

SOUTH WALTON COUNTY
MOSQUITO CONTROL
DISTRICT

EMPLOYEE

HANDBOOK

Revised February 21, 2017

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the South Walton County Mosquito Control District!

We are pleased you have joined employment with us and look forward to working with you as a member of our team. We appreciate you and the experiences and talents you bring to our District. We are committed to helping you achieve your highest level of service and performance.

We are pleased to provide you with your personal copy of our Employee Handbook. This document outlines the personnel policies and practices in effect at the District and you should read and become familiar with it. We are sure this Handbook will be a helpful reference during your association with our District. Of course, as organizational needs and employment and mosquito control legislation change, we reserve the right to make modifications.

We encourage you to freely ask questions. By doing so, you will learn your job more quickly. Early in your employment with us, you will realize we have set very high standards for you.

At the same time, we are committed to providing you with the challenge, recognition and appropriate compensation and benefits to help you reach your personal goals and objectives.

We believe we have a very positive and engaging place to work serving the South Walton area consistent with our Mission and Vision.

The Administration
South Walton County Mosquito Control District

Mission Statement

The mission of the South Walton County Mosquito Control District is to serve the district by suppressing both pestiferous and disease carrying mosquito populations to a tolerable level in the safest, most economical manner, utilizing a variety of methods in such a way as to minimize potential effects on people, wildlife and the environment maximizing the value to the district's taxpayers.

Vision Statement

The South Walton County Mosquito Control District is the role model for other mosquito control districts. The District has a dedicated, motivated work force of employees who support each other and the mission of the District and thus create a stimulating and rewarding work environment.

Core Values

- Integrity and Honesty
- Communication
- Positive Relationships
- Customer Focus
- Teamwork
- Effectiveness
- Knowledge
- Creativity

Organization Description

The South Walton County Mosquito Control District headquarters is located at 774 North County Highway 393, in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. The District was established on May 26, 1964 by referendum under Chapter 388, Florida Statutes, through the efforts of the South Walton Lions Club and the Walton County Chamber of Commerce. The District is dedicated to the control of disease-bearing arthropods and nuisance insects for the betterment, comfort, health, welfare and prosperity of the inhabitants of this beautiful area of Northwest Florida.

Organizational Structure

The South Walton County Mosquito Control District is an independent district governed by a three member elected Board of Commissioners who set policies in accordance with applicable laws. The Director is hired by the Board to administer the mosquito control program.

Organizational Chart



Board Policy

The Board of Commissioners, believing it to be in the public interest and of most benefit to the employees of the District, has established the following policies:

- É The administration of District service will be conducted with integrity and concern for the individual employee.
- É The public interest will be best served by having a personnel system that utilizes employee policies, procedures, and practices that recognize individual worth and are applied objectively and equally.
- É The policy of the Board is to promote present employees within the organization whenever there is a fully qualified employee to advance.
- É The Board encourages, when feasible, the advancement and training of present employees to prepare for furtherance of career and personal goals.
- É The District will comply with all state and federal equal employment statutes and regulations.

Program Management Objective

In order to maintain direct communication, supervision and internal control, the Board of Commissioners designates the position of Director. The Director has the responsibility of enforcing personnel procedures and practices in order to promote and maintain fair, consistent and progressive employment practices in the career services of the District and to assure compliance with federal and state statutory requirements, regulations, and Board of Commissioners policies.

Disclaimer

Policies set forth in this handbook do not create a contract, nor are they to be construed to constitute contractual obligations of any kind or a contract of employment between the District and any of its employees. The provisions of the handbook have been developed at the discretion of management and may be amended, supplemented, modified, deleted or otherwise changed at any time, at the District's sole discretion. These provisions supersede all existing policies and practices and may not be amended or added to without the express approval of the Board of Commissioners of the District.

SECTION 2 - EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES

2.1 Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of the District to provide equal employment opportunity to all people without regard to age, race, color, sex, marital status, handicap or disability, national origin, political, or religious affiliation, and to promote the full realization of that policy. The District is fully committed to assuring equal opportunity and equal consideration to all applicants and employees in all employment matters.

2.2 Employment at Will

Employment with the South Walton County Mosquito Control District is considered Employment at Will. This means that either the employee or the SWCMCD can discontinue employment or change the conditions of employment at any time for any reason not prohibited by law. This provides all parties with flexibility and freedom regarding employment

2.3 Open Door Policy

The District has an open door policy. All employees should feel free to approach their supervisor on any matter relating to their job. If you feel your job might be done better or in a different way, or if a problem develops in connection with your work, promptly take your suggestion or problem to your supervisor or the Director. It is the policy of the District that all employee suggestions shall be given full consideration.

2.4 Disability Policy

The District will comply fully with the intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act and enthusiastically supports its mandates. Disabled employees and applicants who request a reasonable accommodation will be given due consideration within the operational limits of the District as required by law.

2.5 Hiring Policy

Qualifications

The District is committed to employing United States citizens and candidates who are authorized to work in the United States. The District will be in full compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 as amended.

Veteran's Preference

Veterans' Preference for eligibility in employment will be extended to certain Veterans, spouses of Veterans and other specific family members of Veterans according to Florida State Statute 295.07.

Per the statutory requirements, Veteransø Preference applies to all SWCMCD vacancies, as defined below, except seats on the Board of Commissioners, persons employed on a temporary basis without benefits (Seasonal and On-Call) and heads of departments. A vacancy is defined as a position that is announced as being open for recruitment and available to all applicants and does not include positions that are open to current employees only, positions that are to be filled by reassignment, promotion, or demotion, or positions which are not open for recruitment.

The following persons shall be eligible to receive preference in appointment and retention in employment:

ÉA disabled veteran who has served on active duty in any branch of the Armed Forces, has been separated there from under honorable conditions, and has established the present existence of a service-connected disability which is compensable under the public laws administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs OR who is receiving compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension under public laws administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.

ÉThe spouse of a veteran who cannot qualify for employment because of a total and permanent service-connected disability, or the spouse of a veteran missing in action, captured in the line of duty by a hostile force, or forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power.

ÉA veteran of any war who has served on active duty for one day or more during a wartime period, excluding active duty for training, and who was discharged under honorable conditions from the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

Wartime periods are defined as follows:

- a) World War II: December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946.
 - b) Korean Conflict: June 27, 1950 to January 31, 1955.
 - c) Vietnam Era: February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975.
 - d) Persian Gulf War: August 2, 1990 to January 2, 1992.
 - e) Operation Enduring Freedom ó October 7, 2001 to date to be determined.
 - f) Operation Iraqi Freedom ó March 19, 2003 to date to be determined.
 - e) Operation New Dawn: September 1, 2010 to date to be determined.
- The un-remarried widow or widower of a veteran who died of a service-connected disability.
 - The mother, father, legal guardian, or unremarried widow or widower of a service member who died as a result of military service under combat-related conditions as verified by the U. S. Department of Defense.

- A Veteran as defined by section 1.01(14) Florida Statutes. "Active Duty for Training" may not be allowed under this paragraph. The term "veteran" is defined as a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released there from under honorable conditions only or who later received an upgraded discharge under honorable conditions.
- A current member of any reserve component of the U. S. Armed Forces or the Florida National Guard.

If you wish to claim Veterans' Preference, you must meet **all four** of the following criteria at the time of application:

1. Must submit a copy of your DD-214, Certificate of Discharge or Separation from Active Duty, or other official documents to demonstrate eligibility (to include military discharge papers, certification of the veteran's service-connected disability, equivalent certification from the DVA listing military status, dates of service, and discharge type, evidence of marriage, etc.) *(must be submitted with resume/employment application no later than 11:59 pm on the closing date of the job posting if the position is posted or must be submitted with resume/employment application at time of submission; late submissions will not be accepted and failure to provide documentation by these deadlines will exclude applicant from Veteran's Preference Eligibility).*
2. Must have an "Honorable" discharge, or where separated from the military under honorable conditions.
3. Must be a US citizen or a lawfully authorized alien in the United States at the time of application.
4. Must possess the minimum qualifications necessary to the discharge of the duties involved. The rule defines "minimum qualifications" to mean a specification of the kinds of experience, training, education and/or licensure or certification that provides appropriate job-related evidence that an applicant possesses the minimum required knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to the discharge of the duties involved.

Other provisions regarding Veterans' Preference:

Veterans' preference in perpetuity: A person eligible for veterans' preference in appointment (defined by s. 295.07, FS) does **not** forfeit employment preference eligibility once that veteran or eligible spouse of the veteran has been employed by a state agency or any political subdivision of this state. Effective July 1, 2007, Florida law restores Veterans' Preference in employment for all categories of protected individuals previously employed by a state agency or any political subdivision of this state.

Preference in layoffs: Where a layoff is necessitated in a covered position, similar preferences must be given to the covered employee in the retention process.

Preference in reinstatement or reemployment: When an employee in a covered position leaves employment for the purpose of serving in the armed forces, he or she is entitled to reinstatement or reemployment upon release or discharge from active military service.

Promotion preference: Promotion preference applies only to a veteran's first promotion after reinstatement or reemployment, without exception.

If an applicant claiming veteran's preference for a vacant position is not selected, he/she may file a complaint with the:

Florida Department of Veterans Affairs
Division of Benefits and Assistance - Veterans Preference
Post Office Box 31003
St. Petersburg, FL 33731

A complaint must be filed within twenty-one days of the applicant receiving notice of the hiring decision made by the employing agency or within three months of the date the application is filed with the employer if no notice is given. The enforcement mechanism established by the regulations provide for an initial investigation by the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, followed by an evidentiary proceeding before the Public Employees Relations Commission if the matter cannot be earlier resolved.

Employment of Relatives

Based on the number of employees and the close proximity of working together, the District policy is there will be no immediate family member of current employees hired for employment. Immediate family is defined as employee's spouse, parents of employee or spouse, children of either, brothers or sisters of either, grandparents of either, grandchildren of either, and step-parents of either.

Hiring Process

All persons to be considered for appointment to any position with the District shall follow the below prescribed steps:

- É An employment application must be completed in detail before any applicant will be considered for employment.
- É The employment applications will be reviewed by the Director and the Operations Manager and/or the Office Coordinator to determine qualified candidates for interview.
- É All qualified candidates will be interviewed by the Director, Operations Manager and/or the Office Coordinator to determine if the candidate's skills, qualifications, and work experiences are relative to the job requirements.
- É The Director will then select the best qualified candidate to fill the vacancy.
- É A written and/or an oral check of the candidate references will be conducted. A background investigation will be completed which will include a Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) check. May also include a credit check,

- where management deems appropriate, based on job duties to be performed.
- É All employee candidates selected for appointment will be required to complete a physical examination and drug test. The administrative office will schedule a physical and drug test after the candidate has accepted his/her offer of employment.
 - É The candidate must have a satisfactory driver record and be insurable. The administrative office will verify by requesting a transcript from the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles prior to starting employment.

2.6 Employment Categories

It is the intent of the District to clarify the definitions of employment classifications so that employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility.

Each employee is designated as either **Nonexempt** or **Exempt** in accordance with federal and state wage and hour statutes. **Nonexempt** (hourly) employees are entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of law. **Exempt** (salaried) employees are excluded from these overtime provisions. An employee's **Exempt** or **Nonexempt** classification may be changed only as a result of a reclassification of the job due to a change in duties and responsibilities. In each case, the Director will provide the employee written notification of their status change.

All employees are hired on an introductory basis. The Introductory Period is 90 days from the date of employment. An introductory employee may be discharged at any time without any rights to pursue a grievance appeal. Once an introductory employee successfully completes their training syllabus they will be eligible for appointment as a full-time or part-time employee.

Full-time or Part-time Employees

All employees will be classified in one of the following listed categories:

- É **FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES** are those who are regularly scheduled to work the District's full time schedule and are eligible to participate in the District's benefit programs, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program. An employee must work thirty (30) hours or more per week to maintain full-time status.
- É **PART-TIME EMPLOYEES** are those who work less than 30 hours per week. These employees are ineligible to participate in the District's benefit programs except as specified in the Employee Benefits section of this Employee Handbook.

2.7 Schedule/Recordkeeping

Work Week/Work Hours

The standard workweek for Full-Time employees is forty (40) hours. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week.

Breaks

Any employee that works more than 4 hours may have a fifteen minute break. If the employee works eight hours they may have two (2) fifteen minute breaks.

Exercise Period

A half hour paid exercise period has been approved by the Board as a benefit to the employees. Exercise period is between 11:30 a.m. and 12 noon. Exercise is defined as walking, running, playing horseshoes, driving golf balls, utilizing equipment in the designated exercise room or utilizing the weights or pull-up bars outside. Other times or places may be approved at the Director's discretion. No tobacco use is allowed during the exercise period. If this 1/2 hour period is not used for exercise the employee must be working.

Daily Work Reports

Field employees are responsible for completing a daily work report at the end of each workday. Employees should accurately record the time they begin and end their work, also the beginning and ending time of their lunch period. They should also record the beginning and ending time of any split shift or departure from work for personal reasons. The completed work report will be left on the Daily Work clipboard in the break-room prior to departing at the end of their workday. These reports will be collected on the following morning by the Operations Manager and submitted to the Administrative Office.

2.8 Employee Performance

Employee Performance Evaluations

All employees will receive a written annual performance evaluation. Such evaluation shall be conducted on an annual basis prior to the start of the fiscal year (October 1st) by the employee's supervisor. All introductory employees appointed to full-time positions will be evaluated prior to the appointment, and then annually with all other employees. The annual performance evaluation will serve as the basis for annual pay increases, which may be awarded by the District at its sole discretion to recognize employee performance.

Additionally, all employees will also receive an informal evaluation from their supervisor midyear of the evaluation cycle. This review will be conducted no later than March 31st of each calendar year. The purpose of the informal evaluation is to ensure each employee is aware of their performance trends to include their individual strengths and weaknesses. This midyear evaluation should assist supervisors in preparing the employee's written annual performance evaluation.

Promotions

The Board of Commissioners believes it to be in the best interest of the District, the public and the career employees to promote present career employees within the organization rather than recruit new employees for higher-level positions. This policy will be observed whenever advancement opportunities occur and there is a fully qualified employee in the District service.

All appointment and promotion decisions shall be made by the Director. An employee promoted to a higher position may receive an appropriate pay increase, upon approval by the Board of Commissioners. A newly promoted employee shall be evaluated at the end of a three (3) month period to determine if he or she completes or maintains the current job qualifications for the new position. An employee that fails to maintain or complete job qualifications within the three (3) month time period shall be returned to their previous job position.

Demotions

If an employee fails to maintain their job proficiency and/or certifications, he or she may be demoted. Any demotion will require an adjustment to the employee's salary and/or pay rate. Reasons for demotion include, but are not limited to the following examples:

- É Lapse of any license or certification required for the position.
- É Inability to meet the basic job qualifications as required by the specific job description.
- É Failure to complete and maintain the job qualifications of a position that the employee was promoted after the three (3) month trial period.

Access to Personnel Files

The District employment records begin with your job application and other employment forms and are maintained by the Office Coordinator. Performance appraisals, promotions, transfers, training and other documents pertaining to employee matters are recorded in the personnel file and considered confidential. Employees may view their personnel file upon a written request to the Office Coordinator and a convenient time to review the file will be provided. Employees may not remove any documents in the file.

2.9 Separations from Service

Voluntary

An employee may voluntarily terminate his employment, in good standing, by providing at least two (2) week notice in writing to his supervisor or the Director.

Involuntary Discharge for Cause

An employee may be discharged at anytime for cause. Involuntary discharge for cause results in loss of eligibility for re-employment and loss of pay of all accrued leave. The term "cause" includes, but is not limited to the following:

- É Being convicted of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude.
- É Abuse, misuse, or theft of public property, equipment, facilities or supplies.
- É Willfully making false statements to supervisors, Board, Director or to the public, or falsification of records.
- É Violation of district rules, personnel or policy regulations, or safety rules.
- É Possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs while on the job or on District property or in a District vehicle.

- É Acceptance of gratuity.

- É Refusal to be examined by a physician when directed to do so.
- É Conduct which is disruptive, insubordinate, antagonistic, offensive or injurious to the District whether in relation to co-workers, other employees, superiors, elected officials or general public.
- É Failure to promptly report injuries or accidents through proper channels to supervisors.
- É Fighting on the job.
- É Refusal to submit to random drug test when directed to do so.
- É Damage to District property.
- É Poor job performance.
- É Negligence or Incompetence.
- É High Tardiness or Absenteeism.
- É Harassing other employees.
- É Inability to perform required work task.
- É Discrimination against other employees.

Involuntary for Other Business Reasons

Another possible reason would be Involuntary for other business reasons, which would include a reduction in the workforce for lack of work or reorganization or change in technology that could impact the number of employees needed.

Inability to Perform Duties

An employee who is unable to perform his/her job adequately due to loss of license or other requirements may be transferred to other duties, demoted or discharged.

Failure to Report for Work

Any employee who is absent for three (3) consecutive days without leave, and who has not notified the Operations Manager or the Director will be considered to have abandoned their position and will be involuntarily discharged from employment.

Investigation by District

When an employee is reported to have committed an act that would constitute cause or a basis for discharge, the conduct will be investigated by the Operations Manager or Director. The employee may be placed on administrative leave with pay, pending the outcome of the investigation. The employee shall receive a written notification of the investigation, including a time period for which the investigation will be completed. An employee is not required to respond to questions or provide information as part of the investigation that may constitute self incrimination or relates to criminal conduct that is pending or may be charged. Upon completion of the investigation, the Operations Manager or Director will advise the employee of any penalty that may be imposed as a result.

3.1 Pay Policies

Timekeeping

The payroll workweek begins on Wednesday at 12:00 a.m. (midnight) and ends on the following Tuesday at 11:59 p.m.

Federal and state laws require the District to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties.

It is the employee's responsibility to record any leave time taken in the payroll period on the Leave Request sheet. The time-clock will automatically deduct 30 minutes from the field employee's time each day for lunch. If the employee was unable to take a lunch break, it is his/her responsibility to note this on their Daily Work Report so the Office Coordinator can make the adjustment.

In the case of extenuating circumstances where the employee is unavailable to punch in or out on the time-clock, the Director or Supervisor may do so for the employee. Clocking in or out for another employee, altering, falsifying, or tampering with time records may result in disciplinary action.

Under no circumstances may a District employee perform any work for the District while "off-the-clock."

Paydays

All employees are paid biweekly on every other Friday. Each paycheck will include all earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous pay period. As of January 1, 2014 Direct Deposit is mandatory for all employees.

Overtime

Overtime work may be required to satisfy operational requirements. It is the policy of the District that all work in the excess of forty (40) worked hours per workweek, be compensated for at the rate of one and one half times the employee's regular hourly rate. All overtime must be approved by the Director, Operations Manager or Supervisor prior to such work being performed.

Compensatory Time

Full time non-exempt employees to choose Compensatory Time (Comp Time) for any overtime pay owed to them instead of having the overtime paid as cash during the pay period it is earned. The maximum number of Comp Time hours an employee can bank is 60 hours (the equivalent of 40 actual Overtime hours worked). Once an employee reaches this maximum balance, the

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employee will not be able to bank any more time and any Overtime hours worked will be paid out at the rate of one and one half times the regular rate of pay in the pay period in which it is worked.

If an employee would like to choose to have their Overtime pay banked as Comp Time, they need to complete the Comp Time Election/Revocation Form and submit it to the Office Coordinator. Once an employee elects to have Overtime hours banked as Comp Time, this election will remain in effect for ALL Overtime hours earned until the election is revoked. The Comp Time Election/Revocation Form can be used for both the election of the option and the revocation of this option.

Any Overtime hours that are converted to Comp Time will be converted at the one and one half times rate, at the time they are banked, so when Comp Time is paid out, it will be paid out at the regular rate of pay (straight time). Comp Time will begin April 1st of each year and end March 31st. All Comp Time must be used by March 31st. Any unused Comp Time that has not been used will be paid out. Comp Time banks will only be paid out at the pay period following March 31st and cannot be cashed out at any other time during the year except at separation of employment.

When Comp Time is paid out at March 31st, it will be paid at the employee's current hourly rate. When Comp time is paid out due to separation of employment with the District, it will be paid out at either the average regular rate of pay received by that employee during the last 3 years of employment or the final regular rate of pay received by the employee, whichever is higher.

To use Comp Time, the employee should complete a Leave Request Form and check the Comp Time box to indicate that is the type of paid time off that is to be used.

Reporting for Work When No Work is Available

A two (2) hour minimum will be given an employee when reporting to work, and there is less than 2 hours work available.

4.1 Accruable Leaves

Personal Leave Time

It is the policy of the District to allow full-time employees personal leave time. **No employee shall be paid personal leave that has not been accrued by the end of the prior pay period.**

Personal Leave Time Eligibility – Introductory employees accrue the scheduled personal leave time from the date of employment but cannot use the accrued leave time until they have completed the introductory period of 90 days. Full-time employees accrue the scheduled personal leave time benefit based upon satisfying a continuous service requirement. A continuous service is calculated from the date of employment, with personal leave time being accrued from that date.

Personal Leave Time Accrual Rate - At the end of each bi-weekly period, personal leave time is credited to the employee's personal leave time balance.

Based upon Continuous Service;

Employees satisfying the requirement of introductory period thru 1st year of employment earn 136 hours of personal leave time per year,

2 thru 5 year employees earn 192 hours of personal leave time per year,

6 thru 10 year employees earn 224 hours of personal leave time per year,

11 thru 15 year employees earn 256 hours of personal leave time per year,

15 plus years employees earn 264 hours of personal leave time per year.

Personal Leave Time Maximum Accrual - Employees can accrue up to 240 hours of personal leave time. Each employee shall monitor their personal leave account to insure that all personal leave time earned in excess of the 240 hrs. maximum accrual is taken prior to the end of each fiscal year. Any earned unused personal leave time above the 240 hrs. Maximum accrual will be forfeited. The district will not pay for any unused personal leave time.

Payment for Unused Accrued Personal Leave Time - In the following situations, payment shall be made for unused personal leave time:

- É Resignation in good standing from the District after the introductory period is met.
- É Layoff - due to lack of work or due to budgetary constraints.
- É Retirement from career service or participation in the FRS DROP program as allowed.
- É In the event of an employee's death, his or her designated beneficiary will be paid all accrued personal leave time in accordance with District policies.

4.2 Non-Accruable Leaves

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Bereavement Leave

An employee who has a death in the immediate family shall be permitted five (5) days bereavement leave. Immediate family is defined as employee's spouse, parents of employee or spouse, children of either, brothers or sisters of either, grandparents of either, grandchildren of

either, and step parents of either. Any additional days off will be charged as personal leave time or leave without pay. The Director may require evidence of death.

Court Leave

The District encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when required. Jury duty pay will be granted to full-time employees, calculated on the employee's base pay rate times the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked.

Employees must submit a copy of the jury duty summons to their supervisor as soon as possible so that the supervisor may make arrangements to accommodate their absence. Employees are expected to report for work whenever their court schedule permits. A Certificate of Service verifying their attendance is required to receive their regular pay. Any absence that is not covered by the Certificate of Service, the employee will be required to charge personal leave time or be placed in a leave without pay status.

The District may request an excuse from jury duty if, in the Director's judgment, the employee's absence would create serious operational difficulties. The District will continue to provide all benefits for the full term of the jury duty absence.

Witness Duty

The District encourages employees to appear in court for witness duty when subpoenaed. If employees have been subpoenaed or otherwise requested to testify as witnesses for the District, they will be paid their normal rate of pay for the entire period of witness duty. Employees will be granted unpaid time off to appear in court as a witness when requested by a party other than the District. Employees are free to use available personal leave time to receive compensation for the period of this absence. The subpoena should be shown to the employee's supervisor immediately after it is received so that operating requirements can be adjusted to accommodate the employee's absence. The employee is expected to work whenever the court schedule permits.

4.3 Leave Donation

The employees are allowed to donate leave to fellow employees in need of more leave due to a catastrophic illness or death in the immediate family. The employee in need of leave must use all accrued leave before donated leave can be received.

4.4 Leave Exception

An employee who is on authorized paid leave when a holiday is observed will not have that day charged to his/her accrued leave account.

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4.5 Leave Requests & Approval

Employees requesting paid or unpaid leave time in excess of one day, should place the information on the Leave Request Sheet a minimum of three (3) days in advance of the requested leave

date. Leave requests for one (1) day or less should be submitted at least the day before the desired leave.

The Leave Request Sheet should be filled out prior to known needs for doctor appointments, etc. and immediately upon returning from unforeseen illness/accidents.

All leave must be approved by the Supervisor and/or the Director. Conflicts in desired dates among the employees shall be resolved by the Director with due regard to the needs of the District. The Director may require any employee to postpone requested or approved leave if the work schedule requires it.

4.6 Holidays

The following days will be observed as paid holidays by all full-time employees of the District:

New Years Day - January 1st - One day

Martin Luther King Day - Variable - One day

President's Day - Variable - One day

Memorial Day - Variable - One day

Independence Day - July 4th - One day

Labor Day - Variable - One day

Veterans Day - Variable - One day

Thanksgiving - Variable ó Two days

Christmas Holidays - December 24th and 25th - Two days

Holidays that fall on Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday. Holidays that fall on Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. Holidays that fall on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday will be observed on that day, unless alternate days are designated. If it becomes necessary to work on a holiday the employee will be paid for the holiday as well as the hours worked or may choose another day in that pay period to observe the holiday.

4.7 Educational Assistance

The District will reimburse the cost of educational expenses to employees attending off-duty classes in subjects that are directly job related. Reimbursement will be on a pass/fail basis and will be limited to tuition, lab fees and book expenses. All requests for educational assistance must receive the prior approval of the Director before the employee registers for the courses. Failure to obtain prior approval may result in the employee being denied reimbursement of educational expenses.

The District will provide educational assistance to all eligible employees. To maintain eligibility employees must remain on the active payroll and be performing their job satisfactorily through

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completion of each course. Only full-time employees are eligible. Individual courses or courses that are part of a degree, licensing, or certification program must be related to the employee's current job duties, in order to be eligible for educational assistance. The District has the sole discretion to determine whether a course relates to an employee's current job duties. Employees should contact the Director for more information or questions about educational assistance. While

educational assistance is expected to enhance an employee's performance and professional abilities, the District cannot guarantee that participation in formal education will entitle the employee to automatic advancement, a different job assignment, or pay increases.

4.8 Social Security

The District pays the employer portion of the employee's social security as required by law.

4.9 Pension Program

The District is a member of the Florida Retirement System. Full time employees are eligible for retirement benefits consistent with the Florida Statutes.

4.10 Employee Beneficiary

In the event of an employee's death any unpaid wages, accrued personal leave time, and any applicable reimbursements will be paid to the designated beneficiary. A beneficiary form should be signed by the employee. If the beneficiary is not the current spouse, a consent form should be signed by the spouse. If the current spouse is the beneficiary, no signature is needed. If the employee gets divorced, the employee can update the beneficiary form without spouse signature upon submission of final judgment indicating divorce and no award of said benefits to the ex-spouse.

Full-time employees who have been hired before May 16, 2017 and who have been continuously employed full-time by the District are eligible for the following Retiree Benefits:

After a full-time employee has completed twenty (20) years service with the District, he/she is eligible to retire with the following benefits:

- É Health and life insurance premiums will be paid at rate of 50% until the employee starts receiving FRS retirement benefits. At that time, the District will pay the premium in full.

- É Life insurance will be the same amount as the group life insurance at the time he or she retired.

After a full-time employee completes thirty (30) years of service with the District, he/she is eligible to retire with the following benefits:

- É FRS benefits at retirement regardless of age.

- É Health and life insurance premiums will be paid at a rate of 100% by the District.

The forgoing policies are intended as guidelines only and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the SWCMCD Board of Commissioners. These policies do not constitute a contract of employment, expressed or implied, between the employee and SWCMCD. All employees covered by these policies are employed on an at-will basis, and SWCMCD reserves the right to terminate an individual's employment at any time.

SECTION 6 - INSURANCE

6.1 Insurance Program

The District believes it to be in the interest of its employees to have sufficient coverage in the event of accident, injury, or illness. To this end, the District pledges its support of, and participates in employee group health, dental and life insurance plans. The District obtains plan documents from insurance carriers and these are available to employees.

6.2 Eligibility

Only employees classified as full-time are eligible to enroll in all group insurance plans. Any part-time employees with 20 years of service and is currently enrolled in the group dental insurance may maintain coverage.

6.3 Insurance Premiums

The District pays the premiums for health, dental, and basic life insurance for all eligible employees.

6.4 Health/Dental Insurance

Eligible employees are provided full coverage for both Health and Dental Insurance in accordance with an established schedule and deductible limits.

6.5 Life & Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance

Eligible employees participating in the health plan are automatically enrolled in the group life and accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) insurance plan.

6.6 Additional Life Insurance

Additional life insurance coverage is available through the District on a voluntary basis.

6.7 Supplemental Insurance

The District pays \$12 per month (\$144 per year) toward the premiums for supplemental insurance with AFLAC (American Family Life Assurance Company). Additional coverage and dependent coverage is also available at the employee's expense. The employee's portion of the premiums is deducted from the employee's earnings. **Employees/Personnel hired after November 1, 2013 are not eligible for this benefit.**

6.8 Supplemental Reimbursement Program

The Supplemental Reimbursement Program is designed to help pay the cost of needed professional health care services that are not covered by insurance policies for employees and their dependents. Funds are placed in an account for each employee every fiscal year. The amount is determined by the District. If the employee is utilizing the \$12 per month (\$144 per year) allowance that is provided by the District for supplemental insurance through

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AFLAC (American Family Life Assurance Company) then that amount is deducted from the amount placed in the employees Supplemental Reimbursement Program account. The employee must bring receipts for any health care service and the Explanation of Benefits from the appropriate insurance company to show that the charge was not paid by the insurance company. Any amount of the Supplemental Reimbursement Program determined by the District that is unused within a fiscal year are not accruable into future fiscal years. **Employees/Personnel hired after November 1, 2013 are not eligible for this benefit.**

6.9 Dependent Insurance

Dependent coverage is available as outline below. The premiums are deducted from the employee's earnings unless otherwise stated.

Health - Eligible employees may extend health insurance coverage to their family members with a portion of the premiums being paid by the District. The District will have final determination in the portion of payment for dependent coverage. If the employee chooses the group health insurance, the premiums are deducted from the employee's earnings. The employee has the option to choose an individual plan for dependents. The employee is required to provide a personal check to the health insurance carrier for their proportional share of their dependent's individual health insurance premiums. **Employees/Personnel hired after November 1, 2013 are responsible for paying 100% of the premiums for health insurance elected for any dependents.**

Dental & Life - Dependent dental and life insurance coverage is also available through the District group plan.

Supplemental Insurance

Dependent coverage is available with AFLAC (American Family Life Assurance Company) at the employee's expense.

SECTION 7 - STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

7.1 Standards of Ethical Conduct

Each employee and official is a representative of the District and should bear in mind that public taxes pay employee salaries. As a result, employees are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect credit on the District at all times.

7.2 General Conduct

No employee shall engage in criminal, dishonest, immoral, or other conduct injurious or prejudicial to the District work force or the general public.

7.3 Relationships with the Public

Employees shall greet any person who comes into their office and offer their help in directing them to another office or in assisting them in any way possible. This professional courtesy must also be exercised in the execution of duties outside of the District headquarters.

7.4 Working Relationships with Other Employees

Employees shall treat other employees with courtesy and respect. If employees cannot resolve a disagreement, they should approach a Supervisor who will assist in finding a solution. If a Supervisor cannot resolve the situation, the problem/issue will be referred to the Director for resolution. The Director's decision is final in all instances.

7.5 Violations of Policies

Violations of the provisions of the personnel policies and procedures may lead to disciplinary action.

7.6 Conflict of Interest

No employee or official shall have a direct or indirect financial, personal, business or other interest that conflicts or appears to conflict with public duties and responsibilities or engage in financial, personal, business or other transactions as a result of relying on information obtained through employment.

7.7 Gratuities

No employee shall solicit or accept any valuable thing, regardless of its nature, in connection with District employment, from any person, partnership, corporation or other entity that may tend to influence the employee in the performance of duties.

7.8 Civil Disorders

No employee shall participate in riot or civil disorder.

7.9 Discrimination and Harassment

The District is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes or comments based on an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated. As an example, sexual harassment (both overt and subtle) is a form of employee misconduct that is demeaning to another person, undermines the integrity of the employment relationship, and is strictly prohibited.

Any employee who is subjected to or witnesses an incident of sexual or other unlawful harassment should promptly report the matter to his or her supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable or the employee believes it would be inappropriate to contact that person, the employee should immediately contact the Director. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Any supervisor or manager who becomes aware of possible sexual or other unlawful harassment should promptly advise the Director or any member of management who will handle the matter in a timely and confidential manner. Anyone engaging in sexual or other unlawful harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

7.10 Workplace Violence

The District is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe work environment. Given the increasing violence in society in general, the District 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. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay", or other conduct that may be dangerous to others.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, a customer, or a member of the public at any time, including off-duty periods, will not be tolerated. All threats of (or actual) violence, both direct and indirect, should be reported as soon as possible to your immediate supervisor or any other member of management. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by customers, vendors, solicitors, or other members of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, you should be as specific and detailed as possible.

All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. Do not place yourself in peril. If you see or hear a commotion or disturbance near your work station, do not try to intercede, notify your supervisor immediately. The District encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisors or the Director before the situation escalates into potential violence. The District is eager to assist in the resolution of employee disputes, and will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

7.11 Alcohol and Drug Abuse (Drug Free Workplace)

The District has developed a Drug Free Workplace Program and policy regarding the misuse of drugs and abuse of alcohol that, we believe, best serves the interests of all employees. Our policy formally and clearly states that the abuse of drugs and alcohol will not be tolerated. (See the Drug-Free Workplace Policy)

7.12 Use of Government Vehicles and Property

District vehicles are to be utilized for District purposes only. No employee shall use or allow the use of District property of any kind for other than officially approved activities. Misuse of District equipment will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action.

7.13 Use of Telephones

Employees may use District telephones for local personal calls only during break periods or lunch time. Employees should practice discretion when making local personal calls. Limit calls to two minutes or less. Long distance calls are only authorized for official business. No personal long distance phone calls will be made or charged to the District under any circumstances.

To ensure effective telephone communications, employees should always speak in a courteous and professional manner.

7.14 Computer and E-Mail Usage

District computers, computer files, the e-mail system, and software furnished to employees are the District property intended for official business use. Employees should not use a password, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication without authorization. To ensure compliance with this policy, computer and e-mail usage may be monitored. All email messages sent or received, and information stored on District computers or disks may constitute a public record and are subject to review and inspection at any time by District management.

Specific District prohibitions include:

- É The use of computers and the e-mail system in ways that are disruptive, offensive to others or harmful to morale. For example, the display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages, and cartoons is not allowed. This includes but is not limited to, ethnic slurs, racial comments, off-color jokes, or anything that may be construed as harassment or showing disrespect for others.
- É The use of the official e-mail to solicit for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other non-business matters.
- É The use of various computer software for business purposes for which the District does not own the copyright to this software or its related documentation.
- É Unless authorized by the software developer, the District does not have the right to reproduce such software for use on more than one computer. Employees may only use

software on local area networks or on multiple machines according to the software license agreement.

É The illegal duplication of software and its related documentation.

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7.15 Social Media

The District recognizes the importance of the Internet in shaping public thinking about the District and our current and potential services, employees, and citizens. The District also recognizes the importance of our employees joining in and helping shape conversation and direction through blogging and interaction in social media. The District is committed to supporting employees' rights to interact knowledgeably and socially in the blogosphere and on the Internet through blogging and interaction in social media. Further, as part of the conduct of each employee and regarding their employer, appropriate judgment must be exercised on what is shared in the social networking and in general would be similar to what is appropriate while at work.

7.16 Personal Activities During Work Hours

Personal activities must be accomplished before work, during lunch time and/or after work. Personal activities are not to be completed on paid time and not in District vehicles. If an employee has an emergency and needs to accomplish a personal task during his/her normal work schedule, the employee's supervisor will be advised promptly. The employee will be charged for personal leave time.

7.17 Personal Appearance

Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the business image the District presents to customers and visitors. During business hours, employees are expected to present a clean and neat appearance and to dress according to the requirements of their positions. Uniforms are required for all field personnel and will be provided and maintained by the District. Employees shall be expected to exercise care to protect their uniforms from damage and shall be responsible for loss of said uniforms. Upon discharge from employment the employee is responsible to turn in all uniforms. The District will reimburse field employees \$40 per year for steel-toed boots. Consult your supervisor if you have questions as to what constitutes appropriate attire.

7.18 Absenteeism and Tardiness

An employee who is unable to report for work as scheduled or will be late, must call the Operations Manager, Supervisor or Secretary/Receptionist as soon as practical. If the employee is aware of their specific situation prior to normal business hours, the employee must leave a specific message on the District's answering machine to ensure that Management is fully aware of the employee's situation.

7.19 Visitors in the Workplace

To provide for the safety and security of employees and the facilities at the District, only authorized visitors are allowed in the workplace. All visitors must report to the Administrative Office. Authorized visitors will receive directions and/or be escorted to their destination.

Employees are responsible for the conduct and safety of their visitors. If an unauthorized individual is observed on the District's premises, employees should direct them to the Administrative Office.

7.20 Smoking

In keeping with the District's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, smoking in the workplace is strongly discouraged. Nonsmoking areas are clearly designated where smoking is expressly prohibited. Employees are required to respect these designated nonsmoking areas at all times. In situations where the preferences of smokers and nonsmokers are in direct conflict, the preferences of nonsmokers will prevail. There will be no smoking in any building at District headquarters or in District vehicles. The designated smoking area is anywhere outside except within 50 feet of fuel/chemical storage areas. This policy applies equally to all employees, customers, and visitors.

7.21 Cell Phone, computers, Telephone, Voicemail System, Email, Text Messaging, Fax/Copy Machine and Other Communication Device Use

District Provided Cell Phones, Telephones, voice mail systems, fax/copy machines, and computers, including electronic mail systems (e-mail) and Internet are provided for District business use and personal use is strictly prohibited.

The acquisition and use of cellular telephones, computers, voice mail access, email and the like, shall be limited to those instances where there is demonstrated a need for such equipment to perform essential District business or to improve safety, increase productivity, and increase service to the public. The purchase of cell phones, computers, and other equipment shall be subject to authorization by the District Director.

The District recognizes that occasions arise in which a personal calls or communications needs to be made or received on a cell phone, district telephones, emails or the like. These occasions shall be limited to EMERGENCY use only for personal calls or communications during the employee's work hours, It is specifically intended that District equipment and services be used for District business-related purposes only.

Employees that use their District cell phone, text, email, internet, voicemail and the like, for any personal use shall be subject to taxation on the full cost of the monthly bill in accordance with IRS regulations. Personal calls are to be limited to EMERGENCY use only. The District reserves the right to audit all District-owned cell phones and their use, which will include but not be limited to, a review of the monthly billing statement. District issued cell phones are on a fixed plan for minutes used monthly and limited texts. Therefore, the employee is responsible for paying for any minutes or texts used in excess of the total monthly minutes or number of texts allowed unless the excess usage can be documented as official District business.

Cell Phones:

Employees are prohibited from using cell phones, including texting, while driving and are encouraged to use a "hands free" device if the use of a cell phone while driving is absolutely necessary.

All District owned cell phones will be left at the District offices once the employees shift has ended. It is the employees responsibility to insure the phone is being properly charged for use the next day.

If there are special circumstances which require that an employee use a District phone after regular working hours, then this shall be approved on a case by case basis by the District Director at his sole discretion. If a phone is taken home by the employee it shall only be used for District business.

Also prohibited is use of any of these systems to transmit or receive inappropriate messages, to access inappropriate information, or to harass or annoy another party. Inappropriate messages and information include, but are not limited to, those that are for personal benefit and those involving discriminatory, hostile, suggestive, obscene, or otherwise unsuitable language and content.

Retention of Public Records:

The State of Florida requires the retention of "all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, data processing software, or other material, regardless of the physical form, characteristics, or means of transmission, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any agency" (F.S. 119.011 (1)). As it is for all documents, requirements for retention of e-mail and or text messages are determined by content. It is each employee's responsibility to evaluate e-mail and or text messages for content to determine the length of time and how the message must be retained, just as with paper documentation. Methods of retaining e-mail documents and or text messages include saving messages to files on floppy disk, hard drive, or printing messages and filing in paper file.

Personal Cell Phone Usage While at Work

The District discourages employees from bringing personal cell phones to their work site. If an employee finds it necessary to have a personal cell phone during work hours, calls and texts are to be for urgent family or emergency communication only. (i.e. child needs to be picked up at school, family medical emergency, etc.). Employees who do not comply with this policy may be required to leave their personal cell phone in their vehicle during work hours.

Violations of this policy will be considered grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal of employment.

SECTION 8 - DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

The purpose of this policy is to state the District's position on administering equitable and consistent discipline for unsatisfactory conduct and/or performance in the workplace. The best disciplinary measure is the one that does not have to be enforced and comes from good leadership and fair supervision at all employment levels. The District's own best interest lies in ensuring fair treatment of all employees and in making certain that any required discipline is prompt, uniform, fair, and impartial. The major purpose of any disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence, and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.

As a result, the District has developed a progressive disciplinary policy that may call for any of these actions - verbal warning, written warning, suspension with or without pay, or discharge - depending on the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences.

Progressive discipline means that, with respect to most disciplinary problems, the following steps will normally be followed:

- É A first offense will normally result in a verbal warning;
- É A second offense will normally result in a written warning;
- É A third offense will result in more severe discipline up to and including a final written warning, which may include suspension.
- É A fourth offense will result in the most severe discipline up to and including discharge from employment.

This policy does not guarantee four levels of discipline. The severity of offense may require serious or immediate action by the District, including discharge when appropriate.

SECTION 9 - PROBLEM RESOLUTION POLICY

It is the intent and policy of the District to provide employees a means of assuring fair and equitable treatment in all matters related to their employment with the District. For this purpose an independent, impartial review process is established to investigate and resolve complaints, grievances, discrimination claims or other matters related to personnel practices.

First, the employee must promptly put the complaint in writing and discuss the complaint with their immediate supervisor. Within five (5) calendar workdays after being informed of the complaint, the Operations Manager or Office Coordinator shall respond orally and in writing to the employee, and provide written documentation to the Director.

If the employee is not satisfied with the decision of the Operations Manager or Office Coordinator, an appeal in writing, may be made to the Director. The Director shall respond to the employee orally and in writing within five (5) working days after receiving a request to review a matter. The Director's decision will be final.

The District is an Equal Opportunity Employer and abides by all State and Federal laws prohibiting discrimination. It is unlawful to discriminate against an employee based on the following:

- Marital status
- Race
- Color
- Religion or political affiliation
- Age
- Sex
- National origin
- Handicap or disability

The District has a duty to protect its employees from a work environment that fosters, allows, or promotes discrimination of employees. Any employee who discriminates against another employee in violation of this discrimination policy shall be terminated immediately.

SECTION 10 - OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

10.1 Accident Reports

All accidents resulting in injury to employees or other people, and/or damage to public or private property, equipment, or vehicles, must be reported immediately on an accident/incident form. The supervisor will investigate all such occurrences and provide a written report.

10.2 Conservation

All employees must be aware of the need to conserve fuel, equipment, supplies, and energy resources. Each employee shall make positive and continuing efforts to contain costs and reduce consumption and provide supervisors ideas for conservation.

10.3 Emergency Closings

Emergency conditions, such as, severe weather, fires, power failures, or flooding, can disrupt District operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of our facility and suspension of operations. When operations are officially closed due to emergency conditions, the time off from the employees work schedule will be paid. Only the Director or designee is authorized to close the facility and suspend operations.

When operations resume, employees who are unable to report for work can take leave or leave without pay. Employees in essential operations may be asked to work on a day when operations are officially closed. In these circumstances, employees who work will receive regular pay plus paid time off for being officially closed.

10.4 Return of Property

All property issued to individual employees must be returned not later than their last scheduled day of work. The District may also take all action deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property.

Employees are responsible for items issued to them by the District to perform their duties and responsibilities. Examples of items/equipment that may be issued to employees includes:

- É Uniforms
- É Facility and/or vehicle keys
- É Emergency Operations Identification Card
- É Radio

SECTION 11 - EXPANDED POLICIES

11.1 Communications

The District believes in two way communications. The Board and Director will communicate proactively with employees in most appropriate methods. Through board meetings, communication with line management and sharing with employees, communication will be given to employees. This handbook is an example of communications provided to employees on policies and procedures. In order to ensure two way communications, employees are expected to communicate with their supervisors.

11.2 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The following information is intended to be used as a guide for FMLA leave. The original Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 as amended is detailed and lengthy. The provisions contained therein will apply to District employees.

1. FMLA requires covered employers provide unpaid leave to their employees, both male and female, for the following:
 - To care for a newborn child or for a newly adopted or foster child.
 - To care for a family member with a serious health condition.
 - For the employee's own serious health conditions under certain circumstances.
 - For any qualifying exigency arising from the fact that a spouse, child or parent or the employee is on active duty in the U. S. Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation.
 - To care for a spouse, child, parent, or next of kin who is a service member with a serious injury or illness.
2. To be eligible for leave under FMLA an employee must fulfill the following criteria:
 - Work for a covered employer.
 - Have been employed by an employer for at least 12 months.
 - Have at least 1,250 hours of service with the employer during the 12 month period before any leave.
3. FMLA leave provides up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave during any 12 month period to eligible employees for qualifying family and medical reasons. The 12 month period shall be defined as a rolling 12 month period measured backward from the first date an employee uses FMLA leave. Employees are required to use their available personal leave time during the 12 week family leave.
4. Employees should provide 30 days advance notice when the leave is foreseeable.
5. The Director may require a medical certification to support a request for FMLA leave and a fitness for duty report to return to work.
6. The employee's group health insurance will be continued for the duration of FMLA leave.

7. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.
8. The use of FMLA leave will not result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

11.3 Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA)

The federal COBRA gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under the District's group health plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of an employee; a reduction in an employee's hours or a leave of absence; an employee's divorce or legal separation; and a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements. Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at the District's group rates plus an administration fee. Walton County provides each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under the District's group health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations.

11.4 Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

The HIPAA was enacted to provide new rights and protections for participants in group health plans. Additionally, the HIPAA Privacy Act prohibits the disclosure of any Protected Health Information pertaining to any employee. To this end, staff members or employees should not discuss the medical condition of any other employee under any circumstance and/or condition.

11.5 Worker's Compensation

It shall be the policy of the District to provide Workers' Compensation insurance benefits to any employee injured as a result of job duties. The District policy is to secure immediate medical attention for the injured employee and furnish competent medical services.

Injury Reporting

All employee injuries, without exception, must be immediately reported to the Operations Manager or Director by the injured employee. The injury report must be signed by the employee and submitted to the Director as soon as practical.

If an employee fails to immediately report an injury/incident, their eligibility for Workers' Compensation may be jeopardized and withheld.

11.6 Safety

To assist in providing a safe and healthful work environment for employees, customers, and visitors, the District has established a workplace safety program. This program is a top priority for the District. The Director has responsibility for implementing, administering, monitoring, and evaluating the safety program. Its success depends on the alertness and personal commitment of all.

Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all work activities. Employees must immediately report any unsafe condition to the appropriate supervisor.

Expanded safety policies and procedures are outlined in the District's Safety Policy Manual. (See Safety Policy manual.)

11.7 Travel Reimbursement The District will reimburse travelers for reasonable business travel expenses incurred while on assignments away from the normal work location. The Director must approve all business travel in advance. Travelers should contact the Director for guidance and assistance on procedures related to travel arrangements, travel advances, expense reports, reimbursement for specific expenses, or any other business travel issues.

When approved, the actual costs of travel, lodging, and other expenses directly related to accomplishing business travel objectives will be reimbursed by the District. Such expenses are to be limited to reasonable amounts. The traveler must use the most efficient and economical means of travel considering time of the traveler, impact on the productivity of the traveler, cost of transportation, and per diem or subsistence required. Expenses that generally will be reimbursed include the following:

- É Registration fees
- É Toll charges
- É Airfare or train fare for travel in coach or economy class or the lowest available fare.
- É Car rental fees, only for compact or mid-sized cars.
- É Fares for shuttle or airport bus service, where available.
- É Costs of public transportation for other ground travel
- É Taxi fares, only when there is no less expensive alternative.
- É Mileage costs for use of personal cars will be at the Internal Revenue Service Standard Mileage Rate.
Mileage allowed shall be from point of origin to point of destination based on an approved map source i.e. D.O.T., Mapquest, etc.
- É Cost of standard accommodations in low to mid-priced hotels, motels, or similar lodgings, unless the business event is occurring at a specific hotel.
- É Cost of meals at \$42.00 per day, or a portion thereof.
- É Charges for telephone calls, fax, and similar services required for District business purposes. ALL business related calls should be documented to verify for reimbursement.

Cash advances to cover reasonable anticipated expenses may be paid to the traveler, after travel has been approved by the Director. If the traveler is unable to travel and advance payment has been made, the traveler must reimburse the District.

The traveler should submit the completed travel expense report immediately upon return. Receipts for all business related expenses, other than meals, are required for reimbursement and must accompany the report.

When return travel requires less than 150 miles and the conference or workshop is over by 5:00 p.m., travelers are required to return that day provided weather conditions are conducive to travel. For safety reasons, no traveler should drive more than 450 miles per day.

11.8 Training

The Board of Commissioners encourages the furtherance of employee career goals through continued educational training. Consideration will be extended when feasible in duty hours and other position requirements to assist employees in their endeavors.

11.9 Military Duty

Annual Military Training

An employee shall be entitled to a paid military leave of absence upon presenting proper orders calling him/her to temporary active or inactive duty for training purposes with a reserve unit of the United States Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, or National Guard Unit for a period not exceeding seventeen (17) consecutive calendar days in any one (1) calendar year. Only full-time employees are entitled to compensation for such annual military leave. After seventeen (17) calendar days the employee must utilize accrued leave to receive pay.

The employee is required to submit a copy of orders from the appropriate military commander as evidence of such duty to the Director. The request must be submitted in advance of the scheduled date of departure for proper approval for military leave of absence.

Inactive Duty Training

A full-time employee who is a member of an Armed Forces Reserve Unit or the National Guard may be excused from work without pay to attend evening and weekend military training. Evidence of membership in the applicable organization must be provided. All employee benefits will continue provided full-time employment status is maintained. Benefits will cease once accrued leave is exhausted. When employment as a full-time employee is re-established all benefits will be reinstated.

Recall to Active Military Duty

A full-time employee who is a member of an Armed Forces Reserve or National Guard Unit who is ordered to active duty to fulfill his/her primary or an emergency military obligation for a period in excess of thirty (30) days will be granted a military leave of absence without pay or benefits. Prior to departure the employee is required to provide valid written orders to the District to ensure that their right to return to their job is protected. Prior to returning to the District for reemployment, the former employee must notify the Director they intend to apply for reinstatement. The District's responsibility is to return the employee to their previous position, if available, or assign them to a position of equal pay and benefits within the organization.

11.10 Elective Office Candidacy

District Elective Office Candidacy

A District employee may be a candidate for an elective District office but at the time of formally qualifying, shall resign from District service.

Other Elective Office Candidacy

A District employee may be a candidate for and/or elected to a public office, other than the District, and may continue in the District service.

SECTION 12 - SUMMARY

This handbook is a summary of the policies and procedures of the South Walton Mosquito Control District, the pay and benefits offered, and the obligations you assume as an employee. We hope employees read the handbook carefully and will keep it for future reference. If an employee has any questions concerning the policies or benefits outlined in this handbook, please ask the supervisor. Management may occasionally revise, change, add or delete some of the policies that are outlined in this handbook. The dynamic nature of mosquito control, growth in the area served, and changes in technology will undoubtedly require changes in our policies and procedures. Management will keep employees updated on any changes. Employees are a part of the District team, and we hope the association will be rewarding. Each job is important to the District's continued success in serving South Walton.

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

The employee handbook describes important information about the District, and I understand that I should consult the Director regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I have entered into my employment relationship with the District voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described here are necessarily subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the District has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

EMPLOYEE'S NAME (printed): _____

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____