

## **Organization of Personnel System**

### **1.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this personnel policy is to establish a human resources system that will promote a fair and effective means of employee recruitment and selection, develop and maintain an effective and responsible work force, and provide the means for removal of unsatisfactory employees. This personnel policy is established under the authority of Chapter 153A, Article 5, and Chapter 126 of the General Statutes of North Carolina.

### **2.0 Limitations**

This is not a contract of employment. Any individual may voluntarily leave employment upon proper notice and may be terminated by the employer at any time for any reason. Any oral or written statements or promises to the contrary are hereby expressly disavowed and should not be relied upon by any prospective or current employee. The contents of this policy manual are subject to change at any time at the discretion of the employer.

### **3.0 Coverage**

- A. All employees in the County's service, are subject to this personnel policy, except as provided in this section.
- B. Elected officials, the county attorney, consultants, volunteers, and contract employees are exempt from all provisions of this personnel policy, except as specifically designated.
- C. The following employees are covered only by the listed policies and sections:
  - 1. Typically, employees governed by the State Personnel Act shall be subject to all policies except Classification, Separation/Disciplinary and Complaint Resolution.
  - 2. Employees of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service shall be subject to all policies except Classification, Pay Plan, Recruitment and Selection and Benefits.
  - 3. The Supervisor of Elections shall be subject to all policies except Recruitment and Selection, Separation/Discipline and Complaint Resolution.
  - 4. Employees of the County Sheriff and the Register of Deeds shall be subject to all policies except Separation/Discipline, Compensation Plan, and any other aspects of the personnel policy which may be determined to be inconsistent with North Carolina General Statutes.
  - 5. Temporary employees shall be subject to all policies except Holidays, Leave and Benefits.

### **4.0 Definitions** (listed alphabetically)

**Adverse Action:** An involuntary demotion, an involuntary reduction in pay / classification, an involuntary transfer, (not a grievable offense whenever the employees pay remains the same) a suspension without pay, a layoff, or a dismissal. (This shall include any disciplinary demotion, reduction in force, separation and any discriminatory act).

## **Organization of Personnel System**

**Aggregate Service:** The employee's combined total period of countable service (i.e., employment within a non-temporary position) as an employee of Bladen County, inclusive of any time allowed as transfer credit from another jurisdiction for the purpose of determining entitlement to the particular benefit in question. Aggregate service for retirement purposes refers to total length of service under which retirement contributions are paid into the Local Government Employees Retirement System by the employee. Aggregate service for determining the rates at which annual leave and sick leave are earned by an employee is determined from the most recent date of employment with Bladen County.

**Anniversary Date:** The employee's original date of employment with Bladen County service in a permanent position.

**Appointing Authority:** Any County board or official with the legal authority to make hiring decisions.

**Career Status: (Only applies to employees subject to State Personnel Act):** Employees must work for 24 consecutive months before they gain a property interest that is protected by due process.

**Class:** Positions or groups of positions having similar duties and responsibilities requiring similar qualifications, which can be properly designated by one title indicative of the nature of work performed, and which carry the same salary grade.

**\*\*Employee Subject To State Personnel Act:** The Office of Emergency Management Director receiving federal grant-in aid funds and subject to the State Personnel Act.

**Complaint:** A claim or complaint alleging an event or condition which affects the circumstances under which an employee works, allegedly caused by misinterpretation, unfair application, or lack of established policy pertaining to employment conditions. A complaint may involve allegations of safety or health hazards, unsatisfactory physical facilities, surroundings, materials or equipment, unfair or discriminatory supervisory or disciplinary practices, unjust treatment by fellow workers, unreasonable work quotas, or any other inequity relating to conditions of employment subject to the control of the county.

**Cost-of-Living Increase:** An annual adjustment that may be made by the Board of County Commissioners to all pay ranges typically effective July 1 of each year.

**Demotion:** The reassignment of an employee to a position or a classification having a lower salary range than the position or the classification from which the reassignment is made.

**Exempt Employee:** Full- and part-time employees who have been classified as "Exempt" from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act are paid for the accomplishment of assigned accountabilities rather than being paid for the number of hours worked in a work period. These include executive, administrative and professional staff of the county.

### **Full-Time Employee:**

- a. **Permanent or Regular** - An employee, appointed to a permanently established position, who is regularly scheduled to work the standard work period established by the county and is in a position designated by the Board of County Commissioners as regular full-time.

## **Organization of Personnel System**

- b. **Temporary** - An employee who is regularly scheduled to work the standard work period established by the county in a position designated by the Board of County Commissioners as temporary full-time.

**General County Employee:** A county employee not subject to the State Personnel Act.

**Grant Funded Positions:** Positions which are supported wholly or in part by financial grants or other non-county monies. Individuals occupying these positions are appointed for a specific period of time to perform particular services on behalf of the County. Employees may or may not be entitled to County benefits, depending on the provisions of the grant.

**Hiring Rate:** The salary paid an employee when hired into county service, normally the first step of the salary range unless the employee has held a comparable position elsewhere. In the case of the latter, years of comparable employment are factored into the hiring rate.

**Maximum Salary Rate:** The maximum salary authorized by the pay plan for an employee within an assigned salary grade.

**Merit Increase:** An increase in salary above the standard job rate based on service that exceeds the standard and/or expected performance of the assigned position.

**Non-Exempt Employee:** Full- and part-time employees who have been classified as "Non-Exempt" from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act and who must be paid for overtime hours worked or given compensatory time off in accordance with the guidelines in this policy. Overtime is paid or compensatory time off is given to non-exempt employees for hours worked in excess of the standard work periods established by the County.

**Normal Work Week:** The actual hours an employee is regularly scheduled to work each week. Most county employees are routinely scheduled to work Monday thru Friday from 8:30 AM until 5:00 PM.

### **Part-Time Employee:**

- a. **Regular Part-time Employee** - An employee appointed to a permanently established position who is regularly scheduled to work less than the standard work period established by the county.
- b. **Temporary Part-time Employee** - An employee appointed to a temporarily established position, who is regularly scheduled to work less than the standard work period established by the County.

**Performance Evaluation System:** An annual review of an employee's performance, designed to facilitate fair and equitable merit pay decisions, recognizing performance as the basis for pay increases within the established pay range.

**Position:** A group of current duties and responsibilities requiring the full- or part-time employment of one person or of multiple employees whose total work time will not exceed one hundred percent.

## **Organization of Personnel System**

- a. **Full-Time Position:** A position that has been approved by the Board of County Commissioners, the duties and responsibilities of which are required to be performed on a continuous basis, normally requiring full-time employment of an individual.
- b. **Part-Time Position:** A position that has been approved by the Board of County Commissioners, the duties and responsibilities of which can be performed in less than a regular work day and/or work period.

**Position Classification Plan:** A plan approved by the Board of County Commissioners that assigns classes (positions) to the appropriate pay grade.

**Probationary Employee:** An individual appointed to a regular position who has served less than the probationary period in the position.

**Probationary Period:** The required period of time an employee serves before obtaining permanent status when entering County service. Please see “**Career Status**” for employees subject to the State Personnel Act.

**Promotion:** The reassignment of an employee to an existing position or classification in the county service having a higher salary range than the position or classification from which the reassignment is made.

**Reclassification:** The reassignment of an existing position from one class to another based on changes in job content.

**Regular or Permanent Employee:** An employee who has successfully completed the probationary period and has been approved for regular status by his/her department head (with the approval, where applicable, of the county manager).

**Salary Grade:** All positions which are sufficiently comparable to warrant one range of pay rates.

**Salary Plan Revision:** The uniform raising and lowering of the salary ranges of every grade within the pay plan.

**Salary Range:** Range of salary steps assigned to given classifications, typically beginning with Step A, as the minimum of the range and Step M as the maximum.

**Salary Range Revision:** The raising or lowering of the salary range for one or more specific classes of positions within the classification plan.

**Salary Schedule:** A listing by grade and step of all the approved minimum and maximum salary ranges authorized by the Board of County Commissioners for various position classifications of county government.

## Organization of Personnel System

**Standard Work Periods:** Standard work periods for Bladen County employees are as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Work Period</u>	<u>Standard Work Hours</u>
Deputy Sheriffs	28 days	168 / 170 hours
Detention Officers	28 days	168 / 170 hours
Communications	28 days	168 / 170 hours
EMS	28 days	168 / 170 hours
All Others	5 days	37.5 / 40 hours

**Temporary Employee:** An individual appointed to a temporary position: (1) performing hourly work on an as needed basis, (2) completing a specific job, or (3) performing work for a definite duration, not to exceed twelve (12) months.

**Temporary Position:** A position for which the duties and responsibilities are required to be performed for a specific short period of time, normally not to exceed twelve (12) months for employees covered by the State Personnel Act, and not to exceed 1000 hours for General County employees and which may or may not require attendance by a person for a full work-day and/or work period.

**Trainee:** An employee designated as such, appointed to a position in any class for which the county manager or the Office of State Personnel has authorized "trainee" appointments. An individual may not be appointed as a trainee if he/she possesses the acceptable training and experience for the regular class, and must be appointed to the regular class when he/she gains the acceptable training and experience. A trainee shall be paid at a rate below the minimum of the regular class.

**Transfer:** The reassignment of an employee from one position or department to another.

**Work Against Appointment:** When suitable qualified applicants are unavailable, the appointing authority may appoint an employee below the level of the regular classification in a work-against situation. A work-against appointment is for the purpose of allowing the employee to gain the qualifications needed for the full class through on-the-job experience. The appointee must meet the minimum education and experience requirements of the class to which initially appointed. *For example, an applicant meeting the education and experience requirements for a Social Worker I classification may be hired in work-against status to fill a vacancy for a Social Worker III position for which the county has been unable to recruit a suitable applicant possessing the education and experience requirements of a Social Worker III position. An employee thus hired would be classified and paid as a Social Worker I until such time that they meet the qualifications for a Social Worker II. At that time employees salary must be adjusted to the minimum of the salary range assigned to the Social Worker II classification. Employee would continue to work in a Work Against appointment until he / she met the minimum qualifications for the Social Worker III. A work-against appointment may not be made when applicants deemed suitable for the position are available who meet the education and experience requirements for the full class for the position in question unless there is Just Cause for not hiring a qualified applicant.*

### 5.0 Merit Principle

All appointments and promotions hereunder shall be made solely on the basis of merit. All positions requiring the performance of the same duties and fulfillment of the same responsibilities shall be assigned

## **Organization of Personnel System**

to the same class and the same salary range. No applicant for county employment or employee shall be deprived of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affected as an employee because of such individual's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, political affiliation, non-disqualifying handicap or age.

### **6.0 Responsibility of Board of County Commissioners**

The Board of County Commissioners shall establish personnel policies and rules, including the classification and pay plan, and shall make and confirm appointments when required by law. Personnel policies become effective when adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, and may be amended, revised or repealed through the same procedure. As with new personnel policies, revisions in personnel policy are also effective upon approval by the Board, unless otherwise designated.

### **7.0 Responsibility of County Manager**

The County Manager shall be responsible to the Board of County Commissioners for the administration of the personnel program. The county manager shall appoint, suspend, and remove all county officers and employees, except those elected by the people or whose appointment is otherwise provided for by law. The County Manager shall make appointments, dismissals, and suspensions in accordance with 153A-82 of the General Statutes of the State of North Carolina and appropriate County policies

### **8.0 Responsibility of Human Resources Director**

The Human Resources Director shall assist in the preparation and maintenance of the position classification plan and the salary plan, and perform such other duties in personnel administration program as the Manager shall require. An official copy of the personnel policies and rules will be available in the County Human Resources Office. Matters dealing with personnel shall be routed through the County Human Resources Office.