

*Gonzales 089*

**REVISED PERSONNEL POLICIES  
OF  
GONZALES COUNTY APPRAISAL  
DISTRICT**

**APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS**

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## 1. ORGANIZATION

- a. The District is operated under the direction of a governing body known as the Appraisal District Board of Directors. The Board adopts policies and sets rules and regulations for the operation of the District. The policies, rules and regulations are implemented by the Chief Appraiser, who is appointed by the Board to administer the business of the District. The duties of the Chief Appraiser are set out in State Law (Chapter 6, Texas Property Tax Code) and provide that he/she is responsible for the administration of the District.
- b. The District Board is directly responsible to the taxing jurisdictions within the County for the manner in which the District is administered. The Board appoints the Chief Appraiser and may remove him/her at any time he/she fails to execute duties.
- c. In every large organization, much of the authority and responsibility for running it must be delegated to department heads, supervisors and ultimately each employee. Each department is responsible to the Chief Appraiser and the Chief Appraiser is directly responsible to the District Board of Directors for efficient operation of the District.

## 2. GENERAL POLICIES

- a. Employees are selected on the basis of their qualifications to fulfill specific vacancies. General criteria include education, experience, mental capacity, and willingness to work in the specific environment.
- b. No person will be discriminated against in employment, placement or promotion because of religion, race, citizenship, national origin, sex, marital status, age, and liability for services in the armed forces or physical disability.

## 3. ETHICS

- a. Courtesy, cheerfulness, tact and consideration should guide you in your relationship with customers.

## 4. HIRING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- a. Chief Appraiser is responsible for hiring personnel to work, after carefully screening applicants. The screening process normally includes a written application, a personal interview and a reference check.
- b. Making a false statement on an application is grounds for immediate termination.
- c. Files will be maintained on all applicants for a period of six months. The best candidates are selected from these files, or additional applicants are obtained from various other sources. Those candidates who meet the requirements of the vacancy may be given secondary interviews for possible selection to fill the vacancy.

## 5. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

All employees work on a probationary basis for the first ninety (90) calendar days after initial employment. The probationary period gives the supervisor an opportunity to determine the ability of the employee. It also provides the employee the opportunity to decide if the job is satisfactory. During this trial period the supervisor will evaluate the employee's performance and discuss the results of the evaluation with the employee. During the probationary period, no notice is necessary prior to termination of employment by the District or the employee. Upon satisfactory completion of the probationary period, employees achieve regular classification.

## 6. CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT

- a. Probationary – Those employees who have not yet completed the mandatory probationary period.
- b. Regular Full-Time – Those employees who have completed the probationary period.
- c. Temporary – All other employees.

**IMPORTANT: ALL EMPLOYEES, NO MATTER WHAT CLASSIFICATION, ARE EMPLOYED AT-WILL. THESE CLASSIFICATIONS, AND ALL THE MATERIAL IN THIS HANDBOOK, ARE GUIDELINES ONLY, AND DO NOT ALTER AN EMPLOYEE'S AT-WILL STATUS.**

## 7. SENIORITY

- a. Seniority is the elapsed time from an employee's most recent date of hire to the present time.
- b. Seniority shall be considered in the event of layoffs, promotions, shift changes, vacation scheduling and all other personnel actions. It will be the determining factor when all other things are equal.
- c. Seniority is determined within each classification of employment, i.e., regular, part-time, probationary and temporary.
- d. Seniority shall be cancelled and an employee's length of service broken if any of the following occurs:
  - (1) Resignation;
  - (2) Discharge;
  - (3) Failure to return from leave of absence;
  - (4) Absence due to disability, other than work connected, for a period of more than three months unless extended further in writing by the District.

## 8. PROMOTIONS

- a. A recommendation for promotion may be made after an evaluation by the Chief Appraiser, provided a vacancy exists and it is within your ability to perform the duties of the new position.

- b. All reasonable efforts will be made to promote employees to better positions before recruiting outside personnel.
- c. A period of probation in the new position as stated at the time of promotion will be in effect. The probationary period does not apply to the taking of sick leave or vacation time if an employee has already completed the required ninety (90) day period of employment in another position without a break in service with the Appraisal District. If an employee accepts a new position with the Appraisal District and the position previously held by the employee is filled, it shall be understood that the employee can not request a transfer back to the position previously held.
- d. If two or more employees are equally qualified for promotion, seniority may be considered.

9. TRANSFERS

- a. Transfers from one job to another job in the Appraisal District are possible providing a vacancy exists.
- b. Personnel desiring a transfer should submit a written request to the Chief Appraiser.

10. RETIREMENT

- a. Gonzales County Appraisal District has no mandatory retirement age. However, if an employee is unable to perform his or her job requirements in a satisfactory manner, the employee may be subject to transfer or termination.
- b. If the employee decides to retire, proper notification of termination should be given by the employee as specified in "Termination Procedures."

11. WORK SCHEDULES

- a. The normal workday is eight hours, subject to the following:
  - (1) A one-hour meal period is assigned to employees.
  - (2) The District provides two paid 15-minute rest periods per day, which may be taken in the lounge.
    - (a) Rest periods are not cumulative.
    - (b) Administration will schedule the rest periods so there will be no break in services to the public.
    - (c) Rest periods are not to be used for visiting in other offices as this practice interrupts their work.
    - (d) Abuse of rest periods may be cause of dismissal of an employee.
    - (e) It is recognized that there will be times when employees will not be able to take the rest periods. These times will be avoided as much as possible.
    - (f) The District will provide a coffee pot for making fresh coffee in the lounge.

b. The normal workweek is five days, Monday through Friday. Office hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

(1) Although employees may work additional hours or days as required by emergencies and temporary shortages of help, prior approval must be obtained from the Chief Appraiser.

## 12. ABSENCES AND TARDINESS

a. Employees shall attend regularly and report promptly for work as scheduled. An employee must arrive for work in time to be in the office at the scheduled hour.

b. If an employee is unable to be at work as scheduled, the Chief Appraiser is to be notified as soon as possible. If unable to contact the Chief Appraiser, an employee should leave name, position, reason for absence and telephone number with the secretary at the office.

c. Unless the Chief Appraiser is notified as outlined above, the employee must be reported as absent without the right to pay. Repeated unauthorized absences or tardiness jeopardizes the employee's standing in the District and presents grounds for dismissal.

d. Employees must not leave their assigned duties without permission until their scheduled employment day is completed. Infractions of this rule may result in discharge or other disciplinary action and loss of pay.

e. An employee absent from work for 3 days or more without notifying the Chief Appraiser or obtaining permission for such absence, unless a reasonable excuse is offered and accepted by the Chief Appraiser, is considered to have abandoned employment and no pay or privileges will be due for any time the employee was absent.

## 13. CONDUCT

The District, more so than most other organizations, requires order and discipline if it is to succeed in its efforts to provide for the well being and safety of visitors and employees. For this reason, certain actions are to be avoided.

The following are representative, but not all-inclusive, of actions that may result in immediate dismissal.

a. Gross inefficiency;

b. Neglect of duties and responsibilities;

c. Insubordination;

d. Falsification of records;

- e. Indecent or immoral conduct (the determination of what constitutes this conduct is to be determined by the Chief Appraiser on an individual case basis);
- f. Intoxication while on the job or on the premises;
- g. Frequent or prolonged absences which are unauthorized;
- h. Willful destruction of property;
- i. Dishonesty or theft;
- j. Any act that interferes with the work or safety of others;
- k. Unauthorized release of confidential information;
- l. Missing scheduled meeting without good cause (as determined by the Chief Appraiser);
- m. Accepting or soliciting tips or gifts from taxpayers or sales personnel;
- n. Discourtesy to employees or the general public;
- o. Disregard of established procedures without good cause (as determined by the Chief Appraiser);
- p. Sleeping on duty;
- q. Use of non-prescription drugs while at work;
- r. Gambling on District property;
- s. Posting or removing notices in the office without permission from the Chief Appraiser;
- t. Intentionally punching another person's timecard;
- u. Soliciting on premises without permission;
- v. Abusing the public;
- w. Violation of the weapons policy.

The above described provisions do not alter the employee's at-will employment status.

14. PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND GROOMING

- a. All employees shall dress professionally and appropriately for their position.
- b. All employees are to have their hair properly groomed.
- c. Clean hands and fingernails are a requirement of all employees.

- d. It is in bad taste to chew gum while on duty or to engage in loud talk, arguments or discussions in public areas.

## 15. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

An employee may receive a reprimand for any violation of policies defined in this manual. Such a reprimand will be written by the Employer and countersigned by the employee. An employee's refusal to countersign a reprimand does not affect or invalidate any such reprimand. The reprimand will then be placed in the employee personnel file. A total of three reprimands within any 12-month period will result in immediate dismissal. The Employer has the option of verbally counseling an employee about minor matters, but must make a record of such sessions (this is not considered a reprimand). The decision to reprimand, counsel or terminate an employee is within the discretion of the Chief Appraiser. The above-described provisions do not alter the employee's at-will employment status.

## 16. TERMINATION PROCEDURES

- a. All employees of the Gonzales County Appraisal District are non-contract employees, with the exception of the Chief Appraiser, are employed for an indefinite term of service, and are terminable at will, with or without cause. Termination may be, but is not required to be, preceded by a conference with the Chief Appraiser and may be, but is not required to be, preceded by a period of time to be determined by the Chief Appraiser in which the employee will be given a written statement of areas in which improvements are mandatory and an opportunity to improve in these areas. Termination may be immediate and without a conference or without an opportunity to improve performance if in the sole judgement and discretion of the Chief Appraiser, the best interests of the Appraisal District are served by immediate termination of the employee. No part of the personnel policies is intended to create, and should not be construed to create, tenure, contract rights, or any expectation of continued employment. Furthermore, the personnel policy may be amended at any time at the discretion of the Board of Directors as it deems appropriate, and any such amendment shall be in full force and effect from the time of its adoption by the Board as to all employees, whether said employees were hired before or after such amendment.
- b. Voluntary terminations (resignation or retirement) should be in writing to the Employer and should specify the last day the employee is to work. This date will be considered the effective date of termination.
- c. All employees who resign voluntarily will be expected to have an exit interview with a representative of the District. One purpose of this interview is to assure that the reasons for the employee's resignation are not based upon some misunderstanding or condition which could be remedied by either the District or the worker. The District is also interested in obtaining any information that can lead to the improvement of working conditions or public service.
- d. It is expected that all employees give 30 days notice prior to retirement.

- e. It is expected that all employees give a two-week notice prior to resignation.
- f. Employees terminated for violation of conduct rules shown in Paragraph 13 (a) through (w) waive their right to receive accrued vacation and/or holidays.
- g. Upon termination, a final paycheck will be mailed to the employee after he/she furnishes a forwarding address. All final tax information will be mailed to that address unless the employee notifies the District of a different address.
- h. All employees holding positions with the District which require professional registration or certification, such as appraisers, must maintain such registration or certification during their employment. Failure to do so will result in automatic termination of employment with the District.

17. POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The Gonzales County Appraisal District is a political subdivision of the state. Accordingly, no employee or agent may actively advertise, campaign or disseminate literature of a political nature on the premises of the Gonzales County Appraisal District office. The Board of Directors encourages all employees and agents of the Appraisal District to vote for the political candidate of their choice.

18. TELEPHONE USAGE

Good telephone habits will give people the feeling that we are friendly, helpful and considerate. Because of the limited number of telephone lines, both incoming and outgoing personal calls are discouraged. If a personal call absolutely must be made, it should be kept short as possible. Always answer the telephone promptly with your name. The receptionist will answer all incoming calls and transfer to proper person. If the receptionist is unavailable to answer the telephone, the rendition, exemption clerk will answer incoming calls.

19. CANVASSING OR SOLICITING

No one is permitted to approach employees or visitors on District property with a view to canvassing or selling articles or services of any kind unless prior approval has been granted by the Chief Appraiser. Sale or exchange of merchandise or food by individuals, including employees, is normally prohibited on District property. Unauthorized pools, collections, sale of tickets or merchandise, taking orders for merchandise or tickets, or passing of handbills by employees or outsiders are not permitted on District property except for such endeavors as authorized by the Chief Appraiser. Employees approached by such persons should require proof that clearance has been granted by the Chief Appraiser.

20. GIFTS AND TIPPING

District employees are not allowed to accept any amount of money or gifts from a taxpayer. Employees are not allowed to accept any amount of money or gifts valued above \$5.00 from sale representatives. If some person presses an employee to accept such a token, the employee should explain that District policy makes it impossible to

accept. Anything of value received despite the explanation of policy to the donor should be turned in to the Chief Appraiser for proper disposition.

21. RESPECT FOR PROPERTY

- a. District property should be treated with care. Economical and careful use of equipment and supplies will prevent unnecessary operating costs and result in savings that will ultimately benefit both our county and employees.
- b. In case of accidents involving either equipment or supplies, employees must report the facts to the Chief Appraiser and turn in the broken or defective article for replacement.
- c. District equipment or supplies must not be removed from District premises.
- d. Employees will be charged for gross carelessness, mischievous, malicious or willful destruction of District equipment or supplies. Repeated carelessness may result in dismissal.

22. LOST AND FOUND ARTICLES

All articles found must be properly marked and turned in to the secretary for safekeeping. Names and location, as well as name of the person finding the article, date, time, etc. must be noted.

23. SAFETY AND ACCIDENTS

- a. Accident prevention in the office is an important concern. To reduce the number of accidents, the District tries to provide a safe working environment. Employees are expected to perform their jobs in a safe and sensible way.
- b. Accidents must be reported immediately. Only by being aware of accidents and locating their cause can they be prevented. However minor the injury may seem, reporting it may result in changes being made which would prevent a more serious injury in the future.
- c. Employees must complete an accident report immediately before leaving the office. Failure to complete the accident report before leaving the office could cost the employee some benefits under workman's compensation.
- d. If an employee is unable to work because of an injury sustained on duty, coverage is provided under workman's compensation act.
  - (1) The injury must be reported at the time – not later.
  - (2) An employee collecting worker's compensation cannot be on paid leave after the employee has met the seven-day waiting period. During the seven-day waiting period, the employee shall use accrued sick leave. In the event the employee has no accrued sick leave, any accrued vacation leave and compensatory time shall be used during the seven-day waiting period. In the event the employee has no accrued leave time in any of

the aforementioned categories, the employee shall be placed on leave without pay.

24. PREVENTION OF THEFT

- a. Employees are urged to be alert for the entry into any area by unauthorized persons and report any person acting in a suspicious manner to the Chief Appraiser immediately.
- b. The Chief Appraiser reserves the right to examine any and all packages being carried from the premises of the office.
- c. Any employee caught taking items belonging to the District or another person without permission will be terminated immediately and appropriate legal action will be taken. No accrued benefits will be paid to any employee dismissed under such circumstances.

25. NOISE

Every employee should realize that noise is a disturbing factor. Employees should avoid loud talking in their office, in hallways or other work areas. Also, visitors should never be discussed when the conversation might be overheard.

26. SMOKING

All smoking in building is prohibited.

27. NOTICES AND MEMORANDUMS

From time to time, it may be necessary to disseminate information, temporary policies, etc., by memorandums. Such memorandums or notices will be distributed to the employees or posted on bulletin boards. Each employee will be held responsible for being aware of all information and implementing any action that may be required. The items are not to be removed from bulletin boards unless such action is directed by the Chief Appraiser.

28. PURCHASING

All purchasing will be under the direct supervision of the Chief Appraiser.

29. MAIL

Personal mail should be sent to an employee's home, not to the District office.

30. PERSONNEL RECORDS

Personnel records are maintained for the employee's protection as well as for the District's benefit.

- a. The Chief Appraiser's secretary will be responsible for maintaining the personnel records for the employees of the District.

- (1) These records are the property of the District.
  - (2) Each record is to contain, as a minimum, the following documents:
    - (a) Application for employment.
    - (b) Current address of employee.
    - (c) Current telephone number of employee, or where may be reached.
    - (d) Address and telephone of next-of-kin or other person to be notified in case of emergency.
    - (e) Written proof of reprimands or disciplinary actions pertaining to the individual employee.
    - (f) Use of sick leave.
- b. Employees must notify their office anytime there is a change in their home address, telephone number or emergency contact person.
  - c. The Appraisal office is to retain personnel files for a period of three (3) years following an employee's date of termination, after which time the file will be screened prior to destruction.
  - d. The District office will maintain a limited file on all personnel that will contain the following. Employees are to notify the office of any changes.
    - (1) List of insurance deductions, etc.
    - (2) A current W-4 form for income tax purposes.
    - (3) Other material as designated by the Chief Appraiser.

### 31. SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS

Employees are encouraged to offer suggestions or constructive criticisms in writing to the Employer. Employees are encouraged when possible, to furnish possible solutions to problems.

### 32. GRIEVANCES

- a. A grievance is defined to be any difference between the District and the employee regarding wages, hours or working conditions.
- b. Employees are not only allowed, but are encouraged to air any grievance they may have in regard to their treatment or conditions of work over which the District might be expected to have control.
- c. The employee should first discuss the grievance with the Chief Appraiser. If this proves unsatisfactory, the grievance can then be taken to the Board of Directors.
- d. Provided the grievance was not initiated because of malice or in an effort to defame or injure another employee, employees filing a grievance under this procedure will not suffer from prejudice or discrimination because of the action.

### 33. TRAINING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

- a. Training sessions will be scheduled from time to time to help employees do a better job and stay current in their area of work. In-service training will be scheduled by the Chief Appraiser and will be mandatory. The training period will be scheduled during office hours.
- b. Education sessions requiring overnight stay at locations out of the Appraisal District boundaries are paid by the District (including travel, lodging, meals and registration fees). Employees may be given time off by the Chief Appraiser to attend courses not approved for payment by the District. (This will be time off without pay and must be scheduled in advance.)
- c. Travel and meal allowance will be paid by the District for educational seminars and meetings which do not require overnight stay at the discretion of the Chief Appraiser.
- d. Mileage will be paid at the rate provided for in the current budget.

### 34. JURY DUTY

All regular full-time employees summoned for jury duty will be paid the difference between jury duty pay and the regular absence. On return, the employee must furnish a Jury Duty Statement indicating fees paid by the court.

### 35. SALARY AND PAY SCHEDULES

- a. A salary schedule commensurate with salaries paid for similar work in this area has been developed for each position. Comparisons of our pay rates with those of other Appraisal Districts are made periodically in an effort to maintain a reasonable relationship.
- b. Pay increases are not automatic. They are based upon an employee's quality of performance, continuity of service and budgetary consideration.
- c. Pay changes are made effective as provided by current budget.
- d. If current budget provides for overtime pay, it will be paid as set forth in Item 'e' until such time funds are exhausted for current year. If current budget does not provide for overtime pay or in the event all funds allocated for overtime in current budget are exhausted, compensatory time will be given as provided in Item 'f'.
  - (1) Only overtime approved by the Chief Appraiser will be allowed.
  - (2) Overtime is defined as time worked in excess of 40 hours per week. Each workweek begins at 12:01 a.m. Friday and ends at 12:00 midnight on the following Thursday. Vacation time, sick time or any other paid time off given by the District as a fringe benefit, will not be used toward accumulating the basic 40 hours.

- (3) Overtime indicated on the timecard will not be counted unless it exceeds seven minutes and is approved by the Chief Appraiser. Overtime will be counted in 15-minute increments.
- e. Overtime pay is at the rate of one and one half (1 ½) times the regular hourly rate of pay.
- f. Compensatory (comp) time is at the rate of one and one half (1 ½) times the number of hours worked over 40 hours per week.

### 36. PAY CHECKS

- a. Paychecks are issued every other Friday for the two-week period ending the preceding Thursday (12:00 midnight). If a payday falls on a holiday, checks will be issued the day before when possible.
- b. The usual deductions from paychecks are Federal Income Tax Withholding, District Retirement Plan and Insurance Premiums.
- c. Paychecks will normally be given only to the employee whose name appears on the check. The check may be given to another person only if advance arrangements have been made with the Chief Appraiser. Checks will not be given in advance except as outlined in Section 'd'.
- d. When a payroll occurs during an employee's vacation or scheduled compensatory time leave, the employee will be paid in advance if vacation time has been earned in advance for number of hours left in the payroll period. In no event will an employee be paid in advance if vacation time or compensatory time has not been earned through the end of the payroll period.
- e. Effective January 1, 2002, each employee of the District that has completed at least three consecutive years of service with a Texas county appraisal district (including the Gonzales County Appraisal District), will receive longevity pay to be paid at the rate of five dollars per month for each consecutive year of service. The longevity pay will commence on the third anniversary of the employee's original hire date with the District. There will be no prorations. Longevity payments will be paid in a separate check from the employee's regular paycheck on the second Friday of each month. Benefits will be paid on longevity pay such as medicare and retirement, if both are applicable, and Federal Income Tax will be withheld.

If an employee was employed at another Texas county appraisal district immediately before being employed by the Gonzales County Appraisal District, the employee will be credited for their years of service at the other appraisal district. In such situations, the longevity pay will be calculated from the anniversary date of the employee's original employment with the other appraisal district. An employee will not be given credit for service with another appraisal district if there is more than a 14 day gap between the employee's departure from the other appraisal district and beginning employment with the Gonzales County Appraisal District. Similarly, an employee's service with two or more appraisal districts will be credited in the employee's longevity pay if there was never more

than a 14 day gap in employment between appraisal districts (including the Gonzales County Appraisal District).

If an employee's employment with the District is terminated for any reason (including, but not limited to: discharge, resignation, retirement, and/or lay-off), and subsequently re-employed by the District, the employee loses all credit for previous years of service. Under such circumstances, longevity pay will commence on the third anniversary of the employee's re-employment date and will be calculated as though the employee had no previous years of service prior to the employee's re-employment.

Example 1: On January 1, 2005 an employee has completed three consecutive years of employment for the District. Effective January 1, 2005, the employee will receive 15 dollars gross per month in longevity pay. On January 1, 2006, the employee is entitled to 20 dollars gross per month for having completed four consecutive years of service.

Example 2: An employee is hired effective January 1, 2005. Prior to employment by the District, the employee was employed by another county appraisal district and had worked there exactly four years before resigning. If there was not more than a 14 day gap between when the employee resigned from the other appraisal district and began employment with the Gonzales County Appraisal District, then the employee will be credited with the prior four years of consecutive service. Under these circumstances, the employee would be entitled to 20 dollars gross per month, effective January 1, 2005, for having four years of consecutive service.

### 37. TIME CARDS

- a. A time clock is used to record hours worked each day. At the time of employment, each employee will be issued a timecard along with instructions on its use.
- b. No employee is permitted to register in or out for another employee and such offense will be cause for dismissal.
- c. In case of error in using the timecard, the only person authorized to correct timecards will be the employee's supervisor. The employee must take the timecard to the supervisor immediately so the correction can be noted and initialed.
- d. Employees should clock in no more than six minutes before time to go to work and/or no more than six minutes past the end of the work shift unless prior permission has been granted by the Chief Appraiser or in the event a taxpayer is in the office or on the telephone. An employee is expected to stay as late as necessary to wait on customers in the office or on the telephone before 5:00 p.m.
- e. An employee who has the Chief Appraiser's permission to leave the office for any non-work reason is required to register out upon leaving and in upon return.
- f. Employees who go on rest periods in the office need not register in and out for those periods.

38. VACATIONS

- a. Vacations with pay are granted as a fringe benefit by the District in recognition of accrued services so that employees may be free from regular duties to enjoy a period of rest and relaxation.
- b. Vacation time accrues beginning on the first day of employment according to the number of hours worked each two-week pay period and can vary from pay period to pay period. The following table outlines the accrual system for personnel who have been employed less than five years and are on an hourly wage.

HOURS WORKED ONE PAY PERIOD	VACATION TIME ACCRUED THAT PAY PERIOD	MAXIMUM WHICH CAN BE ACCRUED IN ONE YEAR
70 and Over	3 Hours, 20 Minutes	80 Hours
64 – 69	2 Hours, 40 Minutes	64 Hours

- c. Regular full-time, hourly wage employees and the Chief Appraiser with more than five years continuous employment will automatically be credited with an additional eight hours for each year in excess of five years up to a maximum of 40 hours which can be added to the vacation time accrued. This extra benefit will be credited according to date of employment for personnel who are on an hourly wage. The Chief Appraiser will be credited as of January 1 of each calendar year.
- d. An employee will not be paid for vacation taken during the probationary period.
- e. An employee will not be paid for vacation taken in less than four-hour segments, i.e., no vacation of less than half a day will be paid.
- f. Payment for vacation time will be at the employee's base rate of pay.
- g. Employees will not be permitted to accrue more than 160 hours of vacation time. Any accrued time in excess of 160 hours will be lost as of the first day of each calendar year.
- h. A maximum of 200 hours-accrued vacation time will be paid in any one calendar year.
- i. Each year employees will be paid only for the amount of vacation time they have accrued as of the end of the preceding payroll period before the vacation starts (no advance vacation time).
- j. Unused accrued vacation time (up to the maximum of 160 hours) will be paid at the time employment is terminated, provided proper notice has been given and no other provision of this manual prohibits payment. The giving of insufficient or improper notice by an employee voids any obligation on the part of the District.

- k. Vacations must be approved by and scheduled through the Chief Appraiser.
- l. Conflicts in scheduling will be resolved based upon the following priorities:
  - (1) Full-time with seniority
  - (2) Part-time with seniority
- m. Every effort will be made to give employees the vacation time of their preference, but the District must reserve the right to schedule or reschedule vacations in such a way as to assure proper and adequate service to the public and the continuation of all functions of the District.

39. COMPENSATORY TIME

- a. Leave for comp time must be scheduled and approved by the Chief Appraiser.
- b. Effective November 18, 2004, the Board of Directors modified the personnel policies with respect to the compensatory and vacation time by adoption of Resolution No. 175 which states:
  - “WHEREAS the Board of Directors desires to modify personnel policies with respect to compensatory and vacation time. NOW THEREFORE be it resolved that the Gonzales County Appraisal District Board of Directors hereby adopts the following change to the “Personnel Policies of Gonzales County Appraisal District”: Any employee having accrued compensatory time shall take that time prior to taking any vacation time, with the exception of a maximum of (4) hours, subject to other provisions regarding leave. All compensatory time including the four hours allowed to accrue prior to taking any vacation time must be taken prior to the end of the fiscal year.

40. SICK LEAVE (revised Jan. 16, 2003 BOD)

- a. Paid sick leave is a protection for employees granted as a fringe benefit by the District. Pay for sick time is not mandatory and will be withheld unless approved by the Chief Appraiser. If it is felt that the privilege is being abused, legal rules of evidence are not required to withhold sick pay. (It is not just time off with pay.)
- b. Only regular full-time employees (32 hours or more worked each week) are granted sick leave with pay.
- c. Sick leave accrues at the rate of eight hours per month to a maximum of one thousand (1,000) hours.
- d. Sick leave will not be paid in less than one-hour segments, i.e., no half-hour sick leaves.
- e. Sick leave with pay cannot be granted during the probationary period but does begin to accrue as of the first day of employment, i.e., after three months probation completed, beginning of the fourth month, the employee has three days sick leave.

- f. Sickness during vacation or holidays may not be charged to sick leave.
- g. To be eligible for sick leave, an employee must notify the office of the illness by 8:00 a.m.
- h. Use of sick leave is recorded in each employee's personnel record and will be taken into consideration during any evaluation of an employee's job performance.
- i. An employee may use sick leave in the event spouse, children or parent is ill, up to a maximum of ten (10) working days per year.
- j. Upon termination for any reason, whether or not voluntary, and upon retirement, all sick leave accrued to the time of termination or retirement is forfeited on the date of termination or retirement.
- k. Upon written request by an employee, accrued vacation hours may be transferred to sick leave hours. Employee must agree in written request that they understand and agree that they may not transfer these hours back to accrued vacation and that upon termination for any reason, whether or not voluntary, and upon retirement, all sick leave accrued to the time of termination or retirement is forfeited on the date of termination or retirement.

41. HOLIDAYS (revised Dec.19, 2002 BOD)

- a. Full-time employees (regular or probationary) are granted the following paid holidays as fringe benefits each year.
 

(1)	New Year's Day	January 1
(2)	Martin Luther King Day	As Proclaimed
(3)	Good Friday	As Proclaimed
(4)	Memorial Day	As Proclaimed
(5)	Independence Day	July 4th
(6)	Labor Day	First Monday in September
(7)	Veterans Day	November 11th
(8)	Thanksgiving Day	As Proclaimed
(9)	Friday Following Thanksgiving	
(10)	Christmas Day	December 25th
(11)	December 24th or 26th	to Allow a Four-Day Holiday
	If Christmas falls on a Wednesday	December 24th will be a holiday
- b. To be eligible for a paid holiday, an employee must work both the scheduled day before a holiday and the first scheduled day after a holiday, unless written letter from doctor stating that the employee was ill is furnished by the employee.
- c. If a holiday occurs while an employee is on vacation, an extra day of vacation with pay is granted.
- d. If a holiday occurs while an employee is hospitalized, the day will be scheduled after the employee returns to work.
- e. Employees will not be paid for a holiday if it is the effective day of resignation.

42. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Should a death occur in the immediate family of a full-time employee (regular or probationary), the employee may be given up to three days paid time off once each year. Immediate family defined as Father, Mother, Son, Daughter, Spouse, Brother, Sister, Grandparents, Mother-In-Law or Father-In-Law. Advance notice to the supervisor must be given. Pay will be computed on the employee's base rate to compensate for actual time lost within the approved period.

43. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- a. A leave of absence will not normally be granted to an employee who has worked for less than 12 consecutive months and who does not intend to return to work.
- b. A leave of absence request must be submitted to the Chief Appraiser who will make the decision on granting the leave.
- c. Employees will not be paid during a leave of absence.
- d. Benefits such as vacation, sick leave, holidays, etc., are suspended during a leave of absence and do not accrue.
- e. Premiums on group health insurance must be paid by the employee after the first 90 calendar days of absence.

44. MATERNITY LEAVE

- a. Maternity leave without pay may be granted to employees for such time as doctor's certification requires.
- b. Employees must present a statement from the physician after the sixth month of pregnancy indicating a medical opinion that continued employment will not be detrimental to the employee's health. The physician should also state how long he/she feels the employee should continue working before confinement.
- c. The employee may, at her discretion, use accumulated sick leave, compensatory time and annual leave to minimize the length of her maternity leave.
- d. Written requests for maternity leave should be made to the Chief Appraiser at least two weeks before effective date of departure.
- e. If an employee decides to resign at the end or during the time of maternity leave, proper notification of termination should be given by the employee as specified in "Termination Procedures."
- f. For a request for an unreasonable length of time, beyond six weeks, the Chief Appraiser may request certification by a physician of the District's choice with cost of said certification to be incurred by the employee.

**45. INSURANCE**

- a. The Gonzales County Appraisal District provides health insurance for the employees of the District. The District pays the premium of the employee. To be eligible for the hospital group policy coverage, an employee must have completed an application for the hospital group policy coverage, an employee must have completed an application within the time specified by the current policy in force and be classed as a full-time (32 hours per week or more). The effective date of coverage is according to the current policy in force. Health insurance on dependents is offered to those employees who desire to pay for it themselves and must meet the requirements of the current policy in force. Application for the dependent coverage must be made within the time specified by current policy in force, unless there is a qualifying event, which is mandated by state or federal law.
- b. The details of the health insurance plan are too involved to publish here. Employees desiring information about these plans should contact the Chief Appraiser's secretary.
- c. Disability insurance is through Assurant Employee Benefits. The District pays the cost on employees. To be eligible for the disability insurance, an employee must have completed an application in a timely manner as required by the insurer and be classed as full-time (32 hours per week or more), and must be approved by the Insurer.

**46. TRAVEL FOR DISTRICT**

- a. Employees using personal vehicles for performance of their duties shall be required to have a current dated copy of the liability policy insurance for the vehicle that they are driving. This copy shall become a part of their personnel record.
- b. Appraisers using personal vehicles in performance of their duties of employment by the District shall be required to maintain a current Certificate of Insurance, which shall be kept in their personnel file, showing liability coverage limits of at least state required limits.
- c. The Gonzales County Appraisal District shall not be liable for any vehicle repair or maintenance on such personal vehicles.

**47. WEAPONS POLICY**

Employees, whether licensed or not, are prohibited from carrying weapons in the course and scope of employment.

**48. SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

THE GONZALES COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT EXPRESSLY PROHIBITS:

- a. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and all other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or otherwise offensive nature especially where:
  - (1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
  - (2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting an individual's employment, or
  - (3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.
- b. Offensive comments, jokes, innuendoes and other sexually oriented statements.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE:

The Chief Appraiser is responsible for creating an atmosphere free of sexual harassment. Further, employees are responsible for respecting the rights of their coworkers. If you experience any job-related sexual harassment promptly report the incident to the Chief Appraiser, who will investigate the matter and take appropriate action. Your complaint will be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible. If the Chief Appraiser determines that an employee is guilty of harassing another employee, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against the offending employee. The Gonzales County Appraisal District prohibits any form of retaliation against any employee for filing a bona fide complaint under this policy or for assisting in a complaint investigation.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

49. The Gonzales County Appraisal District's prior policy on leave under the Family Medical Leave Act is repealed. Pursuant to 29 U.S.C. Section 261(2)(b), employees of the District are not eligible for FMLA leave. If the District employs enough individuals that employees become eligible for FMLA leave, the District will fully comply with the pertinent statutory requirements.