance notice of the need for FMLA leave could result in the delay of FMLA coverage.

#### CERTIFICATION

Blaine County requires that an employee's leave to care for the employee's covered family member with a serious health condition, or due to the employee's own serious health condition, be supported by a certification issued by the health care provider of the employee or the employee's family member. Failure to provide complete and sufficient certification may result in the denial of the FMLA leave.

An employee requesting Military Exigency Leave must provide proof of the qualifying family member's call-up or active military service and proof of the exigency. Failure to provide complete and sufficient certification may result in the denial of the leave.

An employee requesting Military Caregiver Leave must provide certification to support the need for caregiver leave. Failure to provide complete and sufficient certification may result in the denial of the leave.

## INTERMITTENT LEAVES AND REDUCED SCHEDULE LEAVES

When medically necessary, employees will be allowed to use FMLA leave intermittently or use the leave to reduce the workweek or workday, resulting in a reduced hour-schedule. In all cases, the leave may not exceed a total of twelve (12) workweeks, or twenty-six (26) workweeks to care for an injured or ill service member, over a twelve (12) month period.

If an employee is unable to work their normal schedule and has provided to their manager a physician's note stating they are unable to work their normal schedule, the County will place the employee on FMLA to reduce the workweek or workday as specified by the physician. The effective date will be the date of the physicians note. All other County policies still apply.

If FMLA leave is being taken because of the birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care, allowance of intermittent or reduced schedule leave is at the discretion of the County.

Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule intermittent or reduced schedule leave so as not to unduly disrupt the County's operations.

## BENEFITS

For the duration of FMLA leave, the County will maintain the employee's medical, dental, vision, and life insurance coverage as provided to active employees. If an employee elects to retain dependent health insurance coverage during FMLA leave, the employee must continue to pay their respective premium contributions for such coverage. The County will continue to pay its portion of the dependents' premiums. If an employee elects not to retain dependent health insurance coverage during family and medical leave, the employee will be entitled to reenroll in dependent coverage without any qualification requirements imposed by the plan, including any new preexisting condition waiting period, waiting for open enrollment, or passing a medical examination.

If an employee fails to return to work for reasons other than a continued serious health condition of their own or the employee's family member or a circumstance beyond their control, the employee may be required to reimburse the County for all health insurance premiums the County paid during any unpaid family and medical leave period. An employee must return to work for at least thirty (30) calendar days to be considered as having "returned" to work.

## JOB PROTECTION

Upon return from FMLA leave, an employee is entitled to be returned to the same position held when the leave started, or to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits and working conditions, and substantially similar duties, responsibilities, and authority. The use of FMLA leave will not result in the loss of any employment benefits that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

## SPOUSE EMPLOYEES

Eligible County employees who are also in a recognized marriage under State law may only take a combined total of twelve (12) workweeks of leave during a twelve (12) month period if the leave is taken:



- To care for the employee's parent with a serious health condition.
- For the birth of the employee's son or daughter or to care for the child after the birth.
- For the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care, or to care for the child after placement.

Where each employee will use a portion of the total twelve (12) week FMLA leave entitlement for one of the reasons listed above, each employee would be entitled to the difference between the amount taken individually and twelve (12) weeks for FMLA leave for other purposes, such as the employee's own serious health condition, to care for a child with a serious health condition, or to care for a spouse with a serious health condition.

Eligible County employees who are also in a recognized marriage under State law may be limited to a combined total of twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave during the designated single twelve (12) month period if the leave is taken to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness in addition to the reasons listed above.

### RETURN-TO-WORK

If an employee's FMLA leave is due to their own serious health condition, the employee must provide a release from the medical provider prior to returning to work. Failure to provide a release to return to work may delay the employee's return date. Employees will not be permitted to return without proper return-to-work certification.

### UNLAWFUL ACTS BY EMPLOYERS

FMLA makes it unlawful for the County to:

- Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA.
- Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

County employees and managers may not use an employee's inquiry or request about the use of family and medical leave or the utilization of family and medical leave as a negative factor in any employment decisions or actions.

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#### 2.1.14. WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Workers' compensation coverage is provided for employees who suffer from a work-related injury or illness. The program is administered by Blaine County Payroll and Human Resources. Benefits under workers' compensation are set by the State of Idaho, governed by the Idaho Industrial Commission and begin on the first day of employment.

**MANAGER NOTE 2.1.14.**

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**WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

If an employee suffers a work-related injury, the manager's attention to their well-being is of utmost importance.

- If necessary, refer employee to an appropriate medical care provider
- Have the employee complete the **First Report of Injury or Illness**
- Fax, hand-deliver or email the completed form to Payroll or Human Resources within twenty-four (24) hours\*
- The manager will need to complete the **Supervisor's Accident/Incident Report** and include it with the First Report of Injury or Illness form that is submitted to Payroll or Human Resources.

\*If the injured employee is unable to complete the First Report of Injury or Illness form for any reason, the manager is responsible for completing the paperwork for the employee and submitting it to Payroll or Human Resources. For further details on Workers' Compensation review section 2.4.7.3. Workers' Compensation.

## 2.2. HIRING

### 2.2.1. POSITION POSTINGS

Human Resources will post announcements for applications for vacant, or soon to be vacant, positions upon notification of such vacancy by the appropriate department or office.

Human Resources will post position openings on the County's website. If an office/department wishes to post an advertisement in the local newspaper, it must be requested at least three (3) days in advance of the publication date.

To post a position, the following information will be needed:

- Job Title
- Position Pay Grade and Salary Range
- Job Description Approved by the Board
- Posting Closing Date
- Ads needed, including date(s) of placement and name of recruitment source
- Reason for Posting (vacancy, new position)
- Special Instructions
- Department/Office Contact Person

Vacancies may be filled at the discretion of the appropriate department head or elected official by qualified applicants from within their own department or office, or from other County departments by posting the position for internal applicants only.

All positions, pay grades and salary ranges must be approved by the Board before they are posted.

### 2.2.2. SELECTION

Recruiting efforts should be planned and carried out in a manner that offers open competition. Selection procedures should include an evaluation of the position's job-related minimum requirements. Selections are to be based on the relative experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities of the applicants. For any assistance needed in your selection processes, please contact Human Resources.

### 2.2.3. VETERANS PREFERENCE

When filling a vacant position, the elected official or department head must hire in accordance with Idaho Code section 65-503, giving preference to war veterans (as defined in Idaho Code section 65-509) who served on active duty in the armed forces of the United States for a period of more than one hundred eighty (180) days, or whose discharge or release from active duty was for a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, and who were discharged under honorable conditions. Applicants must be residents of the state of Idaho when the application for work or employment is made in order to claim such preference. This preference applies to initial appointment only.

Disabled war veterans, as defined in Idaho Code section 65-502, must be given preference in employment, provided that such disability does not prevent satisfactory performance of the duties of the position.

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#### 2.2.4. EMPLOYMENT REFERENCE CHECKS

To ensure that individuals who join Blaine County are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, employment references should be checked by the hiring department for applicants prior to employment.

The Reference Check form will be used for documentation purposes. Questions asked must be relevant to the job to be filled, focus on the applicant's work history and ability to perform the job, and comply with federal and state laws.

A thorough reference check includes:

- A minimum of three (3) work references of the selected applicant prior to extending the job offer.
  - If three (3) work references cannot be obtained, academic or volunteer work references may be substituted.
  - If three (3) references cannot be obtained, the hiring manager should contact Human Resources.

A Personnel Action Form (PAF) will need to be completed for each employee hired.

## 2.3. WORK SCHEDULE

### 2.3.1. TIME REPORTING

#### 2.3.1.1. NON-EXEMPT (HOURLY) EMPLOYEES

Non-Exempt employees are required to accurately report all of their work hours and leave taken on the appropriate timesheet. Time may be recorded in increments of one-quarter (0.25) of an hour.

Employees are not allowed to work off the clock or “volunteer” time. Employees must receive approval from their manager prior to working any overtime beyond their regular schedule. Employees who fail to timely report all of their work hours (including any overtime) on their timesheet, who falsify a timesheet, or who work unauthorized overtime may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

#### 2.3.1.2. EXEMPT (SALARIED) EMPLOYEES

Employees who work in positions exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) are paid on a salaried basis and are generally ineligible for both overtime pay and comp time. Salaried employees are expected to manage their work schedule to accomplish the duties of the position, and may be required to work over forty (40) hours in a week, including nights and weekends.

Salaried employees are not managed on an hourly basis and are not required to record individual work hours. However, salaried employees are required to document any leave taken on their timesheet in the period the leave was taken. Salaried employees who work at least a half-day do not have to record leave taken on their timesheet for that day, except for leave taken under the FMLA. Leave taken under the FMLA will be recorded in increments of one-quarter (0.25) of an hour. Salaried employees with questions about how to code a leave on their timesheet may contact Payroll.

#### 2.3.1.3. TIMESHEETS

The workweek covers seven consecutive days beginning on Sunday and ending on Saturday. Each non-exempt (hourly) employee is to:

- Maintain an accurate daily record of his/her hours worked and ensure all regular and overtime hours are recorded on the timesheet, rounded to the nearest one-quarter (0.25) of an hour.
- Record all absences from work schedules on the timesheet. Leave taken should be rounded to the nearest one-quarter (0.25) of an hour.
- Obtain prior approval for any overtime worked in the workweek.
- Obtain prior approval for any vacation, sick and comp time used during a work week.
- All requested time off should be documented by way of the Leave Request form with employee and manager signatures.
- Submit the completed timesheet to their manager in the time period required for approval.

Each exempt (salaried) employee is to:

- Maintain an accurate daily record of his/her absences from work.
- Obtain prior approval from the employee’s manager for scheduled absences.

### MANAGER NOTE 2.3.1.3.

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#### **Timesheets**

An employee's timesheet allows managers and Payroll to maintain an accurate daily record of his/her hours worked and absences from work.

- Employees must have the correct regular and overtime hours recorded including hours for any leave taken.
- Employees must maintain accurate time records and hourly employees are not permitted to "volunteer" or fail to record hours worked.
- Timesheets are approved by the manager and submitted to Payroll.
- Hourly employees must be paid for all hours worked, whether or not the employee had prior authorization to work the hours in question. Managers may not dock an employee's pay or fail to record hours, nor allow an employee to fail to record hours worked. An employee may be disciplined for working without prior authorization, but the discipline may not include refusal or failure to pay for time worked.
- Appropriate use of all leave accruals must be used before an Unpaid Leave of Absence.
- Time taken for an Unpaid Leave of Absence shall be recorded as "Leave Without Pay".
- Employees who violate the timesheet reporting policies or procedures can be subject to discipline up to and including termination.
- Managers must notify employees when a department or office utilizes a timesheet different from the one provided by Payroll.

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### 2.3.2. ATTENDANCE

Punctual and regular attendance is an essential responsibility of each employee at Blaine County, whether hourly or salaried. Employees are expected to report to work as scheduled, on time and prepared to start work. Employees also are expected to remain at work for their entire work schedule. If an employee is scheduled to work overtime and fails to report, it is considered an absence. Any tardiness or absence causes problems for fellow employees and managers. No matter how skilled an employee, if he/she does not have a good attendance record, his/her contributions to the smooth functioning of Blaine County are diminished. Employees who are unable to be at work on time or are unable to work as regularly scheduled must notify their manager via telephone as soon as possible in advance of the tardiness or absence.

### MANAGER NOTE 2.3.2.

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#### ATTENDANCE

Managers are responsible for the following:

- Ensure employees are aware of Blaine County's Attendance Policy and the employee's responsibility within the terms of this policy.
- Ensure employees have been advised of their responsibilities to attend work regularly and to maintain contact with the manager, if absent.
- Communicate with absent employees on a regular basis.
- When an employee reports their absence, the manager will confirm:
  - Reason(s) for the absence; (enough information to ascertain the basis for the absence)
  - Expected duration
  - Where appropriate, what actions the employee is taking to assist their situation
  - Where appropriate, what the County can do to assist (explore modified work)
  - Establish a schedule for further contacts
  - Have employee complete a Leave Request form
  - If warranted, request an attending physician's certificate
- If the reason for the absence is work-related notify Payroll or Human Resources.
- In all cases of extended absences (more than ten (10) days) for non-job related medical reasons, notify Human Resources for consideration of modified work.
- It is recommended that managers utilize an Employee Calendar form for each employee to document absences and patterns of absence, and ascertain whether they are within the County's norm and take appropriate action.
  - The calendar also allows managers the ability to document discussions they have had with the employee. If an employee needs to be officially counseled on an issue related to attendance, the manager should use the Progressive Discipline form.
  - This calendar provides the opportunity for informal discussions related to attendance to be documented on one form in one location.
  - When necessary, the Employee Calendar form is a visual tool when advising employees about their excessive absences.
- When necessary, advise employees, in writing, of the County's expectation with respect to improving attendance. On advice from Human Resources, the letter(s) will advise that should the employee be unable to attend work regularly in his/her present position, one or more of the following may occur:
  - Further medical information may be required
  - Reasonable accommodation strategies may be considered to assist the employee to regularly attend work and perform the essential duties of the job
  - Alternate positions suitable for the employee's functional abilities may be considered
  - Employment status may be reviewed and a non-disciplinary termination may result

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#### 2.3.2.1. DISCIPLINE

Employees with repeated unscheduled absences and/or tardiness, or those employees with a pattern of absences such as calling in sick at the beginning/end of the week, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

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#### 2.3.2.2. NO CALL/NO SHOW

Not reporting to work and not calling to report the absence is a no call/no show and is a serious matter, and may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Management may consider extenuating circumstances when determining discipline for a no call/no show (i.e., if the employee was in an accident and is hospitalized) and has the right to exercise discretion in such cases.

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#### 2.3.2.3. EXCUSED ABSENCES

Leave granted for an employee to serve on a jury or appear as a witness for a government entity will not be counted against the employee's attendance record. Leave granted under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Workers' Compensation, or the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) will not be counted against an employee's attendance record if the employee has met the requirements of taking such leave.

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#### 2.3.2.4. JOB ABANDONMENT

Any employee who fails to report to work without notification to his or her manager for a period of three (3) days or more will be considered to have abandoned his or her job and voluntarily terminated the employment relationship.

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### 2.3.3. WORK HOURS

The standard workweek is forty (40) hours. The standard workday is ten (10) hours for hourly workers, but some employees may work an alternative work schedule depending on the needs of the position. Workday lengths for salaried (exempt) employees are determined primarily by their current workloads. As starting and ending times vary within departments and office locations, each department/office will determine the schedule for the appropriate department/office. All employees are expected to be at their workstation and ready to start work at their scheduled time. Unless an employee makes other arrangements with their manager, the employee is expected to work until the end of the scheduled shift.

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#### 2.3.3.1. MEAL AND REST BREAKS

While no state or federal law requires rest breaks, Blaine County may do so as a courtesy. The appropriate use of short breaks may increase employee efficiency and result in better customer service. A manager may determine the appropriate duration of a break for the office, up to a maximum of twenty (20) minutes. These breaks will be considered paid work time. Managers may discontinue breaks as needed to ensure proper staffing to meet customer demand. Unauthorized extensions of authorized work breaks will not be considered work time. Breaks may not be combined or foregone in order to leave earlier in the day.



In addition, all employees who work more than (6) hours in a day shall take a meal break. Meal breaks are generally one (1) hour in length and may not be shortened to less than thirty (30) minutes. Meal breaks are generally unpaid; however, employees who are required to work during the meal break will be paid for that time.

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#### 2.3.3.2. TRAVEL TIME

The time an employee spends commuting to and from work is considered “home-to-work travel” and is not considered work time. However, the time an employee spends traveling from one work-site to another for work purposes is considered work time. Time spent in travel away from home outside of an employee’s regular work hours as a passenger on an airplane, train, automobile or public transportation is generally not considered work time under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), but will be compensated as work time when in the best interest of the department/office and at the discretion of the department head, elected official or County Administrator. Employees are expected to do other productive work while traveling as a passenger to justify the designation as work time. Work assignments that require an employee to stay out overnight will qualify for expenses, but no time will be compensated beyond appropriate travel time and actual hours worked in accordance with FLSA rules and County policy.

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#### 2.3.3.3. TRAINING TIME

An employee’s attendance at training sessions is considered work time unless all of the following four criteria are met:

- Attendance at the training session is outside of the employee’s regular work hours.
- Attendance at the training session is voluntary.
- The training session is not directly related to the employee’s current job.
- The employee performs no productive work during the training session.

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#### 2.3.3.4. ON-CALL TIME

On-call employees are allowed to use that time for their own personal reasons, and are not limited to one geographical location, but must respond to a page or a telephone call within a reasonable amount of time *as designated by their manager/job duties*. Employees who are required to take on-call shifts will only be compensated for the actual time worked during that shift, not for the entire shift. Time spent on the telephone or in person resolving a work issue during an on-call shift is considered work time, and if performed by an hourly employee should be reported on the employee’s timesheet. Any exceptions to this policy must have prior written approval by the appropriate elected official or County Administrator.

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#### 2.3.3.5. OVERTIME

On occasion, a manager may ask employees to work beyond their regularly scheduled hours. Managers will try to give employees advance notice when overtime work is necessary; however, it will not always be possible to notify workers in advance.

Salaried employees will not be paid for working beyond their regularly scheduled hours. Hourly employees are entitled to payment for overtime, according to the rules set forth below. As overtime incurs an additional expense, the manager may alter the employee's work schedule within the workweek to avoid or minimize overtime. For example, if an hourly employee works two extra hours during the workweek, the manager may reduce their schedule within the current workweek by two hours to result in the employee not working more than forty (40) hours within the current workweek. This schedule adjustment must occur during the current workweek and the time cannot be "flexed" off in any subsequent workweeks.

All overtime work must be approved in advance, by the employee's manager. Working overtime without permission violates Blaine County policy and may result in disciplinary action.

For purposes of calculating how many hours an employee has worked in a day or week, the workweek begins at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday and ends at midnight on Saturday. The County workday begins at 12:01 a.m. and ends at midnight each day.

Hourly employees will be paid overtime for all hours worked in excess of their normal work schedule. Hours worked between their normal weekly schedule and forty (40) hours will be paid at the regular time rate, and any hours worked in excess of forty (40) in a week will be paid at one and a half (1.5) times the regular rate. For employees in some law enforcement and detention positions known as "7-K," overtime is calculated based on eighty five and one half (85.5) hours in a fourteen (14) day cycle. Vacation time, sick days, holidays, or any other paid time during which an employee did not work will not count as hours worked for calculating overtime. Generally for overtime purposes, the County is considered one employer. If an employee regularly works in more than one department or office, Blaine County may need to determine the total hours worked in all County jobs to determine if overtime compensation is due.

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#### 2.3.4. FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING

Blaine County understands that many employees have to balance the demands of their job with the needs of their families and other outside commitments. Therefore, it offers its employees the opportunity to work a flexible schedule when it is in the best interest of the County and will not negatively affect the performance of employees' duties.

If an employee would like to change his/her work schedule—for example, to come in and leave a couple of hours earlier or to work a compressed schedule—the employee should submit a request to his/her manager. Blaine County will try to accommodate employee requests, to the extent practical. Because not all jobs are suitable to flexible scheduling, and because Blaine County must ensure that staffing needs are met, it cannot guarantee that a request will be granted. Flexible schedules may be discontinued at any time, without prior notice.

Employees who have not maintained a good attendance record or who have received a disciplinary action in the last six (6) months may not be eligible for a flexible schedule. Exceptions may be made by the department head or elected official when appropriate.

## 2.4. LEAVE

### 2.4.1. COMPENSATORY (COMP) TIME

As a public sector employer, Blaine County may grant hourly employees compensatory or “comp” time off in lieu of overtime pay. Comp time will accrue at the rate of one and a half (1.5) hours for every one (1) hour of overtime worked in excess of forty (40) hours per work week. Comp time may be taken in lieu of vacation time and is subject to manager approval. It is recommended that an employee use accrued comp leave prior to using accrued vacation leave unless the employee is within forty (40) hours of his or her maximum vacation balance.

Similarly, qualifying law enforcement officers receive straight comp time for each hour of work above eighty (80) hours up to eighty five and a half (85.5) hours in a pay period. They receive comp time at one and a half (1.5) hours for each hour worked above eighty five and a half (85.5) hours.

At the end of each fiscal year, unused comp time is paid out. Individual departments/offices may cap comp time internally for appropriate financial management reasons and if equally applied to all employees in that department/office.

#### 2.4.1.1. COMPENSATORY (COMP) TIME PAYOUT

Upon request from the employee and approval from their respective elected official or department head, employees who are unable to take accrued comp time within a reasonable time frame may submit a written request to have up to forty (40) hours of comp time paid out. Said request may be submitted two (2) times per calendar year. The written request should be submitted to the department head or elected official with a copy forwarded to Payroll. Such requests may be made between January 21st and the last working day in January; and between July 21st and the last working day in July. The request must include the employee’s name, department or office, current comp time balance, the number of comp time hours requested to be paid out, and the employee’s signature and date.

The comp time will be paid out based upon the employee’s current hourly rate of pay and will be subject to the standard required deductions, such as tax withholding and PERSI. Any remaining comp time balance will be available for the employee’s use, subject to manager approval. Remaining comp time balances will be paid out at the end of each fiscal year or termination of employment, or when transferring to an exempt or elected position.

### 2.4.2. SICK LEAVE

Blaine County offers benefit-eligible employees the opportunity to use accrued sick leave during absences related to illness or injury and preventative visits to health care providers. However, abuse of sick leave is not allowed and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination. It is recommended that managers utilize the Leave Request form to monitor all employee leave.

**MANAGER NOTE 2.4.2.****LEAVE REQUEST FORM**

The Leave Request form allows managers and employees the ability to document and monitor leave requests.

- It is recommended that managers have employees complete the Leave Request form, whenever possible, before leave is taken.
- It is recommended that employees give managers at least two (2) weeks' notice prior to requested time-off in order to allow schedules to be adjusted as necessary.
- Upon return to work after an unanticipated sick leave, employees should submit a completed Leave Request form to their manager to document the absence.
- Managers will maintain the completed Leave Request form in the employee's personnel file.
- Employees who violate the timesheet and leave request reporting policies or procedures should be counseled regarding the time reporting requirements and are advised of the consequences of further infractions.

**2.4.2.1. ELIGIBILITY/ACCRUAL SCHEDULE**

Employees may use sick leave that has accrued to them. Benefit-eligible employees who regularly work twenty (20) or more hours per week will accrue sick leave at the rates listed in the Monthly Sick Leave Accrual Schedule.

Sick leave will accrue while an employee is on approved leave with pay, approved vacation leave, approved military leave with pay, and approved sick leave. Sick leave will not accrue while an employee is on leave without pay, suspension without pay, layoff, or when working overtime.

**Monthly Sick Leave Accrual Schedule**

<b>20 hr/wk</b> <b>max hrs</b> 4.0/mo    240	<b>24 hr/wk</b> <b>max hrs</b> 4.8/mo    288	<b>25 hr/wk</b> <b>max hrs</b> 5.0/mo    300	<b>28 hr/wk</b> <b>max hrs</b> 5.6/mo    336	<b>30 hr/wk</b> <b>max hrs</b> 6.0/mo    360
<b>32 hr/wk</b> <b>max hrs</b> 6.4/mo    408	<b>34 hr/wk</b> <b>max hrs</b> 6.8/mo    408	<b>35 hr/wk</b> <b>max hrs</b> 7.0/mo    420	<b>36 hr/wk</b> <b>max hrs</b> 7.2/mo    432	<b>37.5 hr/wk</b> <b>max hrs</b> 7.5/mo    450
<b>38 hr/wk</b> <b>max hrs</b> 7.6/mo    456	<b>40 hr/wk</b> <b>max hrs</b> 8.0/mo    480			

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#### 2.4.2.2. USE OF SICK LEAVE

Sick leave may not be taken in advance of being earned. Scheduled days off and officially designated holidays falling within a period of sick leave will not be counted against sick leave. Sick leave may be taken in increments of one-quarter (0.25) of an hour for hourly employees. Salaried employees who work at least a half-day do not have to record leave taken for that day, except for leave taken under the FMLA. Leave taken under the FMLA will be recorded in increments of one-quarter (0.25) of an hour. Please see FMLA policy for further details regarding sick leave usage under the FMLA.

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#### 2.4.2.3. TRANSFER/SEPARATION

Sick leave will be transferable from department/office to department/office only to the extent that it is accrued. All accrued sick leave will be paid out at the time of separation from the County or when transferring to an elected official position at a rate of one-quarter (0.25) hours for each one (1) accrued hour.

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#### 2.4.2.4. DOCUMENTATION

If an employee calls in sick for three (3) or more consecutive working days, the manager may require a physician's or other licensed practitioner's verification of the illness or injury. The physician's statement should provide (a) verification of the illness or injury; (b) if and when the employee will be able to return to work; and (c) whether the employee is capable of performing his or her regularly scheduled duties. The employee is responsible for providing the proof of physician's care. Without documentation, the use of paid sick leave may be denied and the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

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#### 2.4.2.5. CARE OF ILL FAMILY MEMBERS

Benefit-eligible employees may use sick leave when, under compelling and necessary circumstances, they must administer aid to an immediate member of the family or when an immediate member of the family is quarantined. For purposes of sick leave usage, immediate member of the family includes those individuals shown in the Family and Medical Leave Act section of this policy under "Definitions of Spouse, Child, and Parent for Basic FMLA." In cases where sick leave usage equals three (3) or more consecutive working days, the manager may require a physician's or other licensed practitioner's verification of the illness or injury and a statement that it is necessary that the employee administer aid and comfort to the family member including the expected length of time such aid and comfort is necessary.

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#### 2.4.2.6. OPTIONS FOR USING ACCRUED SICK LEAVE

The County wishes to acknowledge the need for time off for employees who do not have occasion to use their sick leave. It offers three options for converting accrued sick leave into days off. Use of these options is entirely at the manager's discretion, however, based on office requirements. The options are:

1. **Personal Days** – employees may convert accrued sick leave into one personal day per calendar quarter. They must, however, keep a minimum of 100 hours in reserves at all times for possible illness. Requests for personal days must be submitted to the manager for approval at least one

week in advance of the requested day. Managers have discretion whether personal days may be linked to vacation or holidays. These days are to be used when converted, and not accrued for future use.

2. **Vacation** – an employee who wishes to use *additional accrued sick leave in the same quarter* may convert accrued sick leave hours into vacation time at the exchange of four hours of accrued sick leave for one hour of vacation. They must, however, keep a minimum of 100 hours in reserves at all times for possible illness. These days are to be used when converted, and not accrued for future use.
3. **Community Volunteer Leave** – Blaine County recognizes the value employees bring to the community when they volunteer their time in support of community programs. Community Volunteer Leave allows employees to take up to one (1) day of sick leave every six (6) months to participate in manager-approved community volunteer programs that positively impact the quality of life within the community. Employees interested in this opportunity should meet with their manager to discuss their volunteer choice, schedule and to receive approval. Managers are responsible to ensure limits are not exceeded.

Community Volunteer Leave should not conflict with peak work schedules, other work-related responsibilities, create the need for overtime, or cause conflicts with other employees' schedules. Employees must keep a minimum of 100 hours of sick leave in reserve at all times in case of illness.

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#### 2.4.2.7. DONATED SICK LEAVE

Employees may also exercise a fourth option for using their accrued sick leave. At designated times throughout the year, they may donate accrued sick leave hours that exceed their 100-hour reserve to the Donated Sick Leave Bank. Donations of sick leave are irrevocable.

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#### 2.4.2.8. DONATED SICK LEAVE BANK

Receipt of donated sick leave is only available to employees with serious personal or family medical situations that require extended absences when they have exhausted their accrued sick days, vacation days, comp time, holiday comp time, and other leave.

Donated leave is converted to a comparative dollar rate and disbursed as equivalent leave hours for the employee receiving the leave. For example, employee A has an hourly rate of \$30. Employee A donates two hours of leave totaling \$60. Employee B experiences an emergency, is eligible to participate in the program, and requests three hours of leave at a rate of \$15 per hour. Employee B then exhausts the dollar value of \$45 (three hours of leave), and a total value of \$15 of employee A's donation remains in the donated sick leave bank.

Employees seeking to receive hours from the Donated Sick Leave Bank must provide a completed Leave Donation Request to their manager. Subsequent approval is subject to the approval of the department head and Human Resources or elected official. Evaluation may include prior satisfactory attendance, with no history of leave abuse. Employees receiving workers' compensation benefits through the County are not eligible to receive donated leave. Names of recipients must be kept confidential.

Employees may not use more than forty-eight (48) days of donated sick leave. The employee's manager has the right to schedule how the recipient may use the donated leave, but at all times, expects the recipient to return to work as soon as personal or family health allows. Employees who report a personal incapacity to work at the end of leave may be required to provide medical certification of such incapacity.

If the recipient of donated sick leave returns to work before all donated sick leave has been used, the recipient forfeits the donated leave. Unused sick leave will not be credited back the Donated Sick Leave Bank.

### 2.4.3. VACATION LEAVE

Employees may use vacation leave that has accrued to them. Vacation time will not accrue to any employee on leave without pay, suspension without pay, layoff, or when working overtime. Vacation leave will not be earned, accrued or accumulated during any pay period in which the maximum accruals have been met. Managers should utilize the Leave Request form to document and monitor approved leave.

#### Monthly Vacation Accrual Schedule

		<b>20 hours / week</b> Max accrual = 100 hours	<b>24 hours / week</b> Max accrual = 120 hours	<b>25 hours / week</b> Max accrual = 125 hours	<b>28 hours / week</b> Max accrual = 140 hours
10 days	1 yr	3.33	4.00	4.17	4.67
11 days	2 yr	3.67	4.40	4.58	5.13
12 days	3 yr	4.00	4.80	5.00	5.60
13 days	4 yr	4.33	5.20	5.42	6.07
14 days	5 yr	4.67	5.60	5.83	6.53
15 days	6 yr	5.00	6.00	6.25	7.00
16 days	7 yr	5.33	6.40	6.67	7.47
17 days	8 yr	5.67	6.80	7.08	7.93
18 days	9 yr	6.00	7.20	7.50	8.40
19 days	10 yr	6.33	7.60	7.92	8.87
20 days	11+ yrs	6.67	8.00	8.33	9.33
		<b>30 hours / week</b> Max accrual = 150 hours	<b>32 hours / week</b> Max accrual = 160 hours	<b>34 hours / week</b> Max accrual = 170 hours	<b>35 hours / week</b> Max accrual = 175 hours
10 days	1 yr	5.00	5.33	5.67	5.83
11 days	2 yr	5.50	5.87	6.23	6.42
12 days	3 yr	6.00	6.40	6.80	7.00
13 days	4 yr	6.50	6.93	7.37	7.58
14 days	5 yr	7.00	7.47	7.93	8.17
15 days	6 yr	7.50	8.00	8.50	8.75
16 days	7 yr	8.00	8.53	9.07	9.33
17 days	8 yr	8.50	9.07	9.63	9.92
18 days	9 yr	9.00	9.60	10.2	10.5
19 days	10 yr	9.50	10.13	10.77	11.08
20 days	11+ yrs	10.00	10.67	11.33	11.67
		<b>36 hours / week</b> Max accrual = 170 hours	<b>37.5 hours / week</b> Max accrual = 187.5 hours	<b>38 hours / week</b> Max accrual = 200 hours	<b>40 hours / week</b> Max accrual = 200 hours
10 days	1 yr	5.83	6.25	6.33	6.67
11 days	2 yr	6.42	6.88	6.97	7.33
12 days	3 yr	7.00	7.50	7.60	8.00
13 days	4 yr	7.58	8.13	8.23	8.67
14 days	5 yr	8.17	8.75	8.87	9.33
15 days	6 yr	8.75	9.38	9.50	10.00
16 days	7 yr	9.33	10.00	10.13	10.67
17 days	8 yr	9.92	10.63	10.77	11.33
18 days	9 yr	10.5	11.25	11.40	12.00
19 days	10 yr	11.08	11.88	12.03	12.67
20 days	11+ yrs	11.67	12.50	12.67	13.33

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#### 2.4.3.1. ACCRUAL SCHEDULE

Benefit-eligible employees, who regularly work twenty (20) or more hours per week, will accrue vacation leave at the rates listed in the Monthly Vacation Accrual Schedule.

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#### 2.4.3.2. USE OF VACATION

Vacation leave may not be taken in advance of being earned. Vacation leave may be taken only when approved by the employee's manager. Employees should provide as much advance notice as possible by submitting a leave request to their direct manager. Officially designated holidays falling within a period of vacation leave will not be counted against vacation leave. Vacation leave may be taken in increments of one-quarter (0.25) of an hour for hourly employees. Salaried employees who work at least a half-day do not have to record leave taken on their timesheet for that day, except for leave taken under the FMLA. Leave taken under the FMLA will be recorded in increments of one-quarter (0.25) of an hour. Each employee is responsible to monitor his/her vacation balance to ensure maximum hours are not reached.

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#### 2.4.3.3. TRANSFER/SEPARATION

Vacation leave will be transferrable from department/office to department/office only to the extent that vacation leave is accrued. All accrued vacation leave will be paid out at the time of separation from the County, or when transferring to an elected official position, at 100% of the accrual balance.

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#### 2.4.4. HOLIDAYS

Blaine County recognizes these paid holidays each year, as follows:

- New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Friday after Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and any day so designated by the Board of County Commissioners.
- Since County offices are expected to be open at least 40 hours per week, employees are generally expected to work the Friday of a holiday week.
- Please refer to the County's Annual Holiday Calendar for specific work day and holiday schedule.
- Time off without pay may be granted to employees who desire to observe a religious holiday which is not recognized by Blaine County, provided it does not create an undue hardship. Employees can request the use of Vacation, Comp or Holiday time to be used for the observed religious holiday.

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#### 2.4.4.1. HOLIDAY COMPENSATORY (COMP) TIME

The following conditions apply to Blaine County's Holiday Comp Time policy:

- Employees must be benefit-eligible to receive Holiday Comp Time.
- Employees must be on paid time the last scheduled work day before and the first scheduled work day after a holiday to be eligible for Holiday Comp Time. Paid time includes compensatory, vacation, and sick leave; or any other paid leave during which an employee did not work.
- Holiday Comp Time pay is not considered time worked for the purpose of overtime calculations.
- Holiday Comp Time is computed based on the individual employee's work hours.



- For employees who work holidays, compensation will be at regular or overtime rate plus one day of holiday comp time earned.
- If an employee is not required to work on a holiday he/she will be compensated as if the holiday had been a regular workday, as detailed below.

Full-time employees who qualify under the conditions listed above and who work 2,080 hours or more annually, are eligible for holiday pay of ten (10) hours for each holiday. Full-time employees who work 2,080 hours or more annually and are required to work a compressed schedule with shifts longer than ten (10) hours as a condition of their employment may receive holiday pay equivalent to their regular shift length. Employees who work a compressed schedule at their own request will not be eligible to receive holiday pay in excess of ten (10) hours and may adjust their work schedule for the holiday week, or make up the difference with accrued vacation or comp leave.

Benefit-eligible employees who work less than 2,080 hours annually will be eligible for prorated holiday pay calculated according to the number of hours they work in proportion to full-time. For example, an employee who works thirty-five (35) hours each week, for a total of 1,820 hours annually, will receive eight and three-quarter (8.75) hours of holiday comp time for each holiday.

In the event an employee calls in sick the last scheduled work day before or the first scheduled work day after a holiday, a manager may request a doctor's note for the absence if sick leave abuse is suspected. Failure to provide documentation for the unscheduled absence may result in denial of holiday pay for that holiday.

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#### 2.4.4.2. HOLIDAY COMP TIME SWEEP

Employees who are unable to take accrued Holiday Comp Time within the fiscal year it is earned will have up to forty (40) hours of Holiday Comp Time transferred into the following fiscal year. At fiscal year-end any unused Holiday Comp Time in excess of forty (40) hours which is accrued after September 1, 2009, will be forfeited by the employee. An employee who terminates employment with the County or transfers to an exempt or elected official position will be paid for any unused Holiday Comp Time.

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#### 2.4.5. CLOSED FACILITY LEAVE

On occasion, inclement weather or some other unforeseen occurrence may necessitate the closing of a County facility during a workday. Should closure or evacuation be ordered by the Board of County Commissioners, employees affected by the closure or evacuation will be paid their regular work hours for that day without having to use accrued vacation, compensatory time, or holiday time. Employees who are gone during the closure or evacuation on vacation, compensatory, holiday or sick leave, must use the appropriate leave, and will not be eligible for closed facility regular pay.

If, however, an employee cannot make it to work due to inclement weather, poor roads, or other conditions, and the facility has NOT been closed, the employee must make up the work hours, take leave without pay, or use accrued vacation, compensatory time or holiday time at the discretion of the department head or elected official.

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### 2.4.6. MILITARY LEAVE

Blaine County is committed to protecting the job rights of employees absent due to military leave. Under federal and state laws, an employee who leaves a position to perform duty, voluntarily or involuntarily, in the uniformed services is entitled to an unpaid protected leave of absence. "Uniformed Services" includes the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Army National Guard, Air National Guard, the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service, the reserve components of each of these services, or any other category of persons designated by the United States in the time of war or emergency. Uniformed service includes active duty, active duty for training, inactive duty training (such as drills), initial active duty training, and funeral honors duty performed by National Guard and reserve members.

When an employee is called to military duty, the employee must provide (unless military necessity makes it impossible) the following to his/her manager:

- Notification of pending military service (copy of official orders).
- Notification of type of military leave (defined below).
- Notification of whether health insurance benefits will be waived or continued during the leave.
- Verification and/or update of mailing address.
- Notification if military status changes.

Written notice must be submitted to Payroll by the department/office placing the employee on the appropriate type of military leave. Notice must provide any relevant information necessary for processing paperwork. If military leave status changes, subsequent written notice must be submitted with appropriate action and information.

Upon request, the employee has the option of using any accrued comp, holiday comp, and/or vacation leave to continue pay once the military leave begins.

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#### 2.4.6.1. TYPES OF MILITARY LEAVE

Active Military Leave Without Pay – The employee receives full military pay only and no differential pay from the County.

Field Training Military Leave Without Pay – The employee receives full military pay only and no differential pay from the County.

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#### 2.4.6.2. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS DURING MILITARY LEAVE

##### PERSI BASE PLAN

Contact PERSI for additional information.

##### BLAINE COUNTY DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN

If an employee is on a military leave of absence (short or long) that is covered under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), and the employee returns within the requisite period after the leave, certain rights are entitled under the deferred compensation plan. These rights generally include (with exceptions) the right to make contributions missed while on leave and to receive any matching

contributions that would have been received during the leave (based on the compensation that would have been earned if not on leave). This right to contribute applies for five (5) years following the return to County employment or, if sooner, for a period equal to three (3) times the period of the military leave.

### HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS (MEDICAL, DENTAL, VISION)

If an employee is placed on Field Training Military Leave With Pay or Field Training Military Leave Without Pay, the employee's medical, dental, and vision insurance continues to be paid by Blaine County. The employee will continue to be responsible for any dependent portion of coverage.

If an employee is placed on Active Military Leave With Pay or Active Military Leave Without Pay an employee has two options. Blaine County health insurance benefits during military leave can be waived or continued.

If an employee chooses to waive health insurance benefits, the employee must notify Payroll or Human Resources in writing of the specific benefits to be waived. Upon returning from active military leave, health insurance benefits will be reinstated.

If an employee chooses to continue health insurance benefits, the employee must notify Payroll or Human Resources in writing. Continuation of health insurance (medical, dental, and vision) during active military leave is provided under USERRA, which allows up to twenty-four (24) months of coverage after the military leave begins.

### SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS

If an employee chooses to continue supplemental benefits while on military leave, such as voluntary policies, the insurance providers need to be contacted directly regarding continuation of these policies.

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#### 2.4.7. OTHER LEAVE

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##### 2.4.7.1. JURY/COURT LEAVE

Employees called for jury duty or as a witness for a governmental entity, are entitled to take time off, as necessary, to fulfill such jury/court obligations. This leave will be leave with pay. Employees called to attend court hearings in connection with their official duties will consider those hours as work time. No employee will face discipline or retaliation for such jury/court service, except for any violations of the jury/court leave policy set forth below.

Employees must immediately inform their manager when they receive a jury/court duty summons. Employees chosen to sit on a jury must inform their manager how long the trial is expected to last. Employees must also check in with their manager periodically during jury service, so the County knows when to expect the employee back at work.

Paid jury duty is to be used as a means to make an employee whole for their normal work hours, when they serve jury duty on a normal work day. The "Jury Duty Paid" Time and Attendance code will be used for these hours. If an employee has both jury duty hours and regular hours worked on a regularly scheduled work day, employees will record regular hours worked on their timesheet and use the "Jury Duty Paid" code to make them whole for the day.

Since jury/court leave is with pay, jury/court attendance compensation received by the employee must be forfeited by the employee. If an employee fails to do so, their County pay will be reduced by the amount of any such payment.

On any day when jury service ends before the end of that employee's usual work day, the employee must check in with their manager to find out whether they need to return to work for that day.

Any other reason for court attendance other than as provided above will be considered leave without pay. However, employees may substitute accrued comp, holiday comp, or vacation time off instead of taking leave without pay.

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#### 2.4.7.2. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

A full-time employee may take up to three (3) days of paid leave for a death in the immediate family, i.e., spouse, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, in-laws, step-parent, step-grandparent, step-child, step-grandchild, step-brother or step-sister. Additional leave may be taken with manager approval from accrued sick days, vacation days, comp time, holiday comp time, or as an unpaid leave of absence. Part-time employees may take up to two (2) days of paid leave for a death in the immediate family.

Leave for death outside the immediate family may be granted on a case-by-case basis at the manager's discretion. Such leave must be taken from accrued sick days, vacation days, comp time, holiday comp time, or as an unpaid leave of absence. Bereavement leave itself is not accrued. Managers should have employees complete the Leave Request form to document the leave.

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#### 2.4.7.3. WORKERS' COMPENSATION

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##### 2.4.7.3.1. REPORTING

A Workers' Compensation First Report of Injury or Illness form and Supervisor's Accident Report must be filed when any of the following circumstances exists:

- A work-related injury or illness requires medical treatment by a physician
- A work-related injury or illness that has the potential to require medical treatment in the future
- A worker is absent from work for one day or more
- Whenever the injured worker requests that a First Report of Injury or Illness be filed on his/her behalf

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##### 2.4.7.3.2. REPORTING PROCEDURES

In order for the County to properly process workers' compensation insurance claims for work-related injuries or illnesses, the following procedures must be adhered to by employees and managers:

Employee Responsibilities:

- Immediately seek medical attention if necessary.
- Notify your manager of the injury or illness as soon as possible and obtain a First Report of Injury or Illness form.
- Complete the First Report of Injury or Illness form and turn completed form into Payroll or Human Resources within 24 hours.

- Notify your manager of any time lost from work due to injury or illness.
- Provide your manager with a written medical release from your doctor upon returning to work.

Manager Responsibilities:

- Immediately provide assessment of injured employees.
- Immediately refer the employee for medical attention if necessary.
- Ensure the First Report of Injury or Illness form is completed and submitted to Payroll or Human Resources within 24 hours.
- Complete the Supervisor's Accident Report and forward to Payroll or Human Resources within 24 hours.
- Ensure the employee has a proper medical release to return to work.

#### MANAGER NOTE 2.4.7.3.2.

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##### **FIRST REPORT OF INJURY OR ILLNESS FORM AND SUPERVISOR'S ACCIDENT REPORT**

The First Report of Injury Report or Illness form and Supervisor's Accident Report allow managers and employees the ability to document incidents when an employee is injured on the job. This documentation is essential for the proper management of any workers' compensation claim.

- Employee needs to complete the First Report of Injury or Illness form as soon as possible and deliver the report to their manager.
- Managers should review the First Report of Injury or Illness form and complete the Supervisor's Accident Report.
- Managers should get as many details as possible about the incident from the employee and witness(es).
- Investigations should be prompt, thorough and objective.
- Managers should fax, hand-deliver or email the First Report of Injury or Illness form and the Supervisor's Accident Report to Payroll or Human Resources within 24 hours of the incident.
- Managers must stay in contact with employee, Payroll and Human Resources on the number of days and working restrictions of the employee.

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#### 2.4.7.3.3. BENEFITS

If an employee is temporarily disabled by an on-the-job accident, he/she may be eligible for workers' compensation benefits. Return to employment will be authorized on a case-by-case basis upon consultation with the supervising official, the treating physician, Human Resources and the State Insurance Fund. Concerns associated with injured worker status may be brought to Human Resources or the appropriate elected official for review.

Workers' compensation insurance covers costs associated with medical treatment for the employee, and if applicable, a portion of the employee's wages for time lost from work according to the laws of the State of Idaho.

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#### 2.4.7.3.4. COMPENSATION FOR MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Employees who are not on leave, but require time away from work to attend initial or follow-up doctor's appointments related to a work injury or illness, shall be paid for the time spent at the doctor and will not be required to use sick leave. However, employees will be required to make note of the dates and times of appointments on their timesheets, and are asked to schedule appointments at times that will be least disruptive to the office if possible. If the employee requires additional time off for medical care after the claim is closed by the State Insurance Fund, the employee must use accrued leave time.

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#### 2.4.7.3.5. LEAVE COMPENSATION

Employees on workers' compensation leave must indicate (or have their supervisor indicate) on their timesheet that they are on leave so as to avoid over payment from the County. An employee who is absent from work for a period of five (5) days or less as a result of a work-related injury or illness will be required to use paid leave (sick leave, compensatory (comp) time, holiday compensatory time and vacation leave, in that order) before going on unpaid leave.

Under workers' compensation, payment of wages begins on the sixth (6) day following injury/illness from work (time loss) unless the injured worker is hospitalized overnight or time loss exceeds fourteen (14) days. Those earnings cover a portion of the employee's full base pay. The workers' compensation check is sent directly to the employee's mailing address on a bi-weekly basis.

Employees absent from work more than five (5) days, have the option to accept only the workers' compensation payment, or to supplement workers' compensation with their paid leave balance(s). Employees who wish to supplement workers' compensation payment with sick leave, comp time, holiday compensatory time, and vacation leave, must indicate (or have their supervisor indicate) on their timesheet that they are on workers' compensation leave AND that they wish to utilize paid leave to cover the difference for what workers' compensation does not cover. If the employee supplements workers' compensation with their paid leave balances, the employee shall receive payment to bring their salary equal to their bi-weekly gross pay from the County. Payroll will verify workers' compensation check amount before the supplemental payment from the County will occur to avoid overpayment. Employees may experience a delay in the supplemental payment of wages from the County due to verification of workers' compensation check amount.

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#### 2.4.7.3.6. EMPLOYER PAID BENEFITS

Medical, vision, dental, and life insurance benefits shall continue while the employee is on leave. Employees are responsible for making any premium payments to the County for dependent coverage and/or supplemental benefits.

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#### 2.4.7.3.7. PEACE OR DETENTION OFFICER

Pursuant to Idaho Code, Title 72, Chapter 11, any employee who meets the definition of peace or detention officer as defined in I.C. §72-1103 who is injured and temporarily incapacitated and unable to perform employment duties or is otherwise eligible to receive workers' compensation benefits shall receive their full base salary from the County. This policy shall apply only when the employee is:

- Responding to an emergency, or
- In the pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law, and
- Injured by the actions of another person, and by reason thereof is temporarily incapacitated from performing his or her duties and qualifies for workers' compensation wage loss benefits under title 72, Idaho Code.

If the injury is not a result of any of the above, the County shall handle the claim as described in 2.4.7.3.4. Compensation for Medical Appointments and 2.4.7.3.5. Leave Compensation, and the employee will only receive full payment of wages if they choose to use their paid leave balances.

If full wages are paid to the employee, any workers' compensation received or collected by the employee shall be submitted to Payroll immediately upon receipt to avoid overpayment. The County will then apply for reimbursement from the Idaho State Insurance Fund, pursuant to I.C. §72-1104.

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#### 2.4.7.3.8. DOCUMENTATION/RETURN TO WORK

The employee must, on a regular basis, provide the County with a written medical update and prognosis from the attending physician. The County, at its option, may require verification from a physician of its choice.

Additionally, the employee must provide an appropriate written release from the attending physician before the employee is allowed to return to work. The County may require a second release from a physician selected by the County. Employees must return to work as soon as a doctor's release is given. When returning to work, the employee must adhere to departmental policy on return to work issues, if applicable.

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#### 2.4.7.3.9. MODIFIED DUTY PROGRAM

The County strives to promote a successful recovery from any work related or personal injury. These guidelines are to be utilized when an employee returns to work with restrictions following an on-the-job injury.

It is the policy of the County to attempt to provide modified duty assignments to employees who have sustained an on-the job injury or illness that prevents them from performing the full range of duties required for their job and whose medical condition has been diagnosed as "temporary" by the employee's treating physician. "Temporary" means a medical condition of short duration where the medical prognosis is for recovery to full duty status. By having a Modified Duty Program, which makes reasonable accommodations whenever possible, there is a benefit to both the County and the injured employee.

The County will attempt to provide meaningful, productive work that fits within the injured employee's physical restrictions. The injured employee's department will attempt to place the employee in a modified

duty assignment within the department when possible. When the department is unable to place an injured employee in a modified duty assignment within their department, Human Resources will assist in attempting to place the employee in a modified duty assignment with another department. The employee's regular department will be responsible for all personnel actions including the payment of the employee's normal wages and benefits.

Nothing in this policy entitles an employee to a modified duty assignment. Modified duty assignments are temporary. They are not considered a permanent work assignment, and such assignments do not create an entitlement to the position to which the employee is temporarily assigned. The decision to offer modified duty assignment is at the sole discretion of the County.

This program is not intended to, nor does it, alter an employee's rights under Workers' Compensation, the Americans with Disabilities (ADA), or the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Determination of whether an employee has a temporary medical condition or may be covered by ADA will be made on a case by case basis and may be made periodically before, during, or after the recovery period. The determination will be made in consultation with Human Resources.

The employee is responsible for working in a modified duty assignment provided by the County. The employee's failure or denial to participate in the modified duty assignment may result in the denial of temporary total disability benefits under Workers' Compensation laws as determined by the State of Idaho.

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#### 2.4.7.3.10. WORKERS' COMPENSATION DISCLOSURE

Failure to report injuries, filing false claims of injury, falsifying timesheets, misrepresenting facts, or failing to notify the County of overpayment of benefits will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and could result in both criminal prosecution and civil penalties. Employees receiving workers' compensation benefits through the County are not eligible to receive donated leave. If an employee has questions regarding a workers' compensation claim, he/she should contact Payroll or Human Resources.

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#### 2.4.7.4. UNPAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE

An employee may be granted an unpaid leave of absence for a period of time not to exceed six (6) months, upon written approval from the department head and/or elected official(s) responsible for said department or office. Unpaid leaves of absence longer than one week in duration must be approved by the department head and elected official(s). Using all appropriate accruals available, leave with pay must first be used before granting an unpaid leave of absence.

If the employee elects to continue insurance coverage during their unpaid leave of absence, he/she will be responsible for payment of their insurance premiums. Initial payment will be due on the first payday that a paycheck is not received. Future payments will be due the day before the 2<sup>nd</sup> payroll date each month.

Upon return from an unpaid leave of absence, the department head or elected official may restore the employee to his/her former position and status or one of equivalent pay and status. The employee will also be restored to the same leave accrual rates. In general, time on an unpaid leave of absence will not apply toward vacation or sick leave accruals, PERSI service, or salary increases. Copies of requests and approvals/denials will be stored in the employee's personnel file.



## 2.5. GENERAL CONDUCT

### 2.5.1. EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

#### 2.5.1.1. CODE OF ETHICS

Blaine County conducts business fairly, impartially, in an ethical manner, and in compliance with all laws and regulations. The highest standards of ethical conduct are required of Blaine County employees in performance of their responsibilities. Employees must not engage in conduct or activity that may raise questions as to the County's honesty or impartiality or otherwise cause embarrassment to the County or its offices.

Employees must avoid any action which might result in, or reasonably be expected to create, an appearance of:

- Using public office, public position, or public property for private gain.
- Giving preferential treatment to any person or entity.
- Losing impartiality.
- Adversely affecting the confidence of the public in the integrity of the County.
- Interference with or compromise of their position as a County employee.
- Receiving non-County payment for services customarily performed as part of their County employment.

Every employee has the responsibility to ask questions, seek guidance, express concerns regarding compliance, and report suspected violations of this policy. Employees should report suspected violations to their immediate manager or any member of management as soon as possible. Retaliation against employees who use these reporting mechanisms to raise genuine concerns will be grounds for discipline.

#### MANAGER NOTE 2.5.1.1.

##### CODE OF ETHICS

Managers have a responsibility to "set the proper ethical tone at the top;" to design and implement programs and controls to prevent, deter, and detect fraud; and to create and maintain a culture of honesty and high ethical standards so the opportunities to commit fraud are significantly reduced. All managers are responsible for taking an active role in ensuring that this responsibility is met.

When such conduct comes to the attention of a manager, that individual must act promptly to ensure the situation is assessed, thoroughly investigated and that appropriate resolution measures are implemented. Retaliation against employees who use these reporting mechanisms to raise genuine concerns will be grounds for discipline.

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### 2.5.1.2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Employees must avoid any situation which involves, or may involve, a conflict between their personal interest and the interest of the County. County employees must not take any official action or make any decision which could create a conflict of interest. Each employee must make prompt and full written disclosure to his/her manager of any potential situation which may involve a conflict of interest. Volunteer activities that could create a conflict of interest, interfere with performance of an employee's duties, or overlap with duties performed for Blaine County should be disclosed in writing to the manager to ensure no conflict of interest exists. Violations of this policy have legal implications as well for potential violations of the Ethics in Government Act and/or the Bribery and Corrupt Influence Act. For more information, please see Idaho Code, Title 59, Chapter 7 and Idaho Code 18-1309 through 18-1360.

Such conflicts may include, but are not limited to:

- Ownership by an employee or by an employee's family member of a significant interest in any outside enterprise which does or seeks to do business with the County.
- Serving as a director, officer, partner, consultant, or in a managerial or technical capacity with an outside enterprise which does or is seeking to do business with the County. Exceptions not in violation of state and federal law may be approved by the Board of County Commissioners.
- Any other circumstances, including family or other personal relationships, which might dissuade the employee from acting in the best interest of the County.

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### 2.5.1.3. ANTI-FRAUD

Blaine County is committed to maintaining financial statements free from any significant misstatement, whether caused by error or fraud. Many of Blaine County's policies and procedures are intended to prevent significant errors and fraud.

Fraud is an intentional deception designed to obtain a benefit or advantage, or to cause some benefit that is due to be denied. Fraud is not restricted to monetary or material benefits. It includes intangibles such as status and information. Fraudulent activity includes, but is not limited to:

- Manipulation, falsification, or alteration of accounting records or supporting documents.
- Misrepresentation or intentional omission of events, transactions, or significant information.
- Stealing assets or causing Blaine County to pay for goods or services not yet received.
- Management override of controls that otherwise may appear to be operating effectively.
- Forging signatures or falsifying electronic approvals on disbursement authorizations.
- Collusion among management, employees, or third parties.

According to auditing standards, department heads and elected officials have a responsibility to set the proper ethical "tone at the top;" to design and implement programs and controls to prevent, deter, and detect fraud; and to create and maintain a culture of honesty and high ethical standards so the opportunities to commit fraud are significantly reduced.

Every employee has the responsibility to ask questions, seek guidance, express concerns regarding compliance, and report suspected violations of this policy. Employees should report suspected violations to their immediate manager or any member of management as soon as possible. Retaliation against employees who use these reporting mechanisms to raise genuine concerns will be grounds for discipline.

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#### 2.5.1.4. VIOLATIONS

Violations of this policy, regardless of whether or not an actual law has been violated, will not be tolerated. Blaine County will investigate every issue that is brought to its attention in this area and will take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

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#### 2.5.1.5. OTHER EMPLOYMENT

While Blaine County does not prohibit employees from having a second job, secondary employment must not affect the employee's work hours, interfere or conflict with the employee's regular duties, raise any ethical concerns, or necessitate long hours that may impact the employee's working effectiveness.

Self-employment is considered other employment under this policy.

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#### 2.5.1.6. POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Blaine County employees may participate in public affairs, except as prohibited by law, in a manner which maintains the neutrality, efficiency, and integrity of the employee's performance of County functions. Therefore, employees may engage in political activities as individuals, but not as representatives of the County or under the color of office or position. Examples of such political activities may include:

- Registering and voting in elections.
- Expressing personal opinions as a private individual on political subjects and candidates, provided that any expression is not under color of office or position.
- Displaying political pictures, badges or buttons as long as said display is out of the view of members of the public using County services as not to give the impression that the political view is being expressed under the color of office.
- Being a member of a political party or other political organization and participating in political rallies, fund-raising functions, or other political gatherings.
- Signing a political petition as an individual.
- Taking an active part in support of a candidate in an election.
- Serving as an election judge or clerk, or in a similar position to perform nonpartisan duties as prescribed by state or local law.

#### **County Employees May Not:**

- Use their authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with an election to or a nomination for office, or affecting the result thereof.
- Directly or indirectly coerce, attempt to coerce, or direct any employee to lend or contribute money or anything of value to a party, committee, organization, or person for political purposes.
- Infringe upon the rights of other employees or members of the public to participate in political activities and support the candidate(s) of their choice.
- Express support for a candidate for political office on behalf of Blaine County or under color of office or position.
- Use County equipment, materials or work time to engage in political activities.

Employees should direct questions regarding this policy to their department head, elected official, or the County Administrator.

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#### 2.5.1.7. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

The revelation or use of any confidential or non-public information without prior authorization is prohibited. The misuse, unauthorized access to, or mishandling of confidential information, is strictly prohibited and will subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination. All employees are expected to comply with the established procedures for their department or office in responding to public records requests. If the policy is not clear in a certain instance, employees should seek guidance from their manager. Files or records that may contain confidential information, such as personnel records or attorney-client communication, must be reviewed by the Public Records Custodian for the office or the Civil Division of the Prosecuting Attorney's Office prior to being released to the public.

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#### 2.5.1.8. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

Integral to Blaine County's success is the protection to the extent authorized by law of nonpublic information entrusted to us by vendors and other business partners. Confidential and proprietary information may include such things as pricing and financial data, and customer names or addresses. Employees should not disclose nonpublic information without a valid business purpose and proper authorization. For further guidance, please consult the appropriate department head or elected official who may contact the Prosecuting Attorney.

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#### 2.5.1.9. MEDIA INQUIRIES

From time to time, employees may be approached by reporters and other members of the media regarding County business. In this case, employees should direct all media inquiries to the appropriate department head, elected official or the County Administrator, unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate elected official.

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#### 2.5.1.10. GIFTS

No employee should accept any gifts, services or other privileges offered or given by any person or organization which are prohibited pursuant to federal or Idaho state law. Employees may accept unsolicited gifts of nominal value, such as calendars, pens, mugs, caps and t-shirts or other promotional items.

Employees may not accept compensation, payment or money of any amount from the public or entities with whom Blaine County does or may do business. Tangible gifts (including tickets to an event) that have a market value of \$50 or greater may not be accepted. Gifts such as a fruit basket or flowers, valued less than \$50, should be shared with other employees to avoid the perception of favoritism or impropriety.

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#### 2.5.1.11. SOLICITATION

Blaine County does not allow solicitation by non-employees. Blaine County employees may not engage in solicitation during work hours or in work areas.

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#### 2.5.1.12. DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

If a County employee wishes to provide materials for review by other employees, they may request said materials be posted on the bulletin board in the employee break room(s). Requests to post materials at the

Blaine County Courthouse should be forwarded to the County Administrator. Requests to post materials at other County offices or locations should be forwarded to the department head or elected official for that department/office. No materials containing offensive language or graphics are allowed.

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#### 2.5.1.13. VISITORS

Blaine County values family and work/life balance. County policies and benefits are indicative of these beliefs. Blaine County believes in an environment that is conducive to work; therefore, the workplace should not be used in lieu of child care. It is inappropriate for children and other relatives of employees to be in the workplace, except for short visits as detailed below.

This policy is established to avoid disruptions in job duties of the employee and co-workers, reduce potential liability, and help maintain the professional work environment. If an employee performs work (other than on-call responsibilities) outside the office setting, relatives should not be present during those work hours as they present a distraction to the employee. This policy is not intended to prohibit family members from being in the workplace during special County-sponsored events. Exceptions to this policy are permitted under extenuating circumstances and with written approval from the appropriate department head or elected official.

Occasionally an employee's family members or friends may want to visit them at work. Visitors may be allowed for a short visit, on an infrequent basis, depending on the work setting and needs of the office. Each department head or elected official may set standards for their department/office with regards to visitors.

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#### 2.5.1.14. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

During working time and in working areas, employees are expected to keep personal exchanges limited so that others are not distracted or offended by such exchanges and so that productivity is maintained. Employees are strictly prohibited from engaging in physical or sexual contact that would be deemed offensive by a reasonable person while anywhere on County premises, whether during working hours or not.

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#### 2.5.1.15. SOCIAL MEDIA

Employees must maintain high ethical and professional standards of conduct both on and off duty. This includes, but is not limited to, conduct related to materials posted through social media, the Internet or disseminated electronically. Violation of this policy may subject an employee to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Prior to posting on social media, employees also should be aware of the following:

- Employees can be held accountable for content they post on the Internet—whether in the office, at home or on their own time—particularly if something they post or share violates County policies.
- What they write on social media sites may be disseminated to the world—even if they only share it with their "friends."
- Employees should be careful not to post comments they would not say out loud or that they would not want their department head, elected official or County Administrator to see or hear.

- Comments could be deemed to violate County policies including, but not limited to 2.1.1.1. Harassment, 2.5.1.1. Code of Ethics, or could contain information that is considered confidential.

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#### 2.5.1.16. NEPOTISM

The Blaine County Nepotism policy adopts the requirements of state law, and particular attention is directed to Idaho Code § 18-1359 (Using public position for personal gain):

(1) No public servant shall:

(e) Appoint or vote for the appointment of any person related to him by blood or marriage within the second degree, to any clerkship, office, position, employment or duty, when the salary, wages, pay or compensation of such appointee is to be paid out of public funds or fees of office, or appoint or furnish employment to any person whose salary, wages, pay or compensation is to be paid out of public funds or fees of office, and who is related by either blood or marriage within the second degree to any other public servant when such appointment is made on the agreement or promise of such other public servant or any other public servant to appoint or furnish employment to anyone so related to the public servant making or voting for such appointment. Any public servant who pays out of any public funds under his control or who draws or authorizes the drawing of any warrant or authority for the payment out of any public fund of the salary, wages, pay, or compensation of any such ineligible person, knowing him to be ineligible, is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished as provided in this chapter.

and, Idaho Code § 18-1359(4):

No person related to a county commissioner by blood or marriage within the second degree shall be appointed to any clerkship, office, position, employment or duty with the commissioner's county when the salary, wages, pay or compensation of such appointee or employee is to be paid out of public funds.

and Idaho Code § 74-4 Ethics in Government:

A public official shall not take any official action or make a formal decision or formal recommendation concerning any matter where he has a conflict of interest and has failed to disclose such conflict as provided in this section.

“Conflict of interest” means any official action or any decision or recommendation by a person acting in a capacity as a public official, the effect of which would be to the private pecuniary benefit of the person or a member of the person’s household, or a business with which the person or a member of the person’s household is associated . . .

This policy requires that each elected official and department head ensure that each employment situation complies with state law. An elected official may adopt a more restrictive policy, when such policy reflects the business needs of the office or department. Therefore, no employee may directly supervise any person related to him/her within the second degree; which means his or her spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent or grandchild, aunt or uncle, niece or nephew or the same relation by marriage.

Questions related to any situation where nepotism is implicated must be referred to Human Resources, and where necessary, reviewed for compliance by the Prosecuting Attorney.

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#### 2.5.1.17. EMPLOYEE DATING

Blaine County believes that an environment where employees maintain clear boundaries between personal and business interactions is most effective for conducting business. Although this policy does not prevent the development of friendships or romantic relationships between coworkers, it does establish boundaries for relationships that affect the working environment. This policy prohibits romantic relationships between managers and subordinates, because individuals in supervisory roles are subject to more stringent requirements due to their status, their access to sensitive information and their ability to influence others. Employee off-duty conduct is generally regarded as private, as long as such conduct does not create problems within the workplace.

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#### 2.5.2. DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

The County's drug-free workplace policy balances respect for individuals with the need to maintain an alcohol and drug-free environment. Employee involvement with alcohol and other drugs can be very disruptive, adversely affect the quality of work and performance of employees, pose serious health risks to users and others, and have a negative impact on productivity and morale. Blaine County encourages employees to voluntarily seek help with drug and alcohol problems. The consumption of alcohol during work-related social functions held off County property is excluded from this policy.

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#### MANAGER NOTE 2.5.1.16.

##### **NEPOTISM**

Managers, or anyone else in a position having influence over the employment status of others, must disclose the existence of any relationship with a subordinate in their line of supervision or indirect supervision that has progressed beyond a friendship. Disclosure may be made to the department head or supervising elected official. This disclosure will enable management to determine whether any conflict of interest exists because of the relative positions of the individuals involved.

Where problems or potential risks are identified, management will work with the parties involved to consider options for resolving the conflict. The initial solution will be to make sure that the involved parties no longer work together on matters where one is able to influence the other or take action for the other. Matters such as hiring, firing, promotions, performance management, compensation decisions, etc. are examples of situations that may require reallocation of duties to avoid any actual or perceived reward or disadvantage.

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#### 2.5.2.1. PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

It is a violation of the drug-free workplace policy to use, possess, sell, trade, or offer for sale alcohol, illegal drugs or intoxicants while on County property. The illegal or unauthorized use of prescription drugs is also prohibited. It is a violation of the drug-free workplace policy to intentionally misuse or abuse prescription medications.

Prescription and over-the-counter drugs are not prohibited when taken in standard dosage or according to a physician's prescription. Any employee taking prescribed or over-the-counter medications will be expected to consult with their health care provider to ascertain whether the medication may interfere with performance of his/her job. If the use of a medication could compromise the performance or safety of the employee, fellow employees, or the public, it is the employee's responsibility to use appropriate procedures (e.g., sick leave, request change of duty, notify manager) to avoid unsafe workplace practices.

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#### 2.5.2.2. NOTIFICATION OF CONVICTIONS

Any employee who is convicted of a criminal violation must notify Human Resources in writing within five calendar days of the conviction. Blaine County will take appropriate action within 30 days of notification.

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#### 2.5.2.3. DRUG TESTING

Blaine County employees in critical or safety-sensitive positions, as a condition of employment, may be required to participate in pre-employment, random, post-accident, return-to-duty, and follow-up testing upon selection or request of management. All drug-testing information will be maintained in separate confidential records.

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#### 2.5.3. SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE

The County's smoke-free workplace policy balances respect for individuals with the need to provide and maintain a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. The law defines smoking as the "act of lighting, smoking or carrying a lighted or smoldering cigar, cigarette or pipe of any kind."

The smoke-free workplace policy applies to:

- All employees
- All contractors and consultants and/or their employees working on County premises

Smoking is prohibited in the following areas:

- County buildings
- Within fifty (50) feet of County buildings
- Vehicles owned or leased by the County

Smoking is permitted in designated smoking areas.

Employees who violate the smoking policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.



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#### 2.5.4. SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Blaine County is committed to protecting the safety, health and well-being of all employees and other individuals in the workplace. Any employee who notices a safety hazard should report it to their supervisor or Blaine County Facilities Manager immediately.

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##### 2.5.4.1. GENERAL SAFETY

Blaine County expects employees and volunteers to comply with its occupational health and safety policies, procedures and guidelines, and to conduct themselves in a safe manner, not placing themselves or others at undue risk. Managers are responsible for maintaining a safe workplace. Contractors working on County premises are also required to conduct their activities in a manner that ensures the safety, health, and welfare of others.

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##### MANAGER NOTE 2.5.4.1.

###### **GENERAL SAFETY**

Blaine County is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and to eliminating conditions that could result in personal injury or illness. Blaine County recognizes that maintaining a safe workplace is a core management function and best practice entails its full integration into the management of all activities.

Managers are responsible for maintaining a safe workplace. Managers are required to take prompt, appropriate action upon observing or becoming aware of conditions that could result in personal injury or illness. The failure of managers to respond promptly to an observed or reported safety issue, safety policy violation, or occupational health issue may result in disciplinary action against the manager.

The County Administrator is committed to assisting all county departments and offices improve the safety and health of Blaine County employees through incident and injury prevention strategies customized to meet individual department/office needs.

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##### 2.5.4.2. KEY CARD POLICY

Key cards are issued for entry to County buildings for the purpose of conducting County business.

Below is the general policy regarding County-issued key cards:

- Key cards may not to be loaned or made available to others.
- Lost or stolen cards must be immediately reported to Administrative Services.
- Employees may be charged a replacement fee for lost or stolen cards.

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#### 2.5.4.3. PETS AT WORK

In order to protect the safety, health and well-being of all employees and other individuals in the workplace, pets are not permitted in county buildings or in county vehicles. This policy does not apply to service animals.

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#### 2.5.4.4. DRIVER'S LICENSE & INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Individuals authorized to drive a Blaine County vehicle must have a valid driver's license issued in their state of residence for the class of the vehicle being operated. Obtaining a driver's license is a personal expense. The individual's manager should be notified of any license status changes.

Individuals authorized to drive personal vehicles in the course of their employment must have minimum insurance as required by Idaho Statute 49-117. Primary insurance will be the employee's personal insurance and Blaine County's will be secondary per Idaho Statute 6-903.

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#### 2.5.4.5. DRIVER'S LICENSE RECORD REVIEWS

Individuals with job duties that include driving any vehicle, personal or County-owned may be subject to a driver's license record review. Any job offer made to an employee-candidate for a position with driving duties may be contingent upon a driver's license record review in compliance with the required standards. Individual departments and offices may make driver's license record review requests if relevant to and used consistently for the position(s).

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#### 2.5.4.6. VEHICLE USE

The safety and wellbeing of employees is of critical importance. Employees have a responsibility to not only protect themselves when on the road, but also to do their best to protect those around them. Employees driving a vehicle on County business are expected to follow all vehicle safety regulations. County vehicles are for the purposes of conducting County business only.

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#### 2.5.4.7. WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Blaine County is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe work environment. Blaine County has adopted the following guidelines to deal with intimidation, harassment, threats, and acts of violence that may occur during business hours or on its premises.

All employees should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Blaine County encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their managers or Human Resources before the situation escalates into potential violence. Blaine County is eager to assist in the resolution of employee disputes, and will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

### PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, horseplay, or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Firearms, weapons, and other dangerous or hazardous devices or substances are prohibited from the premises of Blaine County facilities without proper authorization. Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or

coerces an employee, vendor, or a member of the public will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes all acts of harassment, as defined by the Blaine County Harassment Policy.

## REPORTING

Any acts of violence or threats of violence should be reported as soon as possible to the immediate manager or Human Resources. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by customers, vendors, solicitors, or other members of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, the employee should be as specific and detailed as possible. All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to a manager. Employees should not place themselves in peril. If an employee sees a disturbance near his or her workstation, the employee should not try to intercede, but rather report the incident immediately.

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### 2.5.5. DRESS CODE

The professional appearance and proper hygiene of employees presents a positive public image. As such, employees should practice good hygiene and report for work in appropriate apparel, in keeping with the work environment. In addition, Blaine County wishes to provide a work environment that is free of safety hazards and harassment of any kind. Therefore, the following items are NOT ACCEPTABLE: bare feet; halter tops; pants, shorts, or skirts worn below the waistline exposing skin; clothing with profanity, offensive pictures, or sexually suggestive slogans or drawings; or the observable lack of undergarments and exposed undergarments. Employees should remember that they represent Blaine County and dress accordingly.

Managers reserve the right to send home any employee who violates any part of the dress code policy in order for them to change clothes. The time spent away from work for this reason will not count toward hours worked.

Individual departments and offices may set more specific and detailed dress codes in keeping with the type of work performed.

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### 2.5.6. PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

The performance appraisal provides a means for discussing, planning and reviewing the performance of each employee. Performance appraisals influence salaries, promotions and transfers, so it is critical that managers be objective in conducting performance appraisals and in assigning overall performance ratings.

Regular performance appraisals:

- Help employees understand their responsibilities and duties.
- Provide criteria by which performance will be evaluated and suggest ways in which employees can improve performance.
- Help managers distribute and achieve departmental goals.
- Provide a fair basis for awarding compensation based on merit.

Employee performance appraisals should, at a minimum, address the following performance factors: Blaine County vision and shared values, knowledge, skills and abilities, quality of work, quantity of work, work habits, and communication. A performance appraisal should also include the following behavioral factors: dependability, cooperation, initiative, adaptability, judgment, attendance and punctuality. Individual offices

may include additional performance categories, if relevant to the position and used consistently in evaluating all employees in that job classification.

Performance appraisals are to be conducted on an annual basis. Each manager is responsible for the timely and equitable assessment of the performance and contribution of his/her employees. Upon completing the appraisal, the manager should meet with the employee and discuss the appraisal. During this meeting, there should be an opportunity for employees to ask questions and receive answers about their appraisal. The employee will be permitted to make written comments on the performance appraisal form. The performance appraisal will be signed by the employee and the direct manager, and verify that the strengths, areas for improvement and job goals for the next review period are clearly communicated.

The appraisals are then to be forwarded through line of supervision and maintained in the employee's personnel file, with a copy of the appraisal sent to Human Resources. Managers should provide employees a copy of their performance appraisal. If the employee disagrees with an appraisal and believes the rating or comment is inaccurate or unjustified, and resolution cannot be achieved during this meeting, the employee may utilize the conflict resolution policy within the specified timeframes.

## 2.6. COUNTY RESOURCES

### 2.6.1. USE OF COUNTY RESOURCES

Blaine County resources, including time, material, equipment and information, are provided for County business use. Employees and those who represent Blaine County are trusted to behave responsibly and use good judgment to conserve County resources. Department heads and elected officials are responsible for the resources assigned to their departments/offices and are empowered to resolve issues concerning their proper use. Questions about the proper use of County resources should be directed to the appropriate department head, elected official, or County Administrator.

Employees should use County resources (including official seals, logos, or emblems) only in an official capacity.

When operating under a County Disaster Declaration, department heads, elected officials or the County Administrator have the ability to make purchases with the understanding that disaster-related purchases are automatically authorized.

### 2.6.2. INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Blaine County provides information systems to employees, contractors, and volunteers for the exclusive purpose of providing services and conducting county affairs for the good of the county's citizens. Information systems include computers and associated peripherals, telephones and telephone services, office equipment, as well as electronic services, such as email, voicemail, instant messaging, Internet connectivity, and World Wide Web access.

Employees and those who represent the County are trusted to act responsibly and use good judgment when using County resources. Department heads and elected officials are responsible for the resources assigned to their departments/offices and are empowered to resolve issues concerning their proper use. Questions about the proper use of County resources should be directed to the appropriate department head or elected official.

#### 2.6.2.1. APPROPRIATE USE

Blaine County requires employees to observe local, state and federal laws and regulations, including prohibitions on defamation, discrimination, harassment, insider trading, anti-competitive behavior, and unauthorized transmission, receipt, or use of licensed or copyrighted material. Unlawful use of information systems is always outside the scope of appropriate use and may result in discipline up to and including termination or cancellation of the work contract.

Messages on Blaine County information systems including email, voicemail, instant messaging and other communication systems are not to contain offensive, harassing, or discriminatory content. Additionally, employees, contractors, and volunteers may not intentionally visit inappropriate web sites including, but not limited to, those which contain pornography, violence advocacy, gambling, or other inappropriate content.

Any inappropriate content received should be immediately deleted and under no circumstance forwarded on to anyone else.

Blaine County prohibits the illegal duplication of licensed or copyrighted programs for any reason. Anyone engaging in the illegal reproduction of software may be subject to civil damages and criminal penalties. Under no circumstances should a program be installed, copied, or duplicated to or from any Blaine County computer or network disk without the explicit knowledge and approval of the Information Technology (IT) department.

Every computer at Blaine County has been designed and assembled to strict specifications, making it as efficient as possible while operating within the County's information systems. Any modification or attempted modification of a County computer is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, installing or removing hardware, installing Windows or 3<sup>rd</sup> party programs, modifying permissions on computer or network drives and creating or modifying computer or network drive sharing without the approval of the IT department.

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#### 2.6.2.2. PERSONAL USE

Personal use of email, voicemail, the Internet, computers or other electronic or non-electronic communications systems should be limited, infrequent and take place during lunch or break. Use of County information systems for filing personal taxes, managing personal businesses, campaigning for public office or lobbying for any entity besides Blaine County is not permitted. Use of Blaine County information systems or services that interferes with an employee's work performance, the work performance of another employee, or results in additional costs or liability to Blaine County is prohibited.

In order to contain the cost of fee-based communications long distance phone service should be limited to Blaine County business only. An exception is granted to Blaine County employees who are traveling on business.

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#### 2.6.2.3. PRIVACY NOT ENSURED

All information systems and data or information resulting from their use, including documents, graphics, maps, programs, web pages and messages that are created or stored on County systems are the properties of Blaine County and are subject to review by Blaine County at any time.

Employees, contractors, and volunteers who use Blaine County information systems should understand that County records are subject to public disclosure and Blaine County cannot guarantee the privacy of communications transmitted or stored on these systems. Blaine County reserves the right to view the contents of information systems at any time without notice, including, but not limited to, inspecting email messages, voicemail messages, and other electronic or non-electronic communications. The existence of a password on these systems is not intended to indicate that messages will remain private.

Employees should be aware that even when a message has been deleted, it may still be possible to retrieve it from a backup system. Therefore, employees should not assume a message has remained private because it has been deleted.

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#### 2.6.2.4. E-MAIL & INTERNET

Use of email and Internet on Blaine County computers is to promote business-related communications and/or facilitation of County work. The computers belong to the County and are provided to employees for the purpose of the work of the County and its agencies. Employees have no right to privacy with regard to their use of the County computer system and computers, including the use of email and Internet.

Employees should refrain from using email and Internet for non-work-related purposes. Prohibited email usage includes, but is not limited to, distribution of chain letters, inappropriate humor, unprofessional comments, vulgar language, offensive graphics and images or language that may offend someone on the basis of age, race, sex, religion, national origin or disability. Prohibited Internet sites include, but are not limited to, those containing offensive graphics, images, or language. Downloading of copyrighted, protected materials or software is strictly prohibited.

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#### 2.6.2.5. CELL PHONE SERVICE AND EQUIPMENT

##### CELL PHONES, PDAS AND SMART PHONES

Elected officials and department heads may have a county owned cell phone or participate in an allowance program. Department heads may authorize county cell phones or phone allowances for employees if the employee meets the following criteria:

- Employee is “in the field” and away from his or her desk more than 40% of a given work week.
- Employee may need to be reached outside of the typical workday on an immediate basis.
- Wireless PDAs or Smart Phones are limited to individuals who are away from their workstation considerable amounts of time (40% or more) in a given day and/or need the technology to perform job related tasks.

The elected official or department head will notify the IT Department by completing the Phone Authorization form that he or she has authorized the procurement of an employee cell phone. The employee will submit a written request stating the service and equipment approved by the manager. The county does not pay accounts that are not authorized. Individuals not employed by the county may not be added to the county account.

##### EMPLOYEE-OWNED DEVICES

Authorized employees may receive a cell phone allowance if they purchase, own, and maintain a cellular device that is used for official county business. Employees authorized for a cell phone will be provided with an allowance through the Clerk’s Office to be applied towards the employee’s cell phone service. Employees may utilize any cellular phone service plan available. The phone and service remain the responsibility of the employee and not the county.

## COUNTY-OWNED DEVICES

The county will purchase, own, and maintain authorized cell phones, smart phones, and other communications equipment. Communication devices and service plans that are owned by the County are managed by the IT Department and the Clerk's Office. New hardware may be replaced or upgraded as outlined in the WSCA contract. Please check with the IT Department for the equipment replacement schedule.

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### 2.6.2.6. INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY

Email, voicemail, or other communication or computer systems are to be accessed only by the intended recipient or the creator or by others at the direct request of the intended recipient or creator. Any attempt by persons to access messages or documents on such systems, including any form of hacking, cracking, or network monitoring, will constitute a violation of Blaine County policy and may result in discipline up to and including termination or cancellation of the work contract.

Access controls in the form of a user profile and password have been set up to prevent the unauthorized use of data. Users will be able to access only those computers, network drives and files that are specifically included in their profile. Users are required to protect their password and should never disclose it. Additionally, as a precaution, computer systems will prompt users to change their password every 6 months. If a user's password is needed by the IT department to perform maintenance, the system will be set to require the user to change their password after the maintenance is complete. If a user suspects someone else knows their password, he/she should change it immediately and notify their manager and the IT department.

To facilitate the recovery of deleted or corrupt data the IT Department performs nightly backups of all data stored on the shared network drives H:\, I:\, J:\ K:\, and U:\. All data files should be stored on these network drives and not on the hard drive of desktop or laptop computers. Data not stored on network drives cannot be recovered in the event it is deleted or becomes corrupt.

Use of personal computers and data storage devices including, but not limited to, USB drives, thumb drives, and flash drives may only be attached to Blaine County's computers or internal networks with the express approval of the appropriate elected official or department head and the IT department.

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### 2.6.2.7. INFORMATION SYSTEMS TRAINING

Blaine County is committed to ensuring its information systems are protected from cybersecurity attacks. Due to the increasing frequency and severity of cybersecurity attacks, Blaine County is making cybersecurity training mandatory for all employees in order to maintain the county's liability insurance coverage.

All employees are required to complete all assigned cybersecurity trainings. Training requirement notices will be emailed by Blaine County IT or the Administrative Services Department. Trainings are required to be issued on a monthly basis and can include phishing tests, interactive trainings and games, educational videos and newsletters.



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#### 2.6.2.8. PERSONAL TELEPHONE CALLS

Blaine County recognizes that employees will occasionally need to place and receive personal phone calls during the workday. In all cases, personal calls should be minimal, whether the calls are placed or received using County phones or personal cell phones. Receiving and placing excessive personal calls is disruptive to others. If at all possible, calls should be limited to allotted breaks. Excessive work time spent on personal calls is considered a misuse of employee's work time and taxpayer funds; therefore, abuse is subject to disciplinary action. All personal cell phones and other communication devices are required to be kept in silent mode or turned off while employees are on duty, unless used for County business.

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#### 2.6.3. USE OF COUNTY CREDIT CARDS

Blaine County allows for the issuance of County credit cards in the names of employees with a need for them. It is the responsibility of each person holding a County credit card to use it in the best interest of Blaine County.

Each individual entrusted with a County credit card is expected to monitor the use of the card, including the following:

- Ensure each purchase made with the County credit card is for county benefit.
- Monitor the balance of the card, ensuring the maximum allowed balance is not reached.
- Keep a receipt of each transaction and submit that receipt to the Accounts Payable Clerk.
- If allowing a co-worker to use the card, monitor that use to comply with the above.

If an "over-limit" fee is incurred, it will be the responsibility of the card holder to pay the fee. Any misuse of County credit cards may be prosecuted.

Having a County credit card is a privilege and misuse or failure to comply with the above policy will result in having the card revoked.

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#### 2.6.4. TRAVEL AND MEAL PER DIEM POLICY

It is the policy of Blaine County to pay for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in connection with approved travel on behalf of the County. The County strongly encourages use of travel discounts when making travel arrangements.

Travelers should research travel destinations on the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) website to review Per Diem rates before making any reservations. The County will compensate employees based on Per Diem rates located on GSA's website.

Travelers should endeavor to incur the lowest reasonable travel expenses when traveling. Compensation from the County is allowed only when it is not available from other sources. If a circumstance arises that is not specifically covered in the travel policies, the most conservative course of action should be followed.

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#### 2.6.4.1. AUTHORIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

An individual may not approve his/her own travel and/or reimbursement. Authorizing signatures include elected officials, County Administrator and department heads. Designated approval authorities are required to review all travel requests. If there is reason to believe any expenditure is inappropriate or extravagant it should not be approved.

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#### 2.6.4.2. PERSONAL FUNDS

Travelers should review compensation guidelines before traveling to determine if such expenses are allowable. The County reserves the right to deny compensation for travel-related expenses for unauthorized travel. Travelers should not use personal funds to facilitate travel arrangements except in emergencies.

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#### 2.6.4.3. VACATION IN CONJUNCTION WITH BUSINESS TRAVEL

In cases where vacation time is added to a business trip, any cost variance in airfare, car rental, and/or lodging must be clearly identified on the Travel Expense form and will not be paid by the County. The County will not prepay any personal expenses with the intention of being “repaid” at a later time. No personal expenses will be reimbursed.

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#### 2.6.4.4. EXCEPTIONS

Occasionally it may be necessary for travelers to request exceptions to Blaine County Travel and Meal Per Diem Policies. Requests for exceptions to these policies must be made in writing and approved by an elected official, County Administrator, or department head.

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#### 2.6.4.5. TRAVEL EXPENSES AND PROCESS

Authorized business travel for staff must be pre-approved by an elected official, the County Administrator, or department head.

Reimbursement for parking, gasoline, ferry and/or bus passes requires a Travel Expense form accompanied by a Claim form and receipts. Payment of County credit cards will require the same documentation as reimbursements.

In advance of the travel, the County will issue prepayments for airfare, rail transportation, rental vehicles, conference registration fees, meals and incidental Per Diem. Applicable policies and methods of payments for these prepayments follow.

**AIRFARE** – Travelers are expected to obtain the lowest available airfare that reasonably meets business travel needs. Airfare must be approved by an elected official, the County Administrator, or department head.

- Travelers are encouraged to book flights at least 30 days in advance to avoid premium airfare pricing. First class tickets are not allowed.
- Coach class or economy tickets must be purchased. A higher-priced coach ticket cannot be purchased for a subsequent upgrade in seating.

- A less than first class ticket (i.e. business class) may be purchased at Blaine County discretion for flights (defined as flight time exceeding 5 consecutive hours – excluding layovers).
- Airfare should be purchased with a County credit card or check, after Travel Expense form approval by an elected official, the County Administrator, or department head.

**RAILWAY TRANSPORTATION** – The County will prepay rail transportation providing the cost does not exceed the cost of the least expensive airfare.

**RENTAL VEHICLES** – The County will pay for approved use of a rental vehicle.

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES** – Conference registration fees should be prepaid with a County check or credit card authorized by an elected official, County Administrator, or department head with a Travel Expense form. Business related banquets or meals that are considered part of the conference can be paid with the registration fees; however, such meals must be deducted from the traveler's Per Diem allowance. See Meals (Per Diem) and review GSA's Per Diem rates for more detail.

**TRAVEL ADVANCES** – Cash advances are authorized for specific situations that might cause undue financial hardship for business travelers. These situations are limited to staff traveling on behalf of Blaine County. Travel Advances will be based off of GSA's Per Diem rates for meals and incidentals.

Travel advances are processed by submitting a completed Travel Expense form.

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#### 2.6.4.6. REIMBURSEMENT

Reimbursements are discouraged. All travel should be pre-approved and prepaid, or a County credit card should be used. All requests for reimbursements of travel related expenses will be submitted on a Travel Expense form. This form must be accompanied by supporting documentation such as receipts and/or GSA's Per Diem rates specific to that destination.

The Travel Expense form and Claim form must be submitted to the Clerk's Office within two weeks after the trip was completed. If forms are not submitted within this time frame exception approval is required from an elected official, County Administrator or department head.

Compensation of travel expenses is based on documentation of reasonable and actual expenses supported by the original, itemized receipts where required. Reimbursements that may be paid by Blaine County are shown below.

**AIRFARE** – If the airfare was not prepaid by the department or Clerks Office, an original itemized airline receipt, an e-ticket receipt/statements, or an Internet receipt/statement is required. The receipt must show the method of payment and indicate that payment was made.

Travelers are expected to obtain the lowest available airfare that reasonably meets business travel needs. Travelers are encouraged to book flights at least 30 days in advance to avoid premium pricing.

Coach class or economy tickets must be purchased for flights (defined as flight time totaling less than 5 consecutive hours – excluding layovers). A higher-priced coach ticket cannot be purchased for a subsequent upgrade in seating.

A less than first class ticket (i.e. business class) may be purchased at Blaine County's discretion for flights (defined as flight time exceeding 5 consecutive hours – excluding layovers).

In any case, first class tickets are not reimbursable.

**RAIL TRANSPORTATION** – Blaine County will pay for rail transportation providing the cost does not exceed the cost of the least expensive airfare. Reasonable accommodations will be made to employees that have medical conditions that hinder them from traveling by air.

If rail transportation was not prepaid, an original itemized receipt, original e-ticket receipt/statement or Internet receipt/statement is required. The receipt must show the method of payment and indicate that payment was made.

#### **AUTOMOBILE – LOCAL USE**

**County-Owned Vehicles** – Use of a county-owned vehicle is preferred over employees using their personal vehicles for County business. The County has several vehicles available for general use when traveling locally. Procedures have been developed and must be adhered to regarding check out, use and refueling of these vehicles.

**Privately-Owned Vehicles** – Privately-owned vehicles may be used for County business with manager approval and when a County vehicle is unavailable or use of a personal vehicle is more practical. Mileage reimbursement for use of a privately-owned vehicle will follow the federal Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Mileage Reimbursement Rates in effect at the time of travel. Current rates can be found on the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) website at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/transportation-airfare-pov-etc/privately-owned-vehicle-pov-mileage-reimbursement-rates>. If a County vehicle is available for the time of travel, the mileage will be reimbursed at the lower “If Government-furnished automobile is available” rate per mile.

A valid driver’s license issued within the United States and personal automobile insurance meeting statutory requirements are required for expenses to be reimbursed. Drivers should be aware of the extent of coverage (if any) provided by his/her automobile insurance company for travel that is business or not personal in nature. County credit cards may not be used for the purchase of fuel for personal vehicles.

#### **AUTOMOBILE – RENTAL WHILE TRAVELING**

Blaine County authorizes reimbursement for entry-level or the most economic vehicle available. In certain circumstances larger vehicles may be rented, with manager approval. The rental agreement must clearly show the date, the points of departure/arrival, as well as the total cost. Drivers must adhere to the rental requirements and restrictions must be followed. Original receipts are required.

Drivers should be aware of the extent of coverage (if any) provided by his/her automobile insurance company for travel that is business or not personal in nature.

Original receipts for parking fees, tolls, and other incidental costs associated with the vehicle usage that are not covered by the rental agreement must be provided to be reimbursed.

Travelers are strongly encouraged to fill the gas tank before returning the vehicle to the rental agency to avoid service fees and more expensive fuel rates.

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES** – If the conference fee was not prepaid, Blaine County will reimburse these fees, including business related banquets or meals that are part of the conference registration. Original receipts to support the payment are required. If the conference does not provide a receipt, a cancelled check, credit card slip/statement, or documentation that the amount was paid is required for reimbursement.

A pro-rated amount for the meals provided must be deducted from the traveler's meal Per Diem. See Meals (Per Diem) and GSA's website for more detail. Entertainment activities such as golf outings and sightseeing tours will not be reimbursed.

**LODGING (commercial)** – The cost of overnight lodging (room rate and tax only) will be reimbursed to the traveler if the authorized travel is 45 miles or more from the traveler's home or primary work site.

Exceptions to this restriction may be approved in writing by the elected official, County Administrator, or department head.

Blaine County will reimburse lodging expenses based on GSA's Per Diem rate related to the specific destination. When the hotel or motel is the conference or convention site, reimbursement will be limited to the conference rate.

Only single room rates are authorized for payment or reimbursement unless the second party is representing the agency in an authorized capacity. If the lodging receipt shows more than a single occupancy, the single room rate must be noted. If reimbursement for more than the single room rate is requested, the name of the second person must be included.

**Meals (Per Diem)** – Meal Per Diem allowances should be given to the traveler before the trip, but can be reimbursed after the trip is completed. Receipts are not required for Per Diem allowances for meals.

Blaine County Per Diem rates are based on the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Guidelines that vary by city location.

Single Day Travel: Per Diem is calculated by including only the specific meals according to the following chart by travel times. The \$5.00 incidental amount is not included in single day travel.

Travel departure by 7:00 a.m. - Breakfast  
Travel through at least 1:00 p.m. - Lunch  
Travel through at least 7:00 p.m. - Dinner

Transport Per Diem is at the discretion of the Blaine County Sheriff.

Multiple Day Travel: First and last day Per Diem is payable up to 75% of the full-day rate. If departure on the first day is in the afternoon or evening, dinner Per Diem only is provided. If return time on the last day is prior to 7:00 p.m., breakfast, lunch and incidental Per Diem are provided (see above chart for guidelines). The travel days between the first and last days are at the full-day rate, which, in addition to meals, includes incidental expenses such as laundry, dry cleaning and service tips (i.e. meal, housekeeping, porters, etc.).

If a free meal, other than a continental breakfast, is served on the plane, included in a conference registration fee, built in to the standard, single hotel room rate or replaced by a legitimate business meal, the Per Diem allowance for that meal will not be allowed. This is to be calculated by deducting the free meal from the full-day rate.

**BUSINESS MEALS** – Travelers are required to follow Blaine County expenditure policies when requesting reimbursement for business meals. Original itemized receipts are required.

**BUSINESS EXPENSES** – Business expenses including faxes, photocopies, Internet charges, data ports, and business telephone calls incurred while on travel status can be reimbursed. Original itemized receipts are required.

**PARKING** – Original receipts are required for parking fees (including airport parking). The lodging bill can be used as a receipt when charges are included as part of the overnight stay.

**TELEPHONE CALLS** – The costs of personal telephone calls are the responsibility of the individual. The County will pay for one 10-minute long-distance call per day by an employee when he/she is traveling on official business outside of Blaine County.

**TOLLS** – Original receipts are required.

**MISCELLANEOUS TRANSPORTATION** – Original receipts are required for taxi, bus, subway, metro, ferry, and other modes of transportation.

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#### 2.6.4.7. TRAVEL EXPENSES NOT REIMBURSABLE

The following items that may be associated with business travel will not be reimbursed by Blaine County:

- Airline club memberships and upgrades.
- Child-care, babysitting, house-sitting, pet-sitting/kennel charges.
- Commuting between home and campus.
- Costs incurred by traveler's failure to cancel travel or hotel reservations in a timely fashion.
- Evening or formal wear expenses.
- Haircuts and personal grooming.
- Passports, vaccinations, and visas when not required as a specific and necessary condition of the travel assignment.
- Personal entertainment expenses including in-flight movies, headsets, health club facilities, hotel pay-per-view movies, in-theatre movies, social activities and related incidental costs.
- Travel accident insurance premiums and/or purchase of additional travel insurance.
- Other expenses not directly related to the business travel.

#### MANAGER NOTE 2.6.4.

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##### **TRAVEL EXPENSE FORM**

The Travel Expense form allows managers and employees to request compensation when traveling for County business.

- Authorized business travel for employees must be pre-approved.
- An individual may not approve his/her own travel and/or reimbursement.
- The Travel Expense form must be accompanied with GSA's Per Diem rates for hotels, meals, and incidentals based on the traveler's destination when turned into the Clerk's Office for compensation.
- The Travel Expense form must be accompanied with documentation that the traveler made or will make the trip.
- Blaine County will compensate employees based on Per Diem rates located on GSA's website.
- County credit cards may be used only for reimbursable items.

## 2.7. DISCIPLINE & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

### 2.7.1. GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINE

Employees are expected to conduct themselves professionally and to comply at all times with all policies contained in this Handbook. Any violation may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Employees of Blaine County are at-will and nothing in this policy should be construed to imply otherwise. The County retains the right to terminate employees at any time, with or without cause. The County is committed to ensuring all such decisions are made in compliance with and in consideration of applicable employment laws. Lesser disciplinary actions may be used when appropriate, because it is often in the County's and the employee's best interest that the employee be retained and provided opportunities for improvement in behavior and performance. Specific examples of potential violations are listed below. This is a list for general reference and should not be considered all-inclusive:

- Failure to perform the position duties; failure to meet work standards or interfering with another employee's efforts to meet work standards.
- Failure to adhere to federal or state statutes, Blaine County Code, or the policies of his or her department or office.
- Unauthorized access, possession and/or willful destruction of County property, or of the property of a fellow employee.
- Threatening or attempting bodily injury to another on County premises or any violation of the workplace violence prevention policy.

- Falsifying official records or documents, including timesheets, or failing to properly complete required reporting.
- Loitering, loafing, or sleeping during scheduled working hours, or leaving the work area without permission of one's manager.
- Disobedience, insubordination, or refusal to accept a reasonable and proper assignment from an authorized manager.
- Absenteeism or tardiness; abuse of leave policies; or working unauthorized overtime.
- Misstatement or deception in application for employment or promotion, or failure to obtain or maintain a current license or certificate required as a condition of performance of duties.
- Conviction of misconduct in office or conviction of a felony.
- Being under the influence of any form of drug, alcohol or controlled substance while on duty, or any violation of the County's drug-free workplace policy.
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or non-public information.
- Impeding, interfering with, or failing to cooperate in an official internal or external investigation conducted by or at the request of the County.
- Acceptance of gifts or money in exchange for influence or favors given in an official capacity.

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### 2.7.2. DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Retaining employees and providing opportunities for improvement in behavior and performance are often in the County's, as well as the employee's, best interest. For this reason, progressive discipline should be utilized whenever possible.

The following actions are among the disciplinary steps that may be taken in response to policy violations:

- Oral warning
- Written warning or reprimand
- Suspension without pay
- Demotion
- Dismissal

The policies outlined in the Handbook are intended to provide guidance to all Blaine County employees and managers. Nothing in these policies should be construed as an employment contract or as a guarantee of continued employment.

Prior to implementing a disciplinary action, the manager should evaluate:

- The facts surrounding the episode or incident. An incident or infraction should be thoroughly investigated regardless of how the situation appears initially.
- The training the employee received regarding the work rules and consequences of failing to follow those rules.
- The performance history of the employee with the County.
- The effect of the employee's behavior/performance on day-to-day operations.
- The corrective actions taken for other employees in the past in similar situations.

Once the manager determines disciplinary action is necessary, he/she should:

- Using the Progressive Discipline form, begin documentation of the situation. The Progressive Discipline form should be completely filled out prior to meeting with the employee. The documentation should include the following information:



- All applicable details regarding the situation.
- The effect of the conduct as it relates to performance, job-related behavior or interference with office/department operations.
- The action(s) that will be taken because of the incident.
- The action(s) that will be taken in the future if another infraction occurs.
- Schedule a disciplinary meeting with the employee for an appropriate time and place. The meeting should be held in a private meeting room, not in front of other employees or where the meeting could be overheard by other employees. However, another member of management or Human Resources should be present in the disciplinary meeting with the employee.
- Allow the employee the opportunity to review the disciplinary write-up and provide him/her a chance to respond and explain the infraction.
- Listen carefully and take notes of the employee's response.
- Conclude the discussion and determine what will happen from that point.
- Work with the employee to develop a Performance Improvement Plan and document the expected improvements in performance on the form.
- Refer the employee to the Employee Assistance Program, if appropriate.
- Monitor the employee's performance and progress and continue to meet regularly with the employee as appropriate to discuss his/her progress.
- Complete the Progressive Discipline form for every employee counseling.

Managers contemplating serious disciplinary actions, such as demotion or termination, must discuss the issue with their department head or elected official and Human Resources prior to implementing disciplinary action. For departments reporting to the Board of County Commissioners, Human Resources must be present in any disciplinary meeting resulting in an employee's termination.

Whenever possible, an employee should be given an opportunity to submit a written response to the disciplinary matters that are under consideration prior to a final decision of demotion or termination.

#### MANAGER NOTE 2.7.2.

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##### **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE FORM**

The Progressive Discipline form allows managers the ability to document employee counseling and develop a Performance Improvement Plan for the specific employee.

- Complete the Progressive Discipline form for every employee counseling.
- Employee or manager can request that Human Resources attend the counseling.
- It is preferred that any disciplinary action be reviewed by Human Resources before the counseling.
- After employee counseling the Progressive Discipline form will be filed in the employee's personnel file.

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### 2.7.3. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

It is Blaine County's intent to be responsive to employees' concerns. Conflicts or misunderstandings can arise in any organization and should be resolved before serious problems develop. Employees are strongly encouraged to attempt to address any concerns they may have with their manager directly, either in person or in writing. The conflict resolution policy and procedures are the method by which this may be accomplished if all other efforts to resolve the situation have been exhausted, or if the employee is uncomfortable with handling the situation directly.

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#### 2.7.3.1. HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION

If the conflict or complaint is related to a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), or is related to a claim of discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, citizenship, veteran's status or sexual orientation, the employee should file a harassment claim under the Blaine County harassment policy, regardless of the employee's length of employment.

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#### 2.7.3.2. SUBMITTING A COMPLAINT

The conflict resolution policy involves working up the line of supervision, starting with the immediate manager. The employee should submit the request for conflict resolution to their immediate manager. If the immediate manager is out of the office, the employee should submit the request to the next level of management. The request should be submitted on the Conflict Resolution form. The form requires details regarding the conflict or complaint, parties involved in the conflict, and possible solutions to the conflict.

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#### 2.7.3.3. TIMEFRAMES

To ensure conflicts are resolved quickly, employees must submit the conflict resolution request as soon as possible after becoming aware of the issue. The employee's immediate manager must then notify Human Resources of the situation. Together, the manager and Human Resources will work to ensure the situation is resolved in a timely fashion.

Conflicts not resolved may proceed up the line of supervision until resolved, or if not resolved through the line of supervision process, until the supervising elected official makes a final decision.

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#### 2.7.3.4. DECISION

The decision of the elected official in charge of said office or department will be final in each case. Final decisions must be provided in writing by the manager and a copy must be given to the employee and a copy of the final resolution must be provided to Human Resources for placement in the employee's personnel file.

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#### 2.7.4. WHISTLEBLOWER

A whistleblower is an employee who reports waste or a violation of a law, rule or regulation to his/her department head, elected official or Human Resources. The employee is not responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures. As much as possible, the confidentiality of the whistleblower will be maintained. However, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with the law.

Blaine County may not take adverse action against an employee because he/she communicates in good faith the existence of any waste of public funds, property or manpower, or a violation or suspected violation of a law, rule or regulation. The employee must communicate the information in a timely manner which gives Blaine County reasonable opportunity to correct the waste or violation.

An employee communicates in good faith if there is a reasonable basis in fact for the communication. Good faith is lacking where the employee knew or reasonably ought to have known that the report is malicious, false or frivolous. An employee who intentionally files a false or frivolous report of wrongdoing will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Blaine County may not take adverse action against an employee because an employee participates in an investigation, hearing, court proceeding, legislative or other inquiry.

Any employee who believes he/she has been subjected to adverse action in violation of this policy must contact Human Resources immediately. The protection against adverse action does not include immunity for any personal violations of policy or law. For more information about the protection of public employees who report waste and violations of law, please see Idaho Code § 6-2101 through § 6-2109.

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#### 2.7.5. DISCRIMINATION / HARASSMENT REPORTING & INVESTIGATIONS

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##### 2.7.5.1. REPORTING

Employees may discuss the concern with the offending party, but if uncomfortable doing so, or if the unwelcome conduct has not stopped following efforts to resolve the issue, the employee should report the conduct as soon as possible to a manager or to Human Resources. The report may be made either verbally or in writing. If a complaint is made verbally, the employee will be asked to confirm the written notes of said report to ensure accuracy and completeness.

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##### 2.7.5.2. DEPARTMENT/OFFICE RESPONSIBILITY

Departments or offices that observe suspected instances of discrimination or harassment, or that receive a report of such conduct, must contact Human Resources within three (3) business days.

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##### 2.7.5.3. CONFIDENTIALITY

Management is responsible for assisting and cooperating in any investigation that is conducted, and maintaining confidentiality on a need-to-know basis. Employees should refrain from discussing the situation with other employees who are not tasked with either investigating or resolving the situation.

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**2.7.5.4. INVESTIGATION**

Human Resources will promptly investigate any reports of harassment or discrimination. Blaine County may choose to place employees on leave, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

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**2.7.5.5. CONCLUSION**

Upon the conclusion of an investigation, Human Resources will retain the original investigative report in confidential Human Resources files. If an employee is disciplined for violating the policy, a copy of the disciplinary notice will be placed in his or her permanent personnel file.

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**2.7.5.6. FORMAL INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS**

Offices or departments that conduct formal internal investigations of misconduct may investigate claims of discrimination as prescribed by the regulations set forth by such department. The office or department conducting the investigation must notify Human Resources of the complaint as soon as possible and that their office will be conducting the investigation. Upon the conclusion of the investigation, the investigating office will forward a copy of the investigation findings to Human Resources.

## 2.8.SEPARATIONS

### 2.8.1. EMPLOYEE TERMINATION

Employees may be given warning that they are in jeopardy of losing their jobs. Blaine County reserves the right under employment-at-will to terminate an employee when it considers the termination to be in the best interests of the County. The County is committed to ensuring all such decisions are in compliance with and consideration of, applicable employment laws. It is County policy to ensure that employee terminations are handled in a professional manner with minimal disruption to ongoing work functions.

#### 2.8.1.1. VOLUNTARY TERMINATION

Voluntary termination of employment occurs when an employee informs his or her manager of employee's resignation, or when an employee is absent from work for three consecutive workdays and fails to contact his or her manager (job abandonment).

#### RESIGNATION

As a courtesy, employees are asked to provide the County at least two weeks' notice of their intention to separate in order to allow a reasonable amount of time to transfer ongoing workloads. Employees are asked to provide a letter of resignation to their manager and to provide a copy of the resignation letter to Human Resources.

#### RETIREMENT

Employees who wish to retire are asked to notify their manager and Payroll in writing at least one (1) month before planned retirement date.

#### 2.8.1.2. INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION

Employees of Blaine County are employed on an at-will basis, and the County retains the right to terminate employees at any time. Involuntary terminations may occur for any reason, including, but not limited to, lack of work, organizational restructuring, or for unacceptable performance, personal conduct, and reasons specifically listed under the Grounds for Discipline Policy. In some cases, progressive disciplinary steps may be used, prior to termination, to correct a performance problem. However, certain types of employee misconduct are such that one incident of misconduct will result in immediate dismissal without prior disciplinary steps.

#### 2.8.1.3. EXIT INTERVIEW

Separating employees will be contacted by Human Resources for an exit interview in order to obtain information about his/her work environment and reasons for leaving. The exit interview provides employees the opportunity to freely express views about working at the County. Human Resources will hold the shared information in strict confidence, except when the information may indicate a violation of law or a threat to safety. Human Resources will compile data from exit interviews to determine trends and opportunities for feedback and training.

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#### 2.8.1.4. AUTOMATIC TERMINATION

An employee, who has not returned to full-duty status from an authorized leave of absence within one (1) year of the beginning of such leave, will be automatically terminated. This period will be extended for up to two (2) years for those who were injured, hospitalized or convalescing following a period of service in the uniformed services governed by the provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). An employee will be considered unable to return to work if he or she cannot perform the essential functions of the job in full capacity, with or without reasonable accommodation. Under no circumstances may an employee be absent from the workplace for more than one (1) consecutive year, unless on approved Military Leave or with approval of the Board of County Commissioners.

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#### 2.8.1.5. DECEASED EMPLOYEES

A termination due to the death of an employee will be effective as of the date of death. Upon learning of the death of an employee, the manager should submit a PAF to process the employee separation.

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#### 2.8.1.6. FINAL PAY

All employees leaving Blaine County employment will be paid through the last day of work, plus any accrued vacation, comp, holiday, and sick leave. Any remaining vacation, comp, or holiday leave will be paid at 100% of the accrual. Any remaining sick leave will be paid at 25% of the accrual.

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#### 2.8.1.7. HEALTH INSURANCE

For information regarding the termination of health benefits upon separation from the County, please contact Payroll.

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#### 2.8.1.8. REEMPLOYMENT

Former employees who left Blaine County in good standing may be considered for reemployment. An application must be submitted and the applicant must meet all minimum qualifications and requirements of the position, including any qualifying exams. Former employees may be considered for either rehire or reinstatements, as described below.

#### REHIRE

Rehired employees begin benefits just as any other new employee. Previous tenure will not be considered in calculating longevity, leave accruals or any other benefits, except as required under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). However, previous tenure may affect other non-Blaine County benefits, such as those provided by the Public Employee Retirement System of Idaho (PERSI).

#### REINSTATEMENT

Former employees who return to Blaine County within one (1) year of the termination of employment may be reinstated at the discretion of the department head or elected official. Reinstated employees will have an

adjusted hire date to include their previous years of service with the County. Vacation accruals will be based on their adjusted hire date.

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#### 2.8.1.9. LAYOFF

Employees may be laid off for any reason including, but not limited to, changes in duties, organizational changes, lack of funds, or lack of work. Employees will be selected for layoff based on objective criteria, which will be established with the County Administrator prior to implementing layoffs. If meeting the objective criteria, employees on leave, whether with or without pay, will be included in the layoff.

Employees selected for layoff will be given as much notice as is required by law or as much as is reasonable under the circumstances.

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#### 2.8.1.10. UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

Blaine County is able to control the cost of unemployment compensation by being responsive to claims. Failure to respond in a timely manner may result in unemployment compensation awards to former and/or current employees who otherwise would not qualify. Managers should forward any unemployment insurance claims to Human Resources as soon as possible. Human Resources will research each claim as necessary and advise the manager on documentation needed and, if applicable, unemployment hearing attendance requirements.

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#### MANAGER NOTE 2.8.

##### **SAFETY & SECURITY**

In order to maintain high levels of safety and security and to protect County assets, it is the responsibility of each office and department to complete important steps for each separated employee. The separation steps should address these important requirements:

- Return of County property and equipment: Exiting employees are required to turn in all Blaine County property and equipment such as keys, ID badges, key access cards, laptop, cell phone, books, files, tools, uniforms, and any other County-owned items.
- Computer access deactivation: Notify the Information Technology department to deactivate employee access to email, voicemail, VPN, etc.
- Key card/building code deactivation: Disable all electronic access (if applicable).
- Separation: Complete a PAF with separation documentation attached.
- Return of Property: Either on or following an employee's final working day, complete a PAF with the office/department separation checklist attached.

Individual departments and offices may have more specific and detailed steps.

## 2.9. PERSONNEL SYSTEMS

### 2.9.1. EMPLOYEE RECORDS POLICY

#### 2.9.1.1. PERSONNEL FILES

All personnel files are the property of Blaine County. Official personnel files are considered confidential, but some information contained therein may be subject to disclosure. Records kept in personnel files may include applications, resumes, offer letters, performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, letters of commendation, job descriptions, and resignation/termination letters. Managers may view the personnel files of employees in their line of supervision. As Blaine County is considered one employer, a member of management considering the hire of a former employee or transfer of a current employee may be granted access to the employee's personnel file.

Current employees may review their personnel files during normal business hours upon written request to Human Resources.

#### 2.9.1.2. EXTERNAL DISCLOSURE OF EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

All requests for information on current or former employees must be referred to Payroll. Information given by telephone will be limited to dates of employment and position title.

Prospective employers, financial institutions, and residential property managers routinely contact employers requesting information on a former or current employee's work history and salary. All requests of this type must be referred to Payroll in the form of a written request with the employee's authorization. Payroll will provide the following information: dates of employment, hire date, title, salary, number of base hours, date and amount of last pay increase.

Representatives of government or law enforcement agencies may be allowed access to file information in response to a legal subpoena or court order. Such cases will be handled on an individual basis in consultation with Human Resources and/or the Blaine County Prosecutor's Office, Civil Division.

#### 2.9.1.3. RECORDS RETENTION

Blaine County retains and destroys personnel records in accordance with federal and state laws governing record retention. Below is an outline of the County's operating procedures for personnel record retention and destruction of documents when such retention periods have passed.

All paper personnel records and confidential employee data maintained by Blaine County will be destroyed by shredding after retention dates have passed pending a resolution of file destruction by the Board of County Commissioners.



## 2.9.1.4. RETENTION SCHEDULE

<p><b>Employment Eligibility Verification:</b></p> <p>Records documenting verification of employment eligibility. Forms may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal I-9 Forms</li> <li>• Copies of driver’s license, passports, or another photo identification</li> <li>• Copies of certificate of naturalization and supporting documentation</li> </ul>	<b>Termination + 5 Years</b>
<p><b>Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and Office of Federal Contract Compliance Program (AFCCP) Records</b></p> <p>Records generated out of compliance, reporting or complaints filed with the two agencies. May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports of OFCCP violations</li> <li>• EEOC reports, investigations, case files, complaints, etc.</li> </ul>	<b>Termination + 10 Years</b>
<p><b>Employee Pay History File</b></p> <p>Records documenting the pay history of individual employees. May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation of employee pay status</li> <li>• Payroll deductions (taxes, insurance, garnishments, or other liens/attachments)</li> <li>• Authorizations for deductions/direct deposit</li> </ul>	<b>Termination + 5 Years</b>
<p><b>Employee Health and Medical Files</b></p> <p>Records documenting the health and medical history of an employee. Created when an employee has a medical condition (injury or illness – work or non-work related) affecting their ability to work. May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about the situation</li> <li>• Incident reports</li> <li>• Physical assessment forms</li> <li>• Information from physicians and other medical providers</li> <li>• Return to work documentation</li> <li>• Workers compensation, FMLA and ADA cases</li> </ul>	<b>Termination + 5 Years</b>
<p><b>Personnel Files</b></p> <p>Records documenting the employment history of Blaine County personnel. May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation of training</li> <li>• Annual Evaluations</li> <li>• Awards and Commendations</li> <li>• Emergency Contact Information</li> </ul>	<b>Termination + 5 Years</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personnel actions</li> <li>• Driver's licence enhancements/restrictions</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Employee Complaint and Grievance Files</b></p> <p>Records documenting complaints and grievances submitted by employees regarding workplace issues (except EEOC and Reasonable Accommodation complaints). May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees Conflict Resolution Forms</li> <li>• Investigations</li> <li>• Progressive Discipline Forms</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Response</li> </ul>	<b>Termination + 5 Years</b>
<p><b>Recruitment Files</b></p> <p>Records documenting the process of recruiting and hiring new employees. May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment applications, resumes, etc.</li> <li>• Advertisements and position announcements</li> <li>• Interview questions and applicant answers</li> <li>• Reference checks</li> </ul>	<b>Termination + 4 Years</b>
<p><b>Training and Outreach Files</b></p> <p>Records documenting development and facilitation of training and outreach courses. May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course and trainer information</li> <li>• Handouts</li> <li>• Training dates</li> <li>• Accommodations</li> <li>• Participation and evaluation material</li> <li>• Materials and billing information</li> </ul>	<b>Termination + 4 Years</b>

### 2.9.2. PERSONNEL ACTION FORM (PAF)

To ensure sufficient time to process the request, a Personnel Action Form (PAF) should be submitted prior to the effective date of the action. All relevant actions listed in the PAF must be completed by the effective date of the action. Retroactive actions should be avoided.

A PAF must be submitted for any personnel changes or actions, including, but not limited to, hiring, transfers, promotions, salary changes, status or address changes, disciplinary actions, and termination of employment. Each PAF submitted will be reviewed and/or approved by the appropriate elected official or department head. All approved PAFs are routed through Human Resources to Blaine County Payroll as the final step in order to be processed.

PAFs designating leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or returning an employee from said leave should be submitted as soon as possible to protect the employee's benefits. If an employee takes non-FMLA qualifying leave without pay for a week or more, a Leave Without Pay PAF should be processed.

Additional questions regarding the completion of PAFs should be directed to Human Resources or Payroll.

#### MANAGER NOTE 2.9.2.

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##### **PERSONNEL ACTION FORM (PAF)**

The Personnel Action Form (PAF) is the official County form used to request a personnel or payroll action affecting an employee's status, pay or employment record.

- No personnel actions will be executed without a PAF completed.
- The affected team member must sign the PAF.
- Elected official or department head must sign the PAF.
- The PAF is submitted to Human Resources for signature then routed to Payroll to be processed and a copy maintained in the employee's file.

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### 2.9.3. EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

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#### 2.9.3.1. TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES

Periodically, it becomes necessary for Blaine County to hire individuals to perform a job or to work on a project that has a limited duration. Typically, this happens in the event of a special project, special time of year, abnormal workload, or emergency. Individuals hired for such work are temporary employees. They are not eligible to participate in any County benefit programs, nor can they earn or accrue any leave, such as vacation leave or sick leave. Temporary employees will be provided any and all benefits mandated by law.

Temporary employment must be less than five (5) consecutive months. Temporary employees cannot change from temporary status to any other employment status by such informal means as remaining in County employ for an extended period of time or through oral promises made to them by coworkers or members of management. The only way a temporary employee's status can change is through submission of a Personnel Action Form, subject to approval by the Board of County Commissioners.

Like all employees who work for Blaine County, temporary employees work on an at-will basis. This means that both they and Blaine County are free to terminate their employment at any time for any reason that is not illegal—even if they have not completed the temporary project for which they have been hired.

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### 2.9.3.2. PERMANENT EMPLOYEES

Depending on the number of hours per week employees are regularly scheduled to work, they will be either part-time or full-time employees. It is necessary that an employee understands which of these classifications he or she fits into, because it will be important in determining whether they are entitled to benefits and leave. See the Compensation and Benefits Chapter of this Handbook for information about eligibility for benefits and leave.

Part-time employees: Employees who are regularly scheduled to work fewer than 20 hours per week are part-time employees.

Full-time employees: Employees who are regularly scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week are full-time employees.

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### 2.9.4. JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Job descriptions are subject to final approval utilizing procedures maintained by Human Resources. No job description can be utilized for job postings, recruitment, or any other employment purpose until the Board of County Commissioners has approved it for adoption.

Each employee should have an up-to-date and accurate job description on file. A department or office seeking adjustments to a job description, or needing assistance in creating a new job description, must provide the necessary information to Human Resources, including primary and secondary duties, scope, reporting structure, supervisory responsibilities, minimum qualifications, and other requirements.

Human Resources will review the information and revise the job description to ensure standard language, County-wide consistency, appropriate placement in the pay band, and compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other employment related laws.

## 3. COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

### 3.1. COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY

Blaine County adheres to a compensation plan that is designed to pay salaries that motivate employees for excellence in job performance, is equitable across County departments and offices, and demonstrates responsible use of public funds.

Individual pay is established by determining the value of the position in the labor market, the value of the individual including relevant education, experience and special skills, and the value to the organization. Pay decisions must include consideration of job performance. County offices/departments may utilize specialized pay plans approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

#### 3.1.1. COMPENSATION PLANNING

Performance, merit, and step increases are not guaranteed and are based upon performance and budget. Overall merit budget allocations and individual merit increases are planned prior to the start of each fiscal year. Merit is allocated beginning the pay period that includes the October 1<sup>st</sup> date. Please refer questions to Human Resources. The compensation program is designed to assist management in planning and allocating salary increases that:

- Reward individual performance
- Are both market competitive and internally equitable
- Are compatible with the operating budget

The employee's overall performance and salary level relative to his/her position responsibilities must be evaluated to determine if a salary increase is warranted.

Salary increase requests must be supported by a recent performance appraisal or other written justification. Human Resources will review all salary increase/adjustment requests to ensure compliance with policy and that they fall within the provided guidelines. Merit, market adjustment, and promotional pay changes must be submitted through the PAF prior to the effective date of the requested change.

#### 3.1.2. SALARY REVIEWS

A department head or elected official may request an analysis and adjustment of an employee's salary at the time frames established by the Board of County Commissioners. This request should be made to Human Resources who will review the employee's salary in comparison to other employees in comparable positions and available market data. An up-to-date job description is required in order to provide an accurate analysis.

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### 3.1.3. MID-YEAR SALARY INCREASES

Salary increases requested outside of the normal budget process are generally limited to new hires who have successfully completed six (6) months of employment. A new hire is generally defined as a person who is selected for a position after participating in a hiring process characterized by submitting an application and interviewing for a role. Internal candidates are considered new hires if the scope and/or responsibilities of their new position is substantially different from their previous one. Such salary increases are limited to a maximum of five (5) percent of the employee's salary. Other mid-year salary increase requests must be submitted to Human Resources and may be limited in keeping with the time frames and parameters established by the Board of County Commissioners.

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### 3.1.4. STEP INCREASES

Step increases are allocated at the beginning of the pay period that includes the employees' two, four, and eight year anniversary in their current position. Employees are eligible for up to a 6% increase at their two and four year anniversaries and up to 5% at their eight year anniversary

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### 3.1.5. MARKET PRICING

Blaine County's compensation goal is to match the labor market, which allows us to be externally competitive in recruiting and retaining talented employees. Labor markets used for salary comparison are based on the normal recruiting market for specific job classifications. All market comparisons will include both public and private sector employers for the recruiting area, unless the position is not found in the private sector. Maintaining a competitive Total Rewards Compensation Strategy enables Blaine County to attract, retain and motivate employees, which improves employee productivity and reduces turnover.

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### 3.1.6. PAY BANDS

The compensation plan for Blaine County establishes pay bands for each class of job descriptions. A pay band is the pay range allocated to a job class stating a minimum and maximum rate of pay allowed an employee performing a job in that particular class.

## 3.2. PAY POLICIES

### 3.2.1. PAYDAY

Employees are paid bi-weekly on Thursday. If a payday falls on a holiday, paychecks will be issued on the last workday immediately before that payday. Time sheets must be received in Payroll on the Tuesday following the end of the reporting period – for example, if a time sheet is for the period January 2 through 15, 2011, the timesheet must be received in the Payroll office by noon on Tuesday, January 18, 2011.

### 3.2.2. PAY INCREASES

All pay increases shall be effective the first day of the pay cycle within which the pay increase occurs.

### 3.2.3. PAY ADVANCES

Blaine County does not allow employees to receive pay advances.

### 3.2.4. PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Employee paychecks reflect employee total earnings for the pay period, as well as any mandatory or voluntary deductions from the paycheck. Mandatory deductions are deductions that Blaine County is legally required to take. Such deductions include federal income tax, social security tax (FICA), any applicable state taxes, and PERSI. Voluntary deductions are deductions that the employee has authorized. Such deductions might include health insurance, deferred compensation, and supplemental insurances.

For further information or questions, please contact Blaine County Payroll.

### 3.2.5. DIRECT DEPOSIT

Direct deposit is available to all employees. Employees interested in direct deposit or needing to make changes to direct deposit should contact Blaine County Payroll.

### 3.2.6. SHIFT DIFFERENTIALS

Blaine County pays shift differentials to non-exempt employees in departments that operate 24 hours a day who work swing and graveyard shifts on a regularly scheduled basis. Employees scheduled for swing shifts are eligible to receive an additional \$.50/hr and \$1.00/hr for working graveyard shifts.

### 3.2.7. TRAINING OFFICER PAY

Field Training Officer (FTO) and Jail Training Officer (JTO) pay is awarded to employees of the Sheriff's Office who have received the necessary certifications to fulfill those roles. This pay is only received when the training duties are performed. FTO and JTO pay is an additional \$2.50/hr.

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### 3.2.8. SPECIALTY PAY

Specialty pay is additional discretionary pay added to the base pay of non-exempt employees who have the skills and certifications to perform specific duties or are given specific assignments. Specialty pay is not included when calculating market, merit, or step increases. The following calculation is used:

$$\text{Base Pay} \times (1 + \text{Percent Increase}) = \text{New Base Pay}$$

$$\text{New Base Pay} + \text{Specialty Pay} = \text{New Hourly Pay}$$

For example: A 2-year step increase (6%) for an employee with a base pay of \$20/hr who receives an additional \$.50/hr for Foreign Language Proficiency Pay is calculated as follows:

$$\$20 \times (1 + .06) = \$21.20$$

$$\$21.20 + \$.50 = \$21.70$$

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#### 3.2.8.1. NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT TEAM (NET)

Employees within the Sheriff's Office that are part of the NET team receive an additional \$.50/hr.

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#### 3.2.8.2. ILETS TERMINAL AGENCY COORDINATOR (TAC)

Employees with the appropriate training that function as the ILETS TAC and Assistant TAC are eligible to receive specialty pay for performing these additional duties. Employees functioning as the ILETS TAC will receive an additional \$1.00/hr and \$.50/hr as the Assistant TAC.

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#### 3.2.8.3. POST CERTIFIED INSTRUCTORS

Employees who are certified through POST as "high liability" instructors are eligible to receive an additional \$.50/hr.

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#### 3.2.8.4. FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY PAY

Foreign Language Proficiency pay is also known as bi-lingual pay. Eligible employees are those with advanced skills in one or more foreign languages that improve their ability to provide service to the community as determined by Human Resources.

Eligible employees will receive an additional \$.50/hr which is determined by taking and passing a Listening & Speaking test. Tests are administered and scored by a third-party language service provider.

With the exception of the Sheriff's Office and Emergency Communications/Dispatch, employee testing must be scheduled through Human Resources. In the event an employee does not pass their test, they may retest at their own expense or wait until the next fiscal year.



### 3.3.EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Blaine County offers a competitive and comprehensive benefit package designed to provide permanent full-time employees and their families with a wide range of benefit options.

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#### 3.3.1. ELIGIBILITY

Benefit eligible employees are regular full-time employees who regularly work twenty (20) or more hours per week.

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#### 3.3.2. WAITING PERIOD

The benefits effective date for new employees is the first day of the month following thirty (30) days of continuous employment. This waiting period applies to group medical, dental, vision, life, accidental death and dismemberment, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), supplemental short and long term disability insurance, supplemental life insurance, flexible spending accounts, NCPERS Group Term Life insurance, AFLAC & Colonial supplemental insurance, and the Blaine County Deferred Compensation 457(b) Plan.

The waiting period does not apply to the PERSI Base Plan and PERSI Choice 401(k) Plan. Please see vacation, sick, and holiday leave policies for respective waiting periods.

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#### 3.3.3. GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE

Please see the respective Benefit Plan Document which describes in detail the covered benefits and the rights and obligations of both enrollee and the carrier.

Medical, dental, and vision insurance coverage is provided to eligible employees and their immediate family members. For purposes of group health insurance, immediate family members will include the enrollee's spouse under a legally recognized marriage in the State of Idaho and eligible dependent children. Blaine County makes a significant contribution towards premium costs for these plans. Most employee premium costs are paid by the County. For summaries of each plan contact Payroll or Human Resources.

- Medical – Blaine County offers a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) medical plan, including prescription drug coverage, provided by GemPlan and administered by Blue Cross of Idaho.
- Dental – Blaine County offers a dental plan through Delta Dental.
- Vision – Vision benefits are administered by GemPlan and provided by VSP (Vision Service Plan).
- Group Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance – Blaine County provides basic life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance to employees at no cost. Additional voluntary life insurance for the employee and eligible dependents is also available to purchase through payroll deduction.

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#### 3.3.4. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

Employees and their family members are eligible to receive free confidential access to professional counseling designed to address a wide range of personal problems and issues. The program allows for up to eight (8) sessions or visits per occurrence or incident. Contact Human Resources for further details on EAP.

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### 3.3.5. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF IDAHO (PERSI)

**Base Plan** – the County provides a defined benefit plan that pays a lifetime allowance upon retirement. Participation is automatic for employees who normally work twenty (20) or more hours per week for five (5) or more consecutive months. Blaine County and the employee contribute to the base plan. The base plan also offers disability and death benefits.

**PERSI Choice 401(k) Plan** – the County provides a voluntary supplemental retirement plan that allows eligible employees to save and invest pre-tax dollars through payroll deduction for additional retirement income.

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### 3.3.6. STATE OF IDAHO DEFERRED COMPENSATION 457(B) PLAN

The State of Idaho Deferred Compensation 457(b) Plan is a voluntary, supplemental retirement savings program using payroll deductions directed into selected investment options. Nationwide Retirement Solutions (NRS) is the third-party administrator responsible for record-keeping, enrollment, education, marketing and customer service. NRS has a local, full-service office in Boise, as well as representatives that service the Plan throughout the State. For additional information contact Human Resources or visit [www.idahodc.com](http://www.idahodc.com).

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### 3.3.7. SOCIAL SECURITY/MEDICARE

Blaine County contributes to withholding taxes under FICA (Federal Insurance Contribution Act) on behalf of County employees: 6.2% Social Security tax; 1.45% Medicare tax.

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### 3.3.8. FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS (FSA)

An IRS approved plan that allows employees to contribute pre-tax dollars to reimbursement accounts for qualifying health care expenses and /or qualifying dependent care expenses.

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### 3.3.9. VOLUNTARY BENEFIT OPTIONS

A variety of voluntary supplemental benefit options are available through several providers. For additional information, please contact Payroll or Human Resources.

## 4. FORMS

The following forms can be accessed on the Human Resources page of the Blaine County website.

### HIRING – SECTION 2.2

[REFERENCE CHECK](#)

### WORK SCHEDULE – SECTION 2.3

[EMPLOYEE CALENDAR](#)

### LEAVE – SECTION 2.4

[LEAVE REQUEST](#)

[FIRST REPORT OF INJURY OR ILLNESS](#)

[EMPLOYEE ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT](#)

[SUPERVISOR REPORT OF EMPLOYEE ACCIDENT/INCIDENT](#)

[WITNESS REPORT OF EMPLOYEE ACCIDENT/INCIDENT](#)

### COUNTY RESOURCES – SECTION 2.6

[PHONE AUTHORIZATION](#)

[TRAVEL EXPENSE](#)

### DISCIPLINE & CONFLICT RESOLUTION – SECTION 2.7

[PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE](#)

[PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN](#)

[CONFLICT RESOLUTION](#)

### SEPARATIONS – SECTION 2.8

[SEPARATION CHECKLIST](#)

### PERSONNEL SYSTEMS – SECTION 2.9

[PERSONNEL ACTION FORM \(PAF\)](#)