



# **Employee Handbook**

*Revised 3/18/2024*

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# INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to introduce the revised Roane County employee handbook. This handbook has been designed to outline and summarize basic personnel policies, employee benefits, employee responsibilities, and employee rights. This handbook is intended to be useful for all Roane County employees.

Roane County is committed to providing a quality workplace for employees. It is our goal to:

- Provide management that is skilled, fair, and concerned about the welfare of our employees.
- Equitably compensate each employee in accordance with our classification and compensation plan.
- Fill vacancies or new positions, where appropriate, by transfer or promotion from within the County.
- Discuss willingly and frankly any problems, complaints, or questions regarding County personnel policies.
- Keep employees informed of any changes that may affect them or their families.

This handbook revokes and supersedes all prior handbooks, amendments, and any policy or communication related to the employee handbook.

This handbook was developed to provide general guidelines about Roane County Government's policies and procedures for employees; however, it does not contain promises to any employee about how any particular situation will be handled. It is a guide to assist employees in becoming familiar with some of the benefits and obligations of employment, including our policy of at-will employment. None of the guidelines in this handbook are intended to give rise to contractual rights or obligations, or to be construed as a guarantee of employment for any specific period of time or any specific type of work. These guidelines are subject to modification, amendment, or revocation by Roane County Government at any time, without advance notice.

It is the intention of Roane County Government to adhere to all State and Federal laws. Any personnel policy found to conflict with a State or Federal law will be changed to ensure compliance with the law.

Amendments to the handbook may be made periodically and communicated to all Roane County employees.

All questions pertaining to information found in this handbook should be referred to the Benefits Coordinator.

## Policies for Employees of Elected Officials

Elected Officials have the jurisdiction to create, maintain, and administer additional personnel policies and procedures. In these cases, the Elected Officials will provide the additional policies for their employees as required by T.C.A 5-23-103.

[**ALTERNATIVES** An Appendix to this Handbook provides additional guidance for several departments within the County, as indicated in the Table of Contents.

OR Departments with additional policies will provide their employees with a copy of them.]

## STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES

### Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

Roane County maintains an equal employment opportunity policy and does not discriminate in hiring practices or terms and conditions of employment. All applicants and employees receive equal employment opportunities and all personnel decisions, actions, and conditions affecting employees, including, but not limited to assignment, transfer, promotion, and compensation, will be governed by the principles of equal opportunity.

Discrimination against any person in recruitment, examination, appointment, training, promotion, retention, or discipline because of political or religious opinions or affiliations or because of race, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, veteran status, or any other category protected by law, shall be prohibited. The Benefits Coordinator Director has been designated as the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer for Roane County. The EEO Officer has overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the County's Equal Employment Policy.

### No Harassment

The County does not tolerate the harassment of applicants, employees, customers, or vendors. Any form of harassment relating to an individual's race, color, sex (including same sex), religion, age, national origin, handicap or disability, citizenship status, veteran status, political affiliation, retaliation for protected activity, or any other protected activity or category is a violation of this policy and will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

**Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.**

Employees with questions regarding what constitutes harassing behavior or what conduct is prohibited by this policy may discuss the questions with immediate

supervisors. At a minimum, the term "harassment" as used in this policy includes:

- Offensive remarks, comments, jokes, slurs, or verbal conduct pertaining to an individual's race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, handicap or disability, citizenship status, or any other protected category
- Offensive pictures, drawings, photographs, or other graphic conduct or communications, including e-mail, faxes, and copies pertaining to an individual's race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, handicap or disability, citizenship status, or any other protected category
- Offensive sexual remarks, sexual advances, or requests for sexual favors regardless of the gender of the individuals involved
- Offensive physical conduct, including touching, regardless of the gender of the individuals involved
- Threatening an employee for refusing to respond to requests for sexual favors, for reporting a violation of this policy, or for participating in an investigation conducted under this policy.

Supervisors and managers are subject to this policy and are prohibited from engaging in any form of harassing conduct. No supervisor or other member of management has the authority to suggest to any applicant or employee that employment or advancement will be affected by the individual entering (or refusing to enter) a personal relationship with the supervisor or manager. Such conduct is a direct violation of this policy.

Harassment of our employees in connection with their work by non-employees also may be a violation of this policy. Any employee who experiences or observes any harassment of an employee by a non-employee should report such harassment to a member of management or the Benefits Coordinator.

Employees who believe that the No Harassment policy has been violated should promptly report the matter to their immediate supervisor, Department Head, or the Benefits Coordinator. Any actions believed to violate the No Harassment policy, no matter how slight the action may seem, should be reported.

Reported incidents will be investigated. Where appropriate, prompt disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination, will be taken. The County will protect the confidentiality of employees making complaints about suspected violations of this or any other County policy, to the extent possible consistent



with our investigation and applicable law.

**Employees will not be penalized or retaliated against for reporting improper conduct, harassment, or other actions that are believed to violate this policy.**

Roane County Government is serious about enforcing the No Harassment policy. Potential policy violations cannot be resolved unless reported. Employees are responsible for bringing concerns regarding possible policy violations to the attention of supervisors, managers, Department Heads, or the Benefits Coordinator so that appropriate action may be taken to address the concern.

## **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**

It is the policy of Roane County Government that qualified individuals with disabilities will not be excluded from participation in or benefit from services, programs, or activities of the County. Roane County Government will not discriminate against a qualified individual with a disability in job application processes; the hiring, advancement, or termination of employment; employee compensation; job training; and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. It is the intent of Roane County Government to comply with all applicable requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

## **Reasonable Accommodations/Modified Job Duties**

Roane County Government will reasonably accommodate persons with a disability. Such reasonable accommodations may include making facilities readily accessible to individuals with a disability, restructuring jobs, modifying work schedules, modifying equipment, or other similar accommodations. To assist employees who are or become disabled and those employees who suffer on-the-job injuries, Roane County Government will make reasonable accommodations to enable such employees to continue performing the essential functions of their jobs. Consistent with this policy, Roane County Government may modify job duties to comply with medical requirements or restrictions. Other accommodation, such as a transfer to a vacant position for which the employee is qualified, may be appropriate, depending upon specific facts and circumstances of individual situations.

Obviously, there are limits to the accommodations which Roane County Government can reasonably make. When an accommodation would cause an “undue” hardship to the County or its employees, or that may threaten the safety of the requestor or others, the County would be unable to make that particular accommodation. Similarly, where placing an individual in a position, with or without accommodation, would create a direct threat to the employee or others, the County may be unable to place the employee in that particular position.

## **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

Roane County Government ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights

Act of 1964; 49 CFR, part 21; related statutes and regulations to the end that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin.

Roane County Government also ensures compliance with Federal laws particularly applicable to language access included in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Title VI regulations, prohibiting discrimination based on national origin, and Executive Order 13166 issued in 2000 which applies to individuals who do not speak English, also referred to as limited English proficiency or LEP, as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. These individuals may be entitled language assistance with respect to a particular type or service, benefit, or encounter. Many individual federal programs, states, and localities also have provisions requiring language services for LEP individuals. An Executive Order is an order given by the President to federal agencies.

The LEP Executive Order (Executive Order 13166) states that people who are LEP should have meaningful access to federally conducted and federally funded programs and activities.

Executive Order 13166 requires all agencies that provide federal financial assistance to issue guidance on how recipients of that assistance can take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access consistent with Title VI and the Title VI regulations.

To report any complaints or to receive additional information about Title VI, contact the Title VI Coordinator at 865-717-4109.

## Verification of Employment Eligibility

The Federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires employers to verify the legal working status of all employees hired on or after November 7, 1986. The Act makes it unlawful to hire anyone who is not either a citizen or an alien who has the legal right to be employed in the United States. All new employees will be required to complete Form I-9 and provide current documentation from time to time, as required by federal law.

## HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act)

Roane County Government complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and follows guidelines involving the protected health information of employees and dependents.

## CODE OF ETHICS

### Ethical Conduct

It is the policy of Roane County Government to uphold, promote, and demand the

highest standards of ethics from all employees and officials, whether elected or appointed. Accordingly, all County employees should maintain the utmost standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fairness in carrying out their public duties; avoid any improprieties in their roles as public servants; and never use their County position or powers for improper personal gain. Employees are required to maintain the highest ethical standards in the conduct of duties. This also applies to non-work situations when you identify yourself as a County employee (i.e., wearing a County identification badge, distributing a County business card, wearing a County uniform, driving a County vehicle, etc.). To fulfill this requirement, the following will apply:

- Personal characteristics such as honesty, courtesy, dependability, and use of sound judgment are required for all employees in all classes of work in County government.
- There shall be no activity which conflicts with the interest of your official duties.
- You cannot use your position with the County for private interest.
- You must comply with the County's Code of Ethics Policy.

***Any employee with knowledge of, or having witness to, any unethical behavior occurring within Roane County Government or any of its departments should report the behavior(s). Employees may report violations of the Ethical Conduct policy to the Benefits Coordinator without fear of retaliation.***

## **Conflict of Interest**

Employment with Roane County Government is a public trust. Employees must not have any financial interest in, or receive any financial benefit from, any acquisition or expenditure related to County activities that interferes or conflicts with the full discharge of duties. If the circumstances cause a reasonable person to believe that a conflict of interest exists, a conflict-of-interest form must be filed with the County Clerk's Office, as instructed by the County's Code of Ethics Policy.

## **Political Activity**

Employees may join or affiliate with civic organizations of a partisan or political nature and may attend political meetings. Employees may advocate and support the principles or policies of civic or political organizations in accordance with the Constitution and laws of the State of Tennessee and in accordance with the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America.

Employees MAY NOT:

1. Engage in any political activity while on duty.
2. Use official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or a nomination for office.
3. Be required as a duty of employment or as a condition of employment, promotion, or tenure of office to contribute funds for political or partisan purposes.
4. Coerce or compel contributions for political or partisan purposes from another employee of the County.
5. Use any supplies or equipment of the County for political or partisan purposes.

## Secondary Employment

Employees shall not engage in any outside employment which adversely affects work performance or creates a conflict of interest. If an employee is engaged in other employment, the employee must notify the supervisor in writing stating the name of the secondary employer, the nature of work or business, specific duties, and hours worked per week.

## Nepotism

Roane County Uniform Nepotism Policy Act

SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Roane County Uniform Nepotism Policy Act." SECTION 2. As used in this act, unless the context otherwise requires: (1) "Governmental entity" means Roane County or any agency, authority, board, commission, department, or office of Roane County or an office of an elected county official. (2) "Relative" means a parent, foster parent, parent-in-law, child, spouse, brother, foster brother, sister, Foster sister, grandparent, grandchild, son-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law, or other family member who resides in the same household; and (3) "County employee" means any person who is employed or appointed by a governmental entity. (4) "Employer" means the governmental entity that appoints or employs the county employee.

SECTION 3. Within each governmental entity, no county employees who are relatives shall be placed within the same direct line of supervision whereby one (1) relative is responsible for supervising the job performance or work activities of another relative; provided, that the extent possible, the provisions of this act shall not be construed to prohibit two (2) or more such relatives from working within the same county governmental entity.

SECTION 4. When as a result of a marriage, county employees are in violation of the prohibition established by Section 3, such violation shall be resolved by means of such transfer with the governmental entity, transfer to another governmental entity, or resignation as may be necessary to remove such

violation. The employer shall advise the county employee of each of the alternatives available to remove such violation. Such employees are unable to agree upon any such alternative within sixty (60) days, then the employer shall take appropriate action to remove such violation.

SECTION 5. The prohibition established by Section 3 shall not be applied retroactively, but shall be adhered to by each employer in all appointments, hiring and employee transactions subsequent to this act being approved as provided in Section 7.

SECTION 6. The provisions of this act shall be applied uniformly and shall constitute the nepotism policy of each governmental entity. No such governmental entity shall adopt a nepotism policy which conflicts with the provisions of this act.

SECTION 7. This act shall have no effect unless it is approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Legislative Body of Roane County prior to December 1, 1998. Its approval or non approval shall be proclaimed by the Presiding Officer of Roane County and certified to the Secretary of State. SECTION 8. For the purpose of approving or rejecting the provisions of this act, it shall be effective upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it. For all other purposes, it shall become effective as provided in Section 7. Passed: April 2, 1998

## County Equipment

County equipment, materials, vehicles, and/or other resources assigned to employees shall be used with care and economy and shall be used only for County purposes. Waste or misuse of County resources may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## County Vehicle Use Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that County owned vehicles are operated in a safe manner and for their intended purposes only.

The term 'vehicle' shall apply to all passenger cars, light duty trucks, heavy duty trucks, emergency vehicles, construction equipment, or any other motorized/non-motorized rolling stock used by various County employees in the course of their duties.

## General Use

1. Only authorized County employees shall operate County owned vehicles.
2. Employees operating County owned vehicles must abide by all applicable motor vehicle laws.
3. Transporting non-County personnel in a County owned vehicle is prohibited except as follows:
  - a. When required for legitimate County business.
  - b. As provided in the personal use section of this policy.

- c. As part of a departmental ride-a-long program authorized by the Department Head or Elected Official.
  - d. In cases of extreme emergency where the employee has a reasonable belief that the life, safety, health, or physical welfare of a citizen would be immediately threatened.
4. Employees are required to maintain a valid Tennessee driver license with proper endorsements for the position.
5. Employees who are authorized to drive County owned vehicles must report any motor vehicle violations that result in a citation to their supervisor as soon as possible. This includes violations that occur in their own vehicle and not on County time.
6. No employee shall carry any concealed weapon in a County vehicle at any time unless:
  - a. They have been authorized to do so by the County Sheriff, or
  - b. They have been authorized to do so by the County Executive, or their department's Elected Official or Department Head, and have obtained a weapons carry permit from the State of Tennessee.
7. No employees shall carry alcoholic beverages, contraband, or other illegal substances in County owned vehicles. (Does not apply to law enforcement units conducting undercover operations or transporting evidence.)

### **Personal Use**

Personal use of County owned vehicles is prohibited except for the following:

1. Personnel whose duties primarily involve operation of County owned vehicles at locations which make it inconvenient or inefficient to access their personal vehicles, may use their assigned County owned vehicles for routine personal activities such as traveling to lunch, or other infrequent or incidental short term stops so long as this privilege does not significantly interfere with their assigned duties or otherwise become abused.
2. In cases where there is no convenient means of transportation available, employees assigned take home vehicles may request permission from the County Executive, Department Head or Elected Official to transport members of their household to and from school, work, and other necessary destinations so long as it does not significantly impact the employee's duties, cost of operating the vehicle or significantly increase the County's exposure to liability.
3. Employees who have been granted permission to use a County owned vehicle for out-of-town travel for County business, may allow members of

their household to accompany them as passengers if they have properly obtained permission from their Department Head or Elected Official.

4. Tobacco use in County owned vehicles is prohibited.

***Roane County Government reserves the right to monitor the usage of County-owned vehicles, with or without the knowledge or consent of the employee to whom the vehicle is assigned.***

### **Accident Reporting**

County employees who are operating a County owned vehicle and are involved in an accident must do the following:

1. Ensure their personal safety and those involved in the accident to their best ability.
2. Notify the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction in the location of the accident.
3. Notify their supervisor of the accident.

## **Gifts and Contributions**

Employees may not solicit or accept, either directly or indirectly, for yourself or for any member of your household, any gift, gratuity, service, favor, entertainment, lodging, transportation, loan, loan guarantee, or anything above a nominal monetary value from any person who:

- has, or is seeking to obtain, contractual or other business or financial relations with the department or agency of Roane County by which you are employed
- conducts operations or activities that are regulated by the department of Roane County which you are employed
- has an interest that may be substantially affected by the performance or non-performance of your official duties

## **CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION**

### **Introductory Period**

All new employees will be considered on “introductory” status for the first six (6) months of employment. At the end of the regular introductory period, the Department Head can elect to remove the introductory status or extend the introductory period. During the introductory period, the full-time employee will accrue sick days at the stated rate but will not be eligible for vacation days until

successfully completing ninety (90) days of consecutive employment. Successful completion of an introductory period does not alter the employee's at-will status.

## Employment Terms

- **“Full-Time Regular Employee”** is defined as an employee who works at least thirty (30) hours per week on a regular and continuous basis throughout the calendar year. The single word “employee” will be used to designate a full-time or regular employee on leave policies.
- **“Part-Time Regular Employee”** is defined as an employee who works twenty-nine (29) or fewer hours per week on a regular and continuous basis throughout the calendar year.
- **“Temporary Employee”** is defined as an employee who is engaged to work either full-time or part-time with the understanding that their employment will terminate upon the completion of a specific assignment. These employees may be “exempt” or “non-exempt” as defined below.
- **“Exempt Employee”** is defined as an employee who is not required to be paid overtime or receive comp time in accordance with federal wage and hour laws, for hours worked over forty (40) in a workweek. Executive employees, professional employees, and certain employees in administrative positions are typically exempt. However, classification of a position as exempt is made on the basis of comparing actual job duties with criteria established by the Department of Labor.
- **“Non-exempt Employee”** is defined as an employee who is required to be paid overtime or receive comp time at time and one-half of their regular rate of pay, in accordance with federal wage and hour laws, for hours worked over forty (40) in a workweek.

## Employment at-Will

Roane County Government is an at-will employer and as such there is no specific length or guarantee of continued employment. The employee or the County may terminate employment at-will, without cause or prior notice, at any time. None of the County's policies may be construed as creating a contract of employment or any other legal obligation, express or implied, and any policy may be amended, revised, supplemented, rescinded or otherwise altered, in whole or in part, at any time, at the sole and absolute discretion of Roane County.

## Pay Periods

All County employees are paid biweekly on every other Friday. Some pay dates may occur earlier due to holidays. In this instance, payroll checks will be issued the Friday before the holiday. All employees are paid in arrears, one week after the end of the pay period.



## Overtime Compensation/Compensatory Time

No overtime or compensatory time will be earned until the employee has worked on the job over 40 hours during the workweek.

- A. Overtime/Compensatory Time: All eligible employees may be paid overtime or given compensatory time for all work performed over 40 hours during the workweek.
- B. Overtime Rate: Hourly rate employees who work overtime will receive overtime pay at a rate of time and one-half their regular hourly pay. Salaried employees who are eligible will receive overtime pay at a rate of time and one-half their equivalent hourly rate (the salaried employee's equivalent hourly rate is calculated by dividing his/her annual salary by 52 weeks and dividing that number by the number of hours in a normal workweek.) The overtime rates for both hourly and salaried employees apply only to those hours worked over 40 during a week. For salaried employees, no additional compensation will be paid for hours worked under 40. For hourly rate employees, the overtime rate will apply only to hours worked over 40 and the regular rate will apply to hours worked up to 40 hours.
- C. Selection of Compensatory Time: Employees who are required to work more than 40 hours per week may receive compensatory time off in lieu of overtime. Such compensatory time shall be earned at a rate of one and one-half hours for each hour of employment worked over 40 hours per week. Compensatory hours are calculated by the County's timekeeping system. In the event of termination of employment, all earned and unused compensatory time will be paid. An employee cannot accrue more than 240 hours of compensatory time. Any employee who has accumulated 240 hours of compensatory time shall be paid for any additional overtime that is worked. An employee who has accrued compensatory time upon termination of employment will be paid the greater of the average regular rate the employee received during the last three years, or the final regular rate of pay received by the employee. The use of compensatory time is subject to approval by the Elected Official/Department Head.

## Working Before/After Regular Hours

Non-exempt Employees may not voluntarily begin work early, work after hours, or extend the workday for the purpose of accumulating compensatory time. Prior approval from immediate supervisors is required for any adjustment to the work schedule. ANY flextime must be addressed during the week it is earned.

# GENERAL PERSONNEL POLICIES

## Attendance

All employees of Roane County Government are committed to providing the highest level of government services and functions to better serve the community. To accomplish this, prompt and regular attendance is required.

It is required to speak directly to the supervisor if an illness or injury that would prevent an employee from reporting to work at the scheduled time occurs. If the supervisor is unavailable, employees are required to speak directly to the next-level manager or director, or to the person designated by the supervisor. Text messages are not considered an appropriate means of notification of an absence and will not be accepted as such.

All employees are expected to be in the workplace at the scheduled time the shift begins. Employees will work in accordance with their scheduled start and ending time and must not work alternate times without supervisor's authorization.

Failure to provide notification of an absence may result in removal from the payroll as having resigned without notice. Employees who resign under such circumstances may be deemed ineligible for rehire.

## Work Hours and Time Records

Core business hours are from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Some jobs may require other hours of service. In such cases, the immediate supervisor will inform employees of the scheduled work hours.

Employees must accurately record all time worked.

Exempt employees should not be subject to specific hours unless required by their elected official.

Any employee that willfully falsifies a time record will be subject to immediate dismissal. A workday may not be shortened by "working through" or reducing the lunch period on a voluntary basis, nor may employees voluntarily begin work before or after regularly scheduled hours for the purpose of accumulating compensatory time. Every adjustment to the work schedule requires advance approval from supervisors.

## Canvassing or Solicitation

Non-employees are not permitted to solicit verbally or by distribution of written material to Roane County employees or the general public for commercial purposes during work hours in work areas.

Employees or outside charitable organizations who wish to solicit Roane County employees for charitable purposes or to schedule activities in Roane County offices, must submit a written request to the County Executive. The request must be approved by the County Executive.

## Inclement Weather

Roane County Government recognizes the fact that inclement weather and other emergencies can affect the ability to open for business and the employee's ability to report to work. All potential emergency situations cannot be foreseen and cannot be addressed by this policy.

Absences due to inclement weather require employees to make a personal judgment pertaining to safety in traveling to and from work. Loss of work time for this reason is charged to accrued compensatory time or annual leave. If no compensatory time or annual leave is available, the time is charged as leave without pay. If an employee makes the effort to report on time and actually reports within a reasonable period of time (based on the circumstances of the event), he/she will not be required to use leave time for the absence. Supervisors will determine if accrued leave must be used for late arrival. If the decision is made to close Roane County Offices, full-time employees will be paid for such time off. In the case of part-time employees, payment will be at the discretion of the elected official.

In the event of inclement weather, the decision to close will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Roane County Executive's Office, in collaboration with the Roane County Sheriff and Roane County Highway Superintendent. This decision will affect the Courthouse and other general County offices.

Fortunately, emergencies and inclement weather days are infrequent and, as always, the safety of our employees and citizens will be of paramount importance. The determination relative to closing will be made as soon as it is deemed to be reasonably necessary. Roane County Government will make every effort to remain open.

Closing/delayed opening information will be given to the three major television stations and posts on the Roane County Government social medial accounts. (WBIR, WATE, and WVLT) and WIVK (FM 107.7) local media (BBB 105.7 WWOK) as soon as it has been determined. Department Heads or their designees may determine closing for departments that work evenings and/or weekends. If you have any questions about an official closing, you should contact your immediate supervisor.

## Telecommuting/Temporary Telecommuting

In the event of an emergency such as a weather disaster pandemic or for other circumstances approved by the respective County Official, the Roane County

Government may allow or require employees to work from home temporarily to ensure continuity of county business.

## Personnel Files

Tennessee law requires that "all state, County, and municipal records ... shall at all times, during business hours, be open for ... inspection by any citizen of Tennessee." The statute applies to personnel records and allows employees to review personnel files, as well as allowing any member of the public to do so. (Medical records are not part of the personnel file.)

There is, however, restricted access to certain types of employee information. The following records of government employees will not be open for inspection by members of the public:

- unpublished telephone numbers
- bank account information
- social security numbers
- driver's license information - unless driving a vehicle is part of the employee's duties or incidental to the performance of the job
- the same information about an employee's immediate family
- any information relating to an employee's disability status or requests for job-related accommodations due to a disability

The personnel files are maintained in the Payroll Department. To review a file, contact the Payroll Department. A sign-out sheet will be in each file showing who reviewed the file and the date. An employee of the Benefits Coordinator/Payroll Department will remain in the room while the file is being reviewed.

It is important that any change in personal information is reported promptly to the Benefits Coordinator. Other records, such as educational accomplishments, should also be reported as they are factors in consideration for future promotional opportunity. Be sure that the Benefits Coordinator always has:

1. Correct address and contact numbers such as telephone, cellular phone, pager, etc.
2. Marital status
3. Increases or decreases in number of dependents
4. Any change affecting Social Security records
5. Correct beneficiary information.

# Performance Evaluations

Managers will conduct formal performance evaluations annually and periodically throughout the year as necessary. The supervisor makes a rated evaluation based on the following competencies:

Job knowledge  
Customer Service  
Teamwork/Collaboration  
Communication

Interpersonal Skills  
Performance  
Outcome orientation  
Reliability

For supervisors:

Leads/Develops/Recognizes Staff  
Job Knowledge/Accountability

Salary increases are typically available at the beginning of each fiscal year, with approved funding by the County Commission.

## Bonus Policy

From time to time and depending on the availability of funds and other factors, the County or Officials/Department Heads may provide incentive compensation to employees. To be eligible for the bonus payment, an employee must be on the payroll at the time the bonus is paid.

Decisions regarding the amount of a lump-sum bonus must be dependent upon the nature and complexity of the accomplishment(s) and the ability of the department to fund the payout. The payment will be taxed at the federal withholding rate established by the IRS, in addition to other required taxes. A letter of commendation will be placed in the personnel file of employee(s) receiving a bonus, recognizing the accomplishment(s) of the employee(s).

The Bonus Plan is provided at the discretion of Roane County Government. The fact and amount of any incentive compensation are within the sole and absolute discretion of the County.

Longevity Pay is given to employees to reward commitment to the County by their long-term service - at 25 consecutive years.

### Promotions, Transfers and Reassignments

Promotions: Roane County continually strives to promote employees and fill job vacancies on an equal opportunity basis. Promotions are based on an objective evaluation of each vacancy and the candidates involved. Vacancies will be advertised and, where appropriate, Roane County will promote from within. Outside recruitment may be necessary based on the qualifications and skills of

internal applicants.

Job postings may be viewed on the Roane County web site at [roanecountytn.gov](http://roanecountytn.gov).

Transfers and Reassignments: Roane County Government may, at its discretion, initiate or approve employee job transfers. Current employees may request a voluntary job transfer by applying for a posted open position. To be eligible for a voluntary transfer, employees must be able to meet the requirements of the new position, must have satisfactory performance, must have held his or her current position for at least six months, and must have no adverse disciplinary actions during the same time period. Employees transferring to an open position are subject to the standard probationary period of six (6) months during which leave days are accrued according to the appropriate accrual schedule.

## Discipline Procedure

In cases where an employee displays inappropriate conduct or poor performance--and the circumstances do not warrant prompt dismissal from employment--Roane County generally employs a progressive discipline process. If the circumstances and seriousness of the offense dictate, an employee may be promptly terminated without implementing the progressive discipline procedure. Misconduct that involves dishonesty, violations of the law, violations of County policies or violations that involve serious risk to the County's operation or the safety or well-being of oneself or others is grounds for immediate termination of employment. The facts and circumstances of each case will determine what actions up to and including termination from employment is appropriate. ***ALL forms of discipline MUST be documented by the Supervisor/Department Head/Elected Official and provided to Benefits Coordinator for placement in the employee's file. This documentation must include time, date, performance issue, performance plan, and signatures of the employee and the Supervisor/Department Head/Elected Official.*** Although the County typically prefers to utilize the steps below, the County reserves the right to employ any level of discipline that it considers appropriate under the circumstances.

- Verbal - The first step is often a verbal warning from the supervisor which identifies the issue and the corrective action needed from the employee. The supervisor documents this step by providing appropriate documentation to the Benefits Coordinator Director for review and placement in the employee's personnel file. The employee may submit a statement for the file, if desired.
- Written - The second step is often a written warning, which appropriately describes the issue and the corrective action needed. The written warning will be discussed with the employee, and a copy of the warning will be sent to the Benefits Coordinator Director for review and placement in the employee's file. The employee may submit a statement for the file, if desired.

- Adverse Action - If previous attempts at correction have not been successful, the County may take a form of adverse action such as suspension, demotion, or termination. Adverse actions must be approved in advance by the Department Head/Elected Official.

## Personal Cell Phone Use

Personal phone calls or text messages during working hours distract employees from job responsibilities and may be disruptive to coworkers. Employees should limit the placing or receiving of personal phone calls during working hours to those required in emergency situations. Employees are expected to inform friends and family members of this policy and will be held accountable for their actions under the disciplinary procedure. *Any information pertaining to work conducted from a personal device may be subject to subpoena or open records request(s).*

## Involuntary Separation of Employment

Employment with Roane County Government is employment "at-will" and, as such, can be terminated by either party at any time, with or without cause. Terminations of employment initiated by the County are considered involuntary.

At the time of termination, employees will be advised regarding final pay as well as benefit termination and/or continuation. **ALL** County owned property must be returned at the time of separation. Such property includes keys, cellphones, laptops, identification cards, etc. Employees who are terminated involuntarily for cause will be paid for any earned but unused vacation.

*ANY employee whose employment has been involuntarily terminated for cause (egregious offenses such as theft, ethics violations, etc.) will NOT be eligible for rehire by any department within Roane County Government.*

## Basic Work Rules

The County has certain policies and rules to govern employee conduct and performance. The most important rule is to use "good sense" at all times. The County has established some basic work rules that must not be violated. Violation of these or similar rules may result in discipline up to and including immediate termination.

**Absenteeism or Tardiness:** When an employee fails to report to work as scheduled, it makes it more difficult to serve our citizens. Each employee plays an important role in our operation, and his or her absence or tardiness places an unnecessary burden on fellow employees. Employees are expected to report to work on time as scheduled, to limit breaks to the time allowed, and to stay on the job until the end of his or her scheduled workday.

**Breach of Confidence or Security:** Because of the nature of our work, we cannot tolerate any breaches of our security measures or confidential relationships.

**County Premises:** Except for areas that are open to the public, you are allowed on County premises only during your scheduled work hours, unless otherwise authorized by your supervisor. Exempt employees may receive authorization to work on premises at any time outside work hours.

**Damage to Property:** A tremendous investment has been made in our facilities and equipment to better serve our citizens and to make jobs easier. Deliberate, reckless, or careless damage to the County's property, or property of others, will not be tolerated. If appropriate, damage to property will be reported to law enforcement agencies.

**Discourtesy or Disrespect:** The County expects all employees to be courteous, polite, and friendly to our citizens and others, and to fellow employees. No one should use profanity or show disrespect to a citizen or co-worker or engage in any activity which could harm our reputation.

**Fighting, Threats, or Weapons:** The County does not allow fighting, threatening words or conduct, loud or abusive language, or any other actions that could injure a citizen, fellow employee, or member of the public, regardless of where such words or actions occur. We also do not allow the possession of weapons of any kind on County premises, except for authorized law enforcement officials.

**Fraud, Dishonesty or False Statements:** No employee or applicant may falsify or make any misrepresentations on or about any application, resume, document establishing identity or work status, medical record, insurance form, invoice, paperwork, time sheet, timecard, or any other document. Observation of such violations must be reported to supervisors immediately.

**Harassment:** The County's No Harassment Policy, set forth in detail in this Handbook, strictly prohibits harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, citizenship, age, handicap or disability, or any other category protected by law.

**Injuries and Accidents:** Every injury, no matter how slight, must be reported immediately to supervisors for first aid treatment or medical care. In the event of a job-related injury or accident, a provider must be chosen from the County's panel of physicians. The County may require a doctor's release before returning to work.

**Insubordination:** All employees have duties to perform and everyone, including your supervisor, must follow directions from someone. Employees must not refuse to follow the directions of a supervisor or member of management, unless



the directions are unethical or a violation of policy. Unethical actions or requests and violations of policy must be reported to the Department Head/Elected Official. Employees witnessing unethical actions or being directed by their supervisor to carry out unethical actions or violations of policy may report those instances without fear of retaliation.

**Leaving Early and Returning Late:** Leaving early or returning late from breaks or lunch is prohibited. Leaving assigned work areas before quitting time to change clothes or make preparations to leave before the end of scheduled shifts is prohibited.

**Misuse of Property:** Employees may not misuse or use without authorization, any equipment, vehicle, or other property of customers, vendors, other employees, or the County.

**Poor Performance:** The County expects all employees to make every effort to learn the assigned job and to perform at a satisfactory level. Employees who fail to maintain a satisfactory level of performance are subject to immediate termination.

**Shortages:** Employees who handle cash as a part of assigned job duties must follow all internal controls, and will be held accountable and may be required to pay for all shortages. Employees who handle cash as a part of their job duties may also be disciplined for such shortages, up to and including immediate termination.

**Sleeping or Inattention:** To protect the safety of all employees and to properly serve our customers, employees must be fully alert while on the job. Sleeping or inattention on the job will not be tolerated.

**Solicitation or Distribution:** Solicitation by an employee of another employee during the working hours of either employee for any reason is prohibited. Distribution of advertising materials, handbills, or other literature is prohibited in all working areas. Solicitation and distribution by non-employees is prohibited on County premises.

**Substance Abuse:** Substance abuse will not be tolerated. Employees testing positive for the presence of drugs or alcohol may be subject to immediate termination. Possession, use, sale, manufacture, purchase or working under the influence of drugs, alcohol or other intoxicants will not be tolerated.

**Theft:** Stealing or attempting to steal County property, property belonging to others, or the theft of time through falsification of timecards is strictly prohibited. Any County property removed from the premises requires written permission in advance from supervisor(s).

**Unlawful Activity:** Employees should not engage in any unlawful or unethical activity, including, but not limited to activity either on County property, or off the job, since such activity can adversely affect the County's reputation and/or the employee's ability to effectively perform the duties of his or her position.

**Unsafe Work Practices:** Roane County Government is committed to providing a safe place to work. A safety program has been established to ensure everyone understands the importance of safety. This program requires all employees to exercise good judgment and common sense during day-to-day work activities. Horseplay and practical jokes can cause accidents and injuries and, therefore, are prohibited.

**Violation of these or similar rules may lead to discipline, up to and including immediate termination.**

Obviously, this list is not all inclusive and there may be other circumstances for which employees may be disciplined or terminated. Any questions regarding these rules, or expectations of employees must be discussed with supervisor(s).

## **Resignations**

Employees choosing to resign any position should notify immediate supervisor(s) or the Department Head in writing no less than ten (10) working days before the expected termination date. Failure to provide such a notice will be recorded in personnel files and may constitute ineligibility for re-hire. Employees who resign without providing proper notice will not be paid for unused vacation/annual leave.

## **Exit Interviews**

Employees resigning or retiring from any position with Roane County Government may be asked to participate with an exit interview.

## **Reduction in Force**

A reduction in force is the release of an employee due to lack of funds, curtailment of work, or reorganization. If a reduction in force becomes necessary, the County will make decisions based on the needs of the Department(s) affected and the job knowledge, skill, work performance and seniority of the employees.

## **Safety**

Roane County is concerned with employee health and safety while performing job tasks. Employees must observe all safety rules and report any unsafe activity to the Risk Management Department. Any workplace accidents, incidents, or injuries must be reported immediately to your direct supervisor and the Risk Management Department. If an employee is injured and unable to report the

incident immediately, the report should occur as quickly as possible.

For additional information about any safety concern, please consult the Risk Management Department.

## Workplace Chemicals

Roane County Government maintains a Hazard Communication Program, including lists of all hazardous chemicals with which employees may work. The County also maintains copies of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) on each chemical. The MSDS explains procedures required to safely work with each chemical, as well as a written description of the Hazard Communication Program. Training will be provided before exposure to or working with a chemical declared "hazardous" by OSHA. Prior to working with chemicals, read container labels for instructions and/or safety requirements. Consult supervisors regarding MSDS requirements, including any safety equipment needed. Evaluate any unusual or non-routine task for chemical hazards. Report any safety issues or requirements to supervisors or managers, if necessary. Immediately notify supervisors of any chemical containers which are leaking or unlabeled. If uncertain regarding the disposal of a chemical, please consult supervisors or managers. When purchasing new chemicals, always obtain an MSDS and provide this information to supervisor(s) prior to use.

## Garnishments and Levies

If a garnishment or similar proceedings are instituted against an employee, Roane County Government will deduct the required amount from the employee's paycheck.

## Alcohol and Drugs Policy

Roane County Government is responsible for maintaining a safe and efficient working environment. Employees who use drugs or work while under the influence of drugs or alcohol present a safety hazard to themselves and fellow employees. Moreover, the use of drugs and alcohol by employees limits their ability to perform their work with the highest amount of efficiency.

Employees are prohibited from being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, while on duty or on County property. Employees may not possess, sell, solicit, or receive illegal drugs or alcohol while on duty or on County property. Violation of this policy is grounds for immediate termination.

The County reserves the right to require employees, while on duty or while on County property, to agree to inspections of all County property at any time. Searches of individual or personal property

may be conducted as authorized by law. If an employee withholds consent to such an inspection, the County may discipline the employee, up to and including termination.

The County reserves the right to conduct drug/alcohol testing in the following situations:

- Applicants for employment to safety sensitive positions
- Employees involved in an accident on the job that resulted in, or could have resulted in, substantial injury to person or property
- Reasonable suspicion

If an employee tests positive for the use of drugs or alcohol, a confirmatory test will be given. If the employee also tests positive on the confirmatory test, the County may discipline the employee, up to and including termination. If an employee refuses to submit to a drug test when requested, the County may discipline the employee up to and including termination of employment.

Certain employees are subject to federally required DOT drug and alcohol testing. For those employees, compliance with the federally mandated testing program is a condition of employment.

This policy is for the benefit of all employees and cooperation with the policy is required. Roane County Government believes this policy is necessary to ensure a safe and secure working environment.

## **Applicant Drugs Testing Policy**

### **Applicant Drug Testing Policy**

All candidates receiving an offer of employment from Roane County for a safety sensitive position are required to undergo testing for commonly abused controlled substances in accordance with this policy. Candidates must advise the testing lab of all prescription drugs taken in the past month before the test and be prepared to show proof of such prescriptions to testing lab personnel. Candidates refusing to submit to a drug test or who fail to show up for a drug test will no longer be considered for employment.

All records containing test results will be kept in medical files that are maintained separately from Roane County personnel files.

## **Tobacco Use**

Pursuant to the Non-Smoker Protection Act, Tennessee Code, tobacco use is

prohibited in enclosed areas of County property, including but not limited to, cafeterias, employee lounges, hallways, court rooms, meeting rooms, offices, restrooms, and company vehicles. Tobacco use may take place only in designated unenclosed areas. The use of e-cigarettes, vaping devices, and smokeless tobacco is prohibited in any enclosed areas of County property, as well. Tobacco use is also prohibited in any County owned vehicle. Any violation of this provision may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## Electronic Communications

This policy contains guidelines for the use, access, monitoring and disclosure of Electronic Communications created, sent, received, transmitted, or stored by employees using any County-provided communication system or equipment and employee-provided systems or equipment used either in the workplace or during working time. "Electronic Communications" include, among other things, messages, images, or any other information contained in e-mail, voice mail, fax machines, computers, personal digital assistants, pagers, telephones, cellular and mobile phones, Intranet, or Internet. (In the remainder of this policy, all these communication devices are collectively referred to as "Systems.")

**Acceptable Uses of Our Systems:** Employees may use Systems to communicate internally with co-workers or externally with constituents, suppliers, vendors, advisors, and other business acquaintances for business purposes. The County provides employees with access to Systems to facilitate these business communications and to enhance productivity.

**Management's Right to Access Electronic Communications:** All Electronic Communications contained in Systems are County records. Although each employee may have an individual password to access Systems, the Systems belong to Roane County and the contents of the Systems and Electronic Communications conducted on the Systems are accessible by the County at all times for any business purpose. The Systems will be subject to periodic unannounced inspections and should be treated like other shared filing systems. The contents of Systems will be monitored by and disclosed to the County without further notice to employees. Thus, employees should not assume that Electronic Communications are confidential or private. Drug -up copies of Electronic Communications in Systems will be maintained and referenced.

**Personal Use of Our Systems:** The County provides Systems to assist employees in the performance of their jobs. The County reserves the right and employees agree to permit the County to use, access, monitor and disclose all Electronic Communications on Systems without regard to content. Because employees' personal communications and information can be accessed without advance notice, employees should not use Systems for communication or information that employees do not want discussed with or known to third parties. For example, employees should not use Systems for gossip; personal information

about themselves or others; for forwarding messages under circumstances likely to embarrass themselves or others; or for emotional responses to business correspondence or work situations. Employees also should not use Systems for such purposes as soliciting for commercial ventures, religious or personal causes, outside organizations, or other similar, non-job-related situations.

Although incidental and occasional personal use of Systems not interfering or conflicting with the County's business is permitted, personal communications in Systems are treated as all other Electronic Communications, and will be used, accessed, monitored, and disclosed by the County at any time without further notice.

The use of unauthorized thumb/zip drives is prohibited.

Employees may not install any software on any County-provided System or copy software from any County-provided System without the prior written permission of our Systems Supervisor. Involving the Systems Supervisor ensures that the County can manage the software on its Systems, prevent the introduction of computer viruses, and meet its obligations under any applicable software licenses and copyright laws. Computer software is protected from unauthorized copying and use by federal and state law. The unauthorized copying or use of computer software exposes the County and individual employees to substantial fines and/or imprisonment.

**Forbidden Uses of Our Systems:** Employees may not use Systems in a manner that violates the No Harassment Policy, Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, or other County policies. Employees may not use Systems in any way that may be deemed insulting, disruptive, obscene, offensive, or harmful to morale. Examples of forbidden transmissions include, among other things, sexually explicit messages, images, cartoons, or jokes; propositions; ethnic or racial slurs; or any other message or image that may be in violation of our No Harassment policy.

In addition, employees may not use Systems:

- to carry any defamatory, discriminatory, or obscene material
- in a manner that violates the terms of any telecommunications license or any laws governing transborder data flow including but not limited to laws dealing with data collection, protection, privacy, confidentiality and security
- in connection with any attempt to penetrate computer or network security of any County or other System, or to gain unauthorized access or attempted

access to any other person's Electronic Communications Systems or equipment

- in connection with any infringement of another person's intellectual property rights, including but not limited to copyrights; and
- in connection with the violation or attempted violation of any law

**Electronic Forgery:** Electronic forgery is defined as misrepresenting, disguising, or concealing a person's identity or another's identity in any way while using Electronic Communications; making changes to Electronic Communications without clearly indicating that such changes have been made and by whom; or using another person's account without prior written approval of the account owner and without identifying that the author is someone other than the account owner. Electronic forgery is not allowed for any purposes.

**Intellectual Property Rights:** Employees must always respect copyrights and trademarks of third parties and their ownership claims in images, text, video and audio material, software, information, and inventions. Employees should not copy, use, or transfer proprietary materials of others without appropriate authorization. Downloaded software and other copyrighted material may be subject to licensing obligations or restrictions. Software labeled as "freeware" or "shareware" may contain licensing restrictions that prohibit or limit the usage or commercialization of such items. If questions arise in this regard, contact the Systems Supervisor. The County will cooperate with the copyright holder and legal officials in all copyright matters.

**System Integrity, Security, and Encryption:** All Systems passwords and encryption keys must be available to the County and employees may not use passwords that are unknown to the County. Employees may not install password or encryption programs without the written permission of our Systems supervisor and without turning over encryption keys to supervisors. Further, employees are prohibited from the unauthorized use of passwords and encryption keys belonging to other employees to gain access to the other employee's messages, information, or communications, passwords must remain secure and confidential.

**Consequences of Violations of the County's Electronic Communications Policy:** Violations of this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including **immediate termination of an employee's employment, as well as possible civil liabilities or criminal prosecution.** Where the County deems it appropriate, legal officials or other appropriate third parties may be advised of any illegal violations. The County will cooperate in investigations conducted by legal officials or appropriate third parties. The County will not retaliate against

employees reporting violations or assisting with investigations of possible violations of this policy.

## Social Media Policy

Roane County understands that social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share events and opinions with family, friends, and co-workers. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist employees with responsible decision-making pertaining to the use of social media, the following guidelines have been established.

This policy applies to all employees.

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including but not limited to:

- Social Networking Sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.)
- Microblogging sites (Twitter, Tumblr, etc.)
- Video and Photo Sharing Website/Applications (Flicker, YouTube, SmugMug, Snapfish, Snapchat, TikTok, etc.)

The term social media refers to the use of web-based and mobile technologies that create interactive dialogue from communications. Social Media substantially changes communication between organizations, communities, and individuals because it is easily accessible.

Ultimately, employees are solely responsible for online posts. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks that are involved. Keep in mind that any conduct that adversely affects job performance, the performance of fellow employees or otherwise adversely affects citizens or Roane County's legitimate interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Whether or not employees participate in social media, it is the policy of Roane County Government that employees who participate in commentary understand there are two levels of social media engagement:

- **Official use** - social media engagement on behalf of Roane County Government on sites where we have an official Web presence; and
- **Personal use** - day-to-day use of social media sites by employees, not related to official duties. Employees must be mindful that in their personal participation in social media sites, they must not present themselves as being the official position of Roane County Government. Finally, employees must be aware that misconduct committed on a social media site may result in appropriate discipline.



Personal use of social media during working hours is discouraged. The detection of social media engagement during working hours may result in appropriate discipline. When using social media, whether on behalf of Roane County Government or on their own time, employees are bound by the Roane County Code of Ethics.

## Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

Roane County Government is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe work environment. Given the increasing violence in society in general, Roane County has adopted the following guidelines to deal with intimidation, harassment, or other threats of (or actual) violence that may occur during business hours or on its premises.

All employees should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. No one other than law enforcement officials, carrying a weapon while in the course of their duties, may bring firearms, weapons, or other dangerous or hazardous devices of substance on the premises of Roane County Government.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, or a member of the public, will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes all acts of harassment, including harassment that is based on an individual's sex, race, age, or any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

All threats of (or actual) violence, both direct and indirect, should be reported as soon as possible to immediate supervisor(s) or any other member of management. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by vendors, solicitors, or other members of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, employees should be as specific and detailed as possible.

All suspicious individuals or activities must be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. Employees should not place his-or-herself in danger. Employees seeing or hearing a commotion or disturbance in or around work areas should not try to intercede.

Roane County Government will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of (or actual) violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. To maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, the County may suspend employees, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

Anyone determined to be responsible for threats of (or actual) violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Roane County Government encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisor before the situation escalates into potential violence. Roane County is eager to assist in the resolution of employee disputes and will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

## Personal Appearance

Our professional atmosphere is maintained, in part, by the image we present to our constituents and vendors. We expect all employees to present a neat, well-groomed appearance and a courteous disposition. These qualities go further than any other factors in making a favorable impression on the public and fellow workers. Employees should avoid extremes in dress. Flashy, skimpy or revealing clothing is unacceptable. Employees should dress in a businesslike manner. Good personal hygiene is important to maintain our constituents' favorable opinion as well as showing respect for your fellow employees. Accordingly, employees are expected to come to work in a clean condition.

### Grooming Standards

- Hair should be neat, clean, and trimmed
- Hair length, style and color should be appropriate for your job
  - Any hair style which projects an unprofessional appearance should not be worn while working
- Facial hair (for males) should be clean and neatly trimmed
- Jewelry should be appropriate for the work setting, convey a professional appearance and should not be excessive
- Refrain from wearing perfumes or using lotions with a strong odor which could be offensive to coworkers

### Standards of Dress

Roane County Government's dress code allows employees to wear business casual attire. This policy is an expression of trust in employees' judgement to dress in a manner reflecting the County's image. The term "business attire" is subjective, meaning different things to different people, referring to more comfortable business attire, appropriate for the business environment. Some examples of appropriate and inappropriate attire are as follows:

Appropriate	Inappropriate
<b>Pants</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skirts (no more than 2" above knee)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sweatpants</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slacks, khakis, capris</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shorts (depending on work environment)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jeans (acceptable on</li> </ul>	

Fridays/more casual days)	
<b>Shirts</b>	
• Collared or golf shirts	• T-shirts*
• Oxford shirts	• Halter tops/tank tops
• Sweaters, blouses or dress shirts	• Crop tops, clothing showing midriffs
<b>Shoes</b>	
• Casual shoes	• Flip flops
• Loafers	• Athletic shoes/tennis shoes (acceptable for more casual days)
• Open toe/open back shoes	

\*T-shirts may be approved for specific events.

Certain staff members may be required to meet special dress, grooming and hygiene standards, such as wearing uniforms or protective clothing, depending on the nature of their job.

At the discretion of the Elected Official or Department Head, in special circumstances, staff members may be permitted to dress in a more casual fashion that is normally required. On these occasions, staff members are still expected to present a neat appearance and are not permitted to wear ripped, frayed or disheveled clothing or athletic wear. Likewise, tight, revealing, or otherwise workplace inappropriate dress is not permitted.

Employees are expected to always observe our Personal Appearance Policy while at work. Employees who report to work in unacceptable attire or appearance may be requested to leave work and return in acceptable attire or appearance. Such time off from work will be without pay for non-exempt employees.

Managers are responsible for ensuring employees project a professional image and adhere to our Personal Appearance Policy.

## Workers' Compensation Policy

Any employee sustaining an injury or an illness during the course and scope of his or her employment which is determined to be compensable under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Law shall be entitled to receive Workers' Compensation leave after the seven (7) day waiting period. This leave shall not be counted against any accrued sick leave that the employee has accumulated. Benefits that are receivable by the employee will be determined by the provision of the Workers' Compensation Law.

# LEAVE POLICIES

## Annual Leave / Vacation

Roane County Government offers eligible employees' vacation/annual leave with pay. Employees are encouraged to schedule sufficient time off for relaxation to promote employee wellness. An employee may use this leave for any purpose he or she wishes, including vacations, unpaid holidays, volunteerism, or personal pursuits. These absences should be scheduled in advance with supervisory approval.

All regular, full-time employees are eligible for vacation/annual leave after 6 months of consecutive employment (probationary period).

The amount of vacation/annual leave to which an employee becomes entitled is determined by the employee's length of full-time service. Vacation/annual leave is granted or accrued, based on the employee's full-time date of hire.

## Vacation accrual

0 to 6 months, accrual at .23 days per pay period (2.3 days)

6 months and 1 day to 5 years, accrual at .46 days per pay period (12 days annually)

5 years and 1 day to 10 years, accrual at .69 days per pay period (18 days annually)

10 years and 1 day to retirement/termination, accrual at .77 days per pay period (20 days annually)

Employees may accrue up to 24 vacation days and roll them over at year end. Employees who have accrued 25 to 29 vacation days may have the days above the cap paid out after days are adjusted in January or he/she may choose to roll the days above the cap to sick leave.

Employees who have accrued 30 days or more must roll over all days above 20 to sick leave at the end of the year.

New employees or employees who have been reinstated in county service shall take no vacation during the first six months of employment, unless an agreement, based upon a reasonable need or prior commitment, was approved by the Official/Department Head and new hire at the initial hiring. Upon re-hire of any person previously employed in Roane County Government, after that employee completes his or her six-month probationary period, that employee shall be reinstated to the same rate of vacation earnings that employee received at the time he or she last separated from employment with Roane County Government.

## Vacation/Annual Scheduling Conflicts

Vacation/annual leave scheduling conflicts will be resolved fairly and appropriately as management sees fit. Generally, with all other factors being equal, preference will be given to the employee who makes the earliest request. Other legitimate factors may be considered, including seniority and the amount of vacation time previously taken by the employees involved.

## Minimum Vacation/Annual Leave Increments

Eligible employees may take vacation/annual leave, with prior supervisory approval, at times that best meet the needs of the department. Employees must take vacation/annual leave in increments of at least a half hour. It is each supervisor's responsibility to monitor such absences and to ensure that absences do not become excessive in relation to the hours worked by the employee.

## Notice of absence

Generally, requests for vacation/annual leave must be submitted to the supervisor at least one week in advance. Employees may have the right in certain circumstances to make leave requests under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or other laws on shorter notice. If the employee is requesting vacation/annual leave for family or medical purposes, the employee must make sure that this purpose is made clear to supervisors. The supervisor must approve any exceptions to this provision or any conflicts in scheduling. A department may impose additional guidelines as necessary to ensure efficiency and adequate staffing levels.

## Termination of Employment

Employees who resign with proper notice or whose employment is terminated for reasons other than cause will receive pay for unused vacation/annual leave.

## Annual Leave Scheduling

Employees must submit your annual leave requests to supervisors and receive approval prior to taking the leave.

## Sick Leave Accrual

Full-time employees will receive full pay during incapacity caused by illness when accumulated sick leave is available, approved and taken. Employees may accumulate sick leave; however, it is non-compensable upon the employee's termination of employment.

### Earning and Accumulating Sick Leave

- Employees will earn one sick day per month of employment.
- There is no maximum on the accumulation of sick days.
- Accumulated unused sick days can be certified to be counted toward

retirement credit with TCRS.

## Use of Sick Leave

An employee may use sick leave for absence due to his or her own illness or injury or that of an immediate family member defined as:

- The employee's spouse
- The employee's parents
- The spouses' parents
- Children or children under legal guardianship of the employee and/or spouse
- The care of a relative living in the employee's home

Sick leave may also be used for appointments with a licensed doctor, dentist or recognized practitioner.

### Documentation of sick leave

Employees are required to notify their immediate supervisor prior to their scheduled start time if sick leave is needed. After three (3) consecutive days of absence, a doctor's excuse may be required. The Department Head may also request a doctor's statement anytime they deem necessary.

### Exhaustion of sick leave

Employees who have exhausted accumulated sick leave will not receive financial compensation for additional days needed due to illness or injury. For any additional time needed, the employee will be considered on leave without pay unless the employee has vacation/annual leave or compensatory time available. The employee may request the additional sick leave needed be credited against the vacation/annual leave or compensatory time.

### Voluntary Leave Transfer Policy

The Voluntary Leave Transfer Policy (VLTP) allows the transfer of accrued sick and vacation time from one employee to another who faces a verified hardship/health condition affecting the employee. In unique situations, and with approval from the Elected Official or Department Head, employees may donate sick or vacation leave to a coworker who has depleted all available leave but still has a legitimate and ongoing need for sick leave. Requests to make donations should be submitted in writing to the appropriate official.

A qualifying condition is:

- Hardship events may include, but are not limited to, serious illness or injury of the employee or an immediate family member, or other unforeseen circumstances that significantly impact the employee's ability to work.

## Provisions:

1. Recipients must exhaust any accrued leave prior to receiving a donation of sick time.
2. The request to donate sick or vacation days must be submitted to the Elected Official or Department Head for approval. The supervisor will review the request, assessing its validity based on the nature of the hardship.
3. Approval will be granted on a case-by-case basis.
4. All information regarding the hardship and the transfer of hours will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.
5. Donations may not be used by the recipient longer than is medically necessary. Leave recipients will not retain unused donated sick/vacation leave after the qualifying health condition ends.
6. An employee is prohibited from engaging in direct or indirect actions such as intimidation, threats, coercion, or any attempts thereof, with the intent to interfere with another employee's decision to donate, use, or receive sick or vacation time. Additionally, these actions should not influence any employee's choice to refrain from donating, using, or receiving such time.

## Bereavement Leave / Funeral Leave

In the event of a death in the employee's immediate family, (immediate family is defined as spouse, parents, spouses' parents, children, brother, sister, grandparents, grandchildren, and spouses' grandparent) the employee is allowed three (3) working days of paid bereavement leave per occurrence. If additional leave is needed, two (2) sick days may be used. The Elected Official/Department Head may request the employee to provide written documentation indicating the name of deceased, relationship to employee and dates of bereavement leave.

\*\*Please note that Roane County Government limits the purchase of flowers for Roane County Government employees and immediate family members only. Immediate family is defined as parents, spouse, and children.

## Holidays

Roane County publishes a holiday schedule each year to be uniformly observed, unless otherwise determined by the Department Head/Elected Official/Department Head to avoid interruption of a public service. Full-time, regular and introductory employees who are not required to work on the holiday will receive their regular rate of pay for the day. If a holiday falls within an employee's scheduled vacation period, vacation time will not be charged for the holiday. Non-exempt employees required to work the holiday will be compensated with holiday pay, unless otherwise specified or provided for. Employees must have worked 40 hours to get time and half.

Part-time employees are not eligible to receive holiday pay.

## Leaves of Absence

All full-time regular employees may be granted a period of personal leave without pay wholly at the discretion of the Elected Official or Department Head.

- Leaves of absence must be requested in writing to the Department Head/Elected Official. This request should be made enough in advance to provide supervisors sufficient time to assess workload and consider the planned leave of other employees. The Department Head/Elected Official reserves the right to deny or cancel leave of absence.
- Elected Officials may elect to disallow leaves of absence within their department. Employees must verify the allowance of leaves of absence with supervisors within your department. If leaves of absence are allowed, the leave request must be approved in writing. The written approval must be given to the Benefits Coordinator/Payroll Department.

## Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Roane County offers leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for eligible employees.

**Eligibility:** Employees who have worked for Roane County Government at least one year and for 1,250 hours during the twelve (12) month period preceding the request are eligible to take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave annually when the absence is necessitated by any of the following circumstances:

- the birth or placement for adoption or foster care of a son or daughter
- employee's own serious health condition that prevents employees from performing the essential job functions
- the serious health condition of a son or daughter, parent, or spouse under the care of the employee.

**Applications:** Applications (available in the Payroll Department) for FMLA leave must be submitted in writing. Applications should be submitted at least thirty (30) days before the leave is to start, or as soon as possible if leave is not foreseeable. Employees must provide the County with an appropriate medical certification when you request FMLA.

**Certification:** Requests for leave related to the employee's own serious health condition, or to care for the serious condition of a son or daughter, parent or spouse, require certification from the treating healthcare provider. Healthcare Provider Certification Forms are available in the Payroll Department.

**Measuring:** Roane County has chosen the "rolling" 12-month period measured backward from the date the leave begins.

*Example: Employee requests a three week leave to begin September 1. Look back*



*the previous year to determine how much FMLA leave has been used. If nine weeks or less were used, then three weeks are available.*

**Intermittent or Reduced-Time Leave:** FMLA leave can be taken on an intermittent or reduced-time basis under certain circumstances. Employees may request intermittent or reduced leave for the following reasons:

- When medically necessary to care for a seriously ill family member, or because of the employee's own serious health condition.
  - For the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care.
- Intermittent or reduced time leave shall not exceed 12 weeks combined if both spouses are employed by the County.

Only the amount of leave taken while on intermittent/reduced schedule leave may be charged as FMLA leave. If employees need intermittent/reduced schedule leave for planned medical treatment, the employee must work with supervisors to schedule the leave, so it does not unduly disrupt the department's operations.

The County may, in its sole discretion, temporarily transfer an employee on intermittent leave to an alternative job with equivalent pay and benefits that accommodate recurring periods of leave better than the employee's regular job.

**Serious Health Condition:** "Serious health condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves:

- any period of incapacity or treatment connected with inpatient care (i.e., an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility; or
- a period of incapacity requiring absence of more than three calendar days from work that also involves continuing treatment by (or under the supervision of) a healthcare provider; or
- any period of incapacity due to pregnancy, or for prenatal care; or
- any period of incapacity (or resulting treatment) due to a chronic serious health condition (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.); or
- a period of incapacity that is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective (e.g., Alzheimer's, stroke, terminal diseases, dialysis, etc.), or
- any absences to receive multiple treatments (including any period of recovery) by, or on referral by, a healthcare provider for a condition that likely would result in incapacity of more than three consecutive days if left untreated (e.g., chemotherapy, physical therapy, dialysis, etc.).

**Medical/Dental Insurance Premiums:** During FMLA leave, the County will continue to pay its portion of the medical/dental insurance premiums. Employees must continue to pay the employee portion of the premium. Employee portions of insurance premiums should be paid continually according to the

payroll schedule (i.e., bi-weekly).

Employees who do not return to work at the end of FMLA leave may be required to reimburse the County for payment of insurance premiums, unless the employee's failure to return is due to a serious health condition which prevents the performance of the job or circumstances beyond the employee's control. Employee's may then choose to elect COBRA coverage. Sufficient notice will be given to the employee at the end of FMLA when and if this event occurs. Employees will be responsible for any other elected contributions while out on FMLA.

**Accrued Leave:** Employees are required to use all available vacation time during FMLA leave, and available sick days will be used when family leave is taken because of serious health conditions. Accrued leave and FMLA leave are used at the same time; employees do not take accrued leave first and then take FMLA.

During FMLA leave; if unpaid, employees will not accrue employment benefits, such as vacation/annual leave, sick leave, pension, etc. Employment benefits accrued through the day the family leave of absence begins will not be lost.

**Return to Work:** Upon returning from family and medical leave, eligible employees will normally be restored to their job, or an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions. However, an employee does not continue to accrue additional benefits such as personal leave or vacation/annual leave, for example, while on family and medical leave unless the employee is receiving regular pay by using available paid time off.

Use of family and medical leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that employees earned or were entitled to before using family and medical leave.

While on FMLA leave, employees must periodically update (if possible) supervisors or Department Heads regarding medical status/condition and indicate an intended to return to work date. Appropriate forms must be submitted to Benefits Coordinator to initiate FMLA leave or to return to active status. The Return-to-Work Release form provided with the initial FMLA application **MUST** be returned to Benefits Coordinator prior to returning to work. Failure to submit the Return-to-Work Release for will delay returning to work!

**Extensions:** Family and medical leave is available for twelve (12) weeks. The County may, at its discretion, approve extended personal leave without pay beyond that time. Any such leave will not be job protected. Requests for extended personal leave must be submitted to the Benefits Coordinator. If possible, requests for extended leave should be submitted two weeks in advance of the previously scheduled return to work date.

## Maternity Leave

Pregnancy, childbirth, and related conditions will be treated as any other temporary medical disability regarding leave policies. Leave is available under the same terms and conditions as for other similar purposes, for a period not to exceed four (4) months which is counted as part of Family Medical Leave (*see Family Medical Leave*)

1. The employee must have been employed by the County for at least twelve (12) consecutive months as a full-time employee.
2. In cases of adoption or foster care, the child must be under the age of one (1) year at the time of placement.
3. The employee must give the County at least three (3) months advance notice of the anticipated date the leave is to begin, except in cases of emergency; the entitlement to leave begins on the date of birth or placement and ends six weeks thereafter.

## Parental Leave

An employee who has been employed by Roane County Government for at least twelve (12) consecutive months as a full-time employee, may be absent from employment for a period not to exceed four (4) months in connection with pregnancy and childbirth. Eligibility for parental leave under this policy and the Family and Medical Leave policy counts against your entitlement under both laws. The specific content of the Tennessee Parental Leave Act found at T.C.A. § 4-21-408 is reproduced as follows:

Leave for adoption, pregnancy, childbirth and nursing an infant:

Employees who have been employed by the same employer for at least twelve (12) consecutive months as full-time employees, as determined by the employer at the job site or location, may be absent from such employment for a period not to exceed four (4) months for adoption, pregnancy, childbirth and nursing an infant, where applicable, referred to as "leave" in this section. Regarding adoption, the four-month period shall begin at the time an employee receives custody of the child.

Employees who give at least three (3) months' advance notice to their employer of their anticipated date of departure for such leave, their length of leave, and their intention to return to full-time employment after leave, shall be restored to their previous or similar positions with the same status, pay, length of service credit and seniority, wherever applicable, as of the date of their leave.

Employees who are prevented from giving three (3) months' advance notice because of a medical emergency that necessitates that leave begin earlier than

originally anticipated shall not forfeit their rights and benefits under this section solely because of their failure to give three (3) months' advance notice.

Employees who are prevented from giving three (3) months' advance notice because the notice of adoption was received less than three (3) months in advance shall not forfeit their rights and benefits under this section solely because of their failure to give three (3) month's advance notice.

Leave may be with or without pay at the discretion of the employer. Such leave shall not affect the employees' right to receive vacation time, sick leave, bonuses, advancement, seniority, length of service credit, benefits, plans or programs for which the employees were eligible at the date of their leave, and any other benefits or rights of their employment incident to the employees' employment position; provided, that the employer need not provide for the cost of any benefits, plans or programs during the period of such leave, unless such employer so provides for all employees on leaves of absence.

If an employee's job position is so unique that the employer cannot, after reasonable efforts, fill that position temporarily, then the employer shall not be liable under this section for failure to reinstate the employee at the end of the leave period.

The purpose of this section is to provide leave time to employees for adoption, pregnancy, childbirth and nursing the infant, where applicable; therefore, if an employer finds that the employee has utilized the period of leave to actively pursue other employment opportunities or if the employer finds that the employee has worked part-time or full-time for another employer during the period of leave, then the employer shall not be liable under this section for failure to reinstate the employee at the end of the leave.

Whenever the employer shall determine that the employee will not be reinstated at the end of the leave because the employee's position cannot be filled temporarily or because the employee has used the leave to pursue employment opportunities or to work for another employer, the employer shall so notify the employee.

Nothing contained within the provisions of this section shall be construed to:

- Affect any bargaining agreement or County policy that provides for greater or additional benefits than those required under this section
- Apply to any employer who employs fewer than one hundred (100) full-time employees on a permanent basis at the job site or location
- Diminish or restrict the rights of teachers to leave pursuant to title 49, chapter 5, part 7, or to return or to be reinstated after leave

## Military Leave

Employees who are members of any U.S. military reserve component, including the Tennessee Army and the Air National Guard, will be granted a leave of absence for all periods of military service during which they are engaged in the performance of duty or training for this state or for the United States of America under competent orders.

An employee required to report for military training must provide the appropriate orders to their supervisor. A Change of Status form must be completed and forwarded, along with a copy of the employee's military orders, to the Benefits Coordinator.

Any benefits the employee has elected will be suspended if and when the employee's military coverage takes effect. The employee will continue to pay the monthly premiums until military benefit coverage takes effect. The employee will be allowed to resume benefit coverage (with no waiting period) with Roane County upon his/her return to employment with the County.

## Jury Duty or Court Appearance

When employees must miss work due to jury or witness duty, the employee will be excused from work. Notice must be given to direct supervisors. Witness duty must pertain to job-related business for excused absence with regular pay. This also includes subpoenas to court on non-work-related issues.

Employees working day shifts, and whose jury service was under three hours, are expected to return to work upon being released from service. Employees working second or third shift are excused from the shift before their first day of jury duty, and if they have served for 3 hours or more on the day they are released, are also excused from the first shift that follows their release from jury duty.

Roane County Government employees are paid his or her regular wages.

## Voting Leave/Elections

In accordance with Tennessee State Law, employees entitled to vote in an election held in this state may be absent from work on the day of the election for a reasonable amount of time, not to exceed three (3) hours.

## **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

### Benefits Eligibility

Employees working a minimum of thirty (30) hours per week are eligible for benefits. These benefits include medical coverage, dental coverage, and supplemental benefit options.

Employees whose hours drop below thirty (30) hours per week on a regular basis will lose eligibility for medical/dental and other insurance coverage. The employee and all covered dependents will be offered COBRA. Employees are responsible for listing only dependents that are eligible for coverage as defined by the plan rules. If a covered dependent becomes ineligible based on the plan rules, it is the employee's responsibility to notify Benefits Coordinator immediately.

Per Resolution 4-19-14 Roane County does not allow spouses of employees who are eligible for group health insurance through the spouses' employers to be added to the County health plan.

Roane County **WILL** distinguish between spouses of existing employees and spouses of new hires with regard to offering insurance coverage. Coverage **WILL** be extended to spouses of employees hired prior to the Effective Date of the spousal exclusion, 5/25/2016, As long as those employees and their spouses continue to be eligible, and the spouses are already covered prior to the Effective Date of the exclusion, coverage will continue after the Effective Date of the exclusion. Spouses of employees hired after the Effective Date of the exclusion **WILL NOT** be eligible for coverage if eligible for group insurance coverage through the spouse's employer.

## **Benefits Effective and Termination Dates**

Health and vision benefits begin the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month after thirty (30) days of employment. For example, if the hire date is January 18<sup>th</sup> coverage will begin on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Benefit deductions currently begin on the first payroll date in the first month after date of hire. For example, if the hire date is in January, deductions begin in February.

## **Medical/Dental Coverage**

Currently, employees must enroll for coverage within thirty (30) days of employment or an eligible qualifying event. Temporary employees, seasonal employees, and interns are not eligible for medical/dental coverage. Complete benefit packets are provided at new hire orientation. Additional packets may be obtained by contacting Benefits Coordinator.

Information regarding the current medical/dental plan and premiums is available from Benefits Coordinator 865-717-4109.

## **Identification Cards**

Identification cards for employees enrolling in benefits will be mailed to the

employee's home address.

## Annual Open Enrollment Period

Medical and dental plans, benefit designs, eligibility rules, and premiums are subject to change each plan year based on the previous year's claims experience. Announcements concerning changes for the upcoming plan year are made during the annual open enrollment period each fall. Employees are required to review notices, home mailings, and department memos for information about the benefits for the upcoming year. Typically, the health enrollment/change period occurs in the fall of each year. It is the employee's responsibility to stay informed of benefit changes.

## Benefit Premiums/Payroll Deductions

Employees are responsible for reviewing paychecks to ensure the appropriate benefit premiums have been deducted. Employees on unpaid leave or no-pay status must contact Benefits Coordinator to make payment arrangements. *Failure to pay premiums while on no-pay status will result in the loss of coverage!*

## COBRA

If insurance coverage is discontinued due to termination of employment, a reduction in work hours, or other qualifying event, the employee and any covered dependents may be eligible to continue coverage through COBRA.

For a full explanation of COBRA terms and eligibility, contact Benefits Coordinator or refer to the "General COBRA Notice" received at time of enrollment.

## Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Roane County Government is very concerned with the physical and emotional well-being of its employees and their families, any employee who is enrolled in health insurance is eligible for this service. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides up to five (5) free and confidential counseling sessions per topic to employees and the members of the household who are dealing with difficult issues.

If you have questions about the EAP or would like more information regarding any of the programs, contact Benefits Coordinator.

## Health Savings Accounts (HSA)

Health Savings Accounts (HSA) are savings accounts that allow employees to save money for future qualifying medical expenses through pre-tax payroll deduction or lump-sum deposits. Employees must be enrolled in a Qualified High Deductible Health Plan (QHDHP) in order to participate in the HSA. For more information on Health Savings Accounts please contact the Benefits Coordinator.

## Flexible Spending Accounts

Flexible spending accounts allow an employee's medical out-of-pocket expenses and dependent care expenses to be paid with "before tax" dollars. Employees electing this benefit have a selected amount deducted from each paycheck. The maximum annual contributions to FSAs follow IRS guidelines.

Membership in Roane County's medical plan is NOT required to participate in a flexible spending account. Employees may enroll during the annual open enrollment period. Re-enrollment is required each year to continue participation.

## Change in Status

Employees are required to report personal changes and/or changes in work status to Benefits Coordinator within thirty (30) days of any status change. This includes:

- dependent status change,
- address change,
- divorce,
- marriage,
- birth or adoption,
- reduction in work hours, or
- any other change that could affect benefit plan eligibility.

## Supplemental Benefits

Roane County offers supplemental voluntary benefits employees may purchase. The voluntary coverage options include long term disability, short term disability, accident, term life, whole life, cancer, critical illness, vision as well as the 401k, and Roth 401K plans. These additional benefit options can be administered through payroll deduction. Information on these products is provided at orientation and during the annual open enrollment period. For more information on these products contact Benefits Coordinator.

## Life insurance

Roane County Government provides all full-time eligible employees with \$25,000 of Basic Term Life and AD&D insurance. Employee Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment benefits reduce to 50% at age 75. Effective dates follow the same guidelines as health and vision.

Employees may choose to purchase Voluntary Life Insurance in increments between \$10,000 and \$500,000 not to exceed 7x annual earnings. Employees may purchase additional Voluntary Life Insurance increment between \$5,000 and \$150,000 Life for spouses not to exceed 50% of employee election maximum benefit. Employees may purchase additional Life Insurance for children of \$2,500, \$5,000, \$7,500, or \$10,000. Voluntary Life Insurance benefit amounts will reduce by 35% at age 65, 50% at age 70, 75% at age 75, and 80% at age 80. Employer Paid



Life Benefits terminate at retirement. Voluntary Life Insurance is portable upon retirement or termination. The spouse's Voluntary Life Insurance benefit amount will reduce in accordance with the spouse's age.

Roane County Government also offers Voluntary Long-Term Disability. Qualifying Benefits begin after a 180-day elimination period and max out at 5 years per occurrence. Employee benefit is 60% of gross base wages. (Bonuses and overtime do not count unless overtime is scheduled overtime.)

## Tennessee Consolidated Retirement Systems (TCRS)

**Membership:** Upon hire

**Contribution Requirement:** Five percent of salary

**Vesting:** Vesting rights after 5 years of service  
(A vested member is one who has accrued enough years of service to guarantee a retirement benefit once age requirements are met)

**Refunds:** Upon separation of employment, participants may apply for a refund of account balance. Federal withholding tax requirements apply to early withdrawals.

**Income Benefit Eligibility Legacy:** Age 60 or 30 full years of service for unreduced income benefits.  
Age 55 for reduced income benefits.

**Income Benefit Eligibility Hybrid:** Age 65 or reaching the Rule of 90 (attainment of a combination of age and years of creditable serves as to equal 90.

**Average Final Compensation:** TCRS provides a lifetime monthly benefit as determined by a formula specified in state law. The formula for computing a monthly retirement benefit consists of a member's Average Final Compensation (AFC), years of creditable service, and the benefit accrual factor, 1.5% for Legacy employees, 1% for hybrid.

Employees planning to retire *must* apply online with TCRS ninety (90) days prior to the planned retirement date.

## Benefits Eligibility Upon Retirement

Employees retiring from Roane County Government may elect to continue coverage under the County's medical and vision plans up to age 65 provided they meet the following criteria:

- Ten years of services with the County, must be age 55 and have at least three full years of coverage on the plan.
- Twenty years of service with the County, must be age 55 and have at least one full year of coverage on the plan.
- Thirty years of service with the County, at any age and have at least one full year of coverage on the plan.

Employees considering retirement must contact the Benefits Coordinator at least three (3) months prior to the potential retirement date to verify benefit eligibility.

## Professional Development Courses

### Education and Training

When the County requires employees to participate in training programs, all training costs are paid or reimbursed by the county. The time an employee spends away from work to attend the training program is considered work time. Authorization to attend professional seminars and certification courses are decided on a case by case basis by managers, within the constraints of the training and education budget.

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I acknowledge I have received, read, and understand the policies outlined in the Roane County Government Employee Handbook. I agree to conform to the rules and regulations of Roane County Government as described in the handbook which is intended as a guide to Roane County's policies and procedures.

I understand the County has the right to change the handbook without notice. It is understood that future changes in policies and procedures will supersede or eliminate those found in this book. The most recent version will be available on the Roane County Government website.

I also understand and agree that the information contained in this handbook does not constitute an employment contract between Roane County Government and me, and that either I or Roane County may terminate our employment relationship at any time, with or without cause.

I understand no manager or representative of Roane County has any authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period of time, or to make any agreement contrary to the foregoing.

I hereby acknowledge that neither this manual nor any of the policies or statements contained herein constitutes a contract nor guarantee of employment and that I am an employee-at-will.

Employee Signature:

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name (please print):

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