



Bell County Public Health District
PROMOTE • PREVENT • PROTECT

Employee Handbook

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WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEE!

The Bell County Public Health District (BCPHD) is glad to have you on the team of public servants that comprise this unique governmental agency. How well you do your work and how you conduct yourself on the job are both subject to public approval. Your contact with citizens will often be the only basis on which the Health District is judged. Therefore, the primary objective in your position should be to serve the public to your utmost ability while behaving in a professional and courteous manner to both colleagues and members of the public alike.

The Bell County Public Health District provides direct public health services, education, and leadership to promote optimal health of all people and ensure the well-being of Bell County's environment while working in cooperation with the local community and county, state, and federal governments. The Health District plays a critical role in protecting and improving the health of citizens in Bell County by providing a range of services aimed at promoting healthy behaviors; preventing diseases; ensuring access to safe food, water, and life-saving immunizations; and preparing for and responding to health emergencies. The Health District maintains a dedicated and technically trained staff to provide these public health services to the residents of Bell and surrounding counties.

The Health District partners with local cities to provide public health services to each of its citizens. Under the Inter-local agreement, each participating city receives the right to appoint a voting representative to the Board of Health. The participating members are: Killeen, Belton, Harker Heights, Temple, Bell County, Little River/Academy, Morgan's Point, Troy, Holland, Rogers, and Salado. The Board meets quarterly to oversee the administrative functions of the Health District.

This handbook is a brief reference on how we work as a team to provide services to the public. No employee handbook can anticipate or address every circumstance or question, and the agency has not attempted to do so here. Whether you are a new or experienced employee, this guide is designed to give you facts about the Health District, how it works, and the policies which govern all employees.

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with the Health District and provide you with information about working conditions, employee benefits, and some of the policies affecting your employment. You should read, understand, and comply with all provisions of the handbook. It describes many of your responsibilities as an employee, and outlines the programs developed by the Health District to benefit employees. One of the Health District's objectives is to provide a work environment that is conducive to both personal and professional growth.

The Health District personnel policies and procedures are adopted by the Health District's Board of Health, and are subject to constant review and may be updated or changed as necessary and/or appropriate. All such changes take effect when approved by the Board. The language used in this handbook is not intended to create, nor is it to be construed to constitute a contract between the Health District and any one or all of its employees. Employment with the Health District is not for a fixed or definite term, and either the employee or Health District may sever the employment relationship at any time for any reason.

We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable, and rewarding. Again, welcome!

BELL COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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GENERAL PERSONNEL GUIDELINES

100 Employee Relations

The Health District believes that the work conditions, wages, and benefits it offers to its employees are competitive with those offered by other local health organizations. If employees have concerns about work conditions or compensation, they are encouraged to voice these concerns directly to their supervisor.

Our experience has shown that when employees deal openly and directly with supervisors, the work environment can be excellent, communications can be clear, and attitudes can be positive. We believe that the Health District amply demonstrates its commitment to employees by responding effectively to employee concerns.

101 Equal Employment Opportunity Employer

All employees and job applicants are guaranteed equality of employment opportunity under state and federal law. Essentially, this means that the Health District will not discriminate against any worker or applicant based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, or veteran status. All recruitment, selection, placement, training and layoff decisions made by Health District supervisors or managers will be based on job-related qualifications and abilities of candidates without any illegal discrimination.

All other personnel policies and practices of the Health District, including compensation, benefits, discipline, and safety and health programs, as well as social and recreational activities, will be administered and conducted without regard to any individual's race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, or veteran status. The Health District will take all necessary steps to ensure that each employee's work environment is free of unlawful discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, or veteran status. The Health District will take all necessary steps to see that applicants and employees with known disabilities are reasonably accommodated and that all applicable federal, state and local laws regarding employment are complied with. Applicants and employees who have a disability and who need a reasonable accommodation are encouraged to notify the Human Resources Office so that Health District can make a reasonable accommodation.

102 At-Will Employment

All employees of the Health District are employees *at will* and as such are free to resign from employment at any time with or without reason. The Health District retains the same right to discharge any employee at any time with or without cause or advance notice. Nothing contained in this handbook or any other document provided to the employee is intended to be, nor should it be, construed as a contract that employment or any other benefit will be continued for any time. No Health District employee shall promise or guarantee any employee employment for any period of time nor make any guarantee of salary or benefits. Any salary numbers provided to an employee in annual or monthly terms are stated for the sake of convenience or to facilitate comparisons and are not intended and do not create an employment contract for any specific period of time.

Health District employees may be disciplined, demoted, transferred, or discharged at any time with or without notice or cause. No statements found in this handbook are intended to or will limit a supervisor's right to discipline an employee providing there is a reason.

Further, supervisors administering discipline or discharging an employee are not required to follow any specific procedure or comply with any of the procedures described within this handbook, which are guidelines only.

103 Employment Applications

The Health District relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the Health District's exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

104 Directory Information

Employees are required to promptly report any changes of name, address, telephone number, number of eligible dependents, and emergency contact information. Such information is required by the Health District for matters such as federal withholding and insurance coverage. That information should be provided to the Human Resources Department.

105 Official Employee Records

The Health District will maintain all official employment related files, and when applicable, a separate medical file. Personnel and medical files are the property of the Health District and information contained within those files shall be consistent with federal, state and local government regulations. Personnel files should contain documents related only to employment. For example, applications, resumes and other application documents, W-4's, change of status forms, termination of employment forms, letters of recognition or commendation, among others. Employee medical files may contain employee documents related to workers' compensation, FMLA, medical leave of absence forms, documents pertaining to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), drug screenings and results required for pre-employment physical exams, and other medical information required by applicable law.

Individual employees do not have a right of privacy in their personnel files. Personnel files are the property of the Health District and individual employees have no ownership interest in their personnel file. Employees wishing to view their personnel file may be allowed to do so upon request, but only in the presence of a Human Resources office staff member.

106 Probationary Period

The probationary period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. The Health District uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance. Either the employee or the Health District may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after the probationary period, with or without cause or advance notice.

All new and rehired employees work on a probationary basis for the first six (6) months after their date of hire. Employees who are promoted or transferred within the Health District may complete a secondary probationary period of the same length with each reassignment to a new position. Any significant absence will automatically extend the

probationary period by the length of the absence. If the Health District determines that the designated probationary period does not allow sufficient time to thoroughly evaluate the employee's performance, the probationary period may be extended for a specified period.

In cases of promotions or transfers within the Health District, an employee who, in the sole judgment of management, is not successful in the new position can be removed from that position at any time during the secondary probationary period. If this occurs, the employee may be allowed to return to their former job or to a comparable job for which the employee is qualified, depending on the availability of such positions and the Health District's needs.

Upon satisfactory completion of the initial probationary period, employees enter the "regular" employment classification. Employment status is not changed during the secondary probationary period that results from a promotion or transfer within the Health District.

107 Performance Evaluations

Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. Formal performance evaluations are conducted at the end of an employee's probationary period in any new position. This period, known as the probationary period, allows the supervisor and the employee to discuss the job responsibilities, standards, and performance requirements of the new position.

Performance evaluations are conducted to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weakness, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals.

108 Paydays

The Health District currently issues paychecks on the last business day of every month. If either the last day of the month should fall on a weekend or a holiday, payday will be the last working day prior to that day.

Direct deposit forms are available from the Administration office and can be submitted at any time. Employees are encouraged to enroll in direct deposit. The first and last paychecks are not direct deposited.

109 Employment Termination

Termination of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization, and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Below are examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:

- **Resignation**-Except as otherwise agreed to by a supervisor, an employee who desires to resign in good standing with the Health District will be expected to submit a written resignation and give at least two-week, working notice of their intent to leave the Health District. Employees resigning must submit a written resignation prior to leaving the Health District in order to be eligible for accrued annual leave payment.
- **Retirement**-Voluntary employment termination initiated by the employee meeting age, length of service and any other criteria for retirement from the organization.

- **Discharge**-Involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization. To include employees whose absence is a no call/no show.

An employee who separates from Health District employment through resignation or termination is entitled to a lump sum payment for accrued and unused annual leave provided:

- A minimum of a two week written notice is provided for resignation,
- The employee has six (6) months of continuous, benefits eligible, Health District employment prior to separation.

The lump sum payment is based on the employee's rate of pay at the time of separation. If an employee separates from the Health District prior to completing six (6) months of continuous, benefits eligible employment, annual leave accrual is lost.

Employee benefits will be affected by employment termination in the following manner. All accrued annual leave benefits that are due and payable at termination will be included in the employee's final paycheck. Some benefits may be continued at the employee's expense if the employee so chooses. The employee will be notified in writing of the benefits that may be continued and of the terms, conditions, and limitations of such continuance.

In the event that a two-week notice is impossible, this policy may be waived on a case by case basis by the Division Director.

110 Out Processing Information & Retirement information (if applicable)

Any employee who resigns or is discharged will receive a termination packet either in person or in the mail that contains COBRA information, retirement information, where applicable, and other information relating to the termination of employment.

111 Voting

Health District employees are encouraged to vote. Employees may choose to vote on early voting days or on election days for candidates of their choice, during non-working hours.

112 Employment Outside of Health District

Your job with the Health District should be your primary job. If you have a second job, you must inform your supervisor of the details. The second job must not interfere with your Health District job duties or performance.

113 Hiring of Relatives

Relatives of persons currently employed by the Health District may be hired only if they will not be working directly for or supervising a relative. Health District employees cannot be transferred into such a reporting relationship.

In other cases where a conflict or the potential for conflict arises, even if there is no supervisory relationship involved, the parties may be separated by reassignment or termination from employment. Supervisors are to follow state law prohibiting nepotism in the hiring of employees.

If two employees working in the same chain of command choose to marry, one will have to find other employment outside that chain of command within sixty (60) days of the marriage; otherwise, one of the persons will have to terminate their employment with the Health District.

The Health District also reserves the right to transfer one or both employees within a department if the employees are in a co-habitation relationship. The same process may apply for such relationships among employees as stated above.

114 Immigration Law Compliance

The Health District is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin.

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 with the Health District within the past three years, or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid.

Employees with questions or seeking more information on immigration law issues are encouraged to contact the Administration office. Employees may raise questions or complaints about immigration law compliance without fear of reprisal.

115 Conflicts of Interest

Employees have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. This policy establishes only the framework within which the Health District wishes the business to operate. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general direction so that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. Contact their Department Supervisor for more information or questions about conflicts of interest.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for a relative as a result of the Health District's business dealings. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if employees have any influence on transactions involving inspections, purchases, contracts, or leases, it is imperative that they disclose to a Health District Supervisor and/ or Division Director, as soon as possible, the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Personal gain may result not only in cases where an employee or relative has a significant ownership in a firm with which the Health District does business, but also when an employee or relative receives any kickback, bribe, substantial gift, or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving the Health District.

116 Job Posting

The Health District provides employees an opportunity to indicate their interest in open positions and to advance within the organization according to their skills and experience.

Vacancy notices will be emailed to all supervisors in all Health District facilities before the notice will be published externally to the general public. The notice will include job title, office, pay range, brief description of the duties, experience and educational requirements, supervisor's name and the closing date. After the vacancy notice is posted, Health District employees may still apply for the position until position is filled.

In general, notices of all regular, full-time job openings are posted, although the Health District reserves its discretionary right to not post a particular opening.

117 Employment Reference Checks

The Health District will respond to all reference check inquiries from other employers. Responses to such inquiries will confirm only dates of employment, wage rates, positions(s) held and/or whether the employee is re-hireable or not.

118 Protected Health Information - HIPAA

The Human Resources Department has the complete policies related to protected health information and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). You may contact the HIPAA Compliance Officer for more information about HIPAA.

Access to HIPAA – protected health information – Employees who, in the course of performing their duties, obtain information which is protected health information are expected to treat such information with the utmost confidentiality. Such information should only be disclosed to others who are specifically authorized to have access to such information and only on a need to know basis.

At the Health District, all patient information is confidential and shall not be disclosed without the consent of the patient, the patient's representative, or unless required by law. Confidential patient information shall not be communicated to any person (including healthcare givers) unless that person has a clear need to know (e.g. other physicians and personnel under the direction of the physician who are participating in the diagnosis, evaluation, or treatment of the patient).

Communicating confidential patient information inappropriately, carelessly, or negligently (e.g. casual discussion regarding a patient, discussion in public area, and/or unauthorized release of information while on or off campus) is a breach of confidentiality.

Medical records of patients of the Health District are kept as a component of the operation of the clinic and are the business records of the Health District. Although maintained for the benefit of the patient, the medical staff, and the clinic, the pieces of paper which make up the medical records are the property of the clinic. They are not the property of either the patient, or the patient's attending physician.

Breach of confidentiality is a serious violation. Violation of this policy will result in appropriate disciplinary review and action which may include termination.

119 Fraud

The Health District is committed to providing quality services to eligible clients in full compliance with the rules and regulations applicable to each Health District program as outlined by the individual program's Federal or State funding agency. The Health District will demonstrate a "zero tolerance" of fraud, waste, or abuse of Federal or State program dollars entrusted to the Health District. Health District employees are expected to comply fully with all rules and regulations related to their program and to promptly report suspected fraud, waste, or abuse by Health District employees or clients to their supervisor, Health District Director or the Chairperson of the Health District Board of Health.

Employees, who participate in activities which create fraud, waste, or abuse of Federal or State contract dollars/services, or who have personal knowledge of such activities by other employees or clients and fail to report the situation to their supervisor, the Health District Director or the Chairperson of the Health District's Board of Health, will be subject to disciplinary action which may include termination. Health District employees who report such misconduct in "good faith" will not be subject to retaliation or retribution.

The Health District will conduct an internal investigation of each complaint based on facts provided in the initial complaint. The Health District may compile complaints to determine trends and areas for targeting program integrity activities or may address complaints individually as the Health District Director or the Chairperson of the Health District Board of Health deems appropriate. The Health District will make appropriate referrals to the funding agency's Office of Inspector General – Fraud Investigation Division and/or law enforcement as necessary. The Health District will strive to maintain the confidentiality of an employee's identity. However, there may be a point where the individual's identity may become known or may have to be revealed in order to complete the investigation or to cooperate with law enforcement or Office of Inspector General investigations.

WIC Program

The Health District WIC staff will have their own computer User ID and password, which is not to be shared with any other staff under any circumstances. WIC staff will log out of the TEXAS WIN System before another staff member uses the computer system and/or if they step away from the computer for any length of time.

The Assistant WIC Director or the Clinic Site Leader will randomly review certification records on a quarterly basis. Using the participant names generated from foxfire reports for active records, the Records Not Available WIC Review Tool will be utilized for documentation of record review for staff fraud, waste, and abuse.

Suspected fraud, waste, and abuse will immediately be reported to the WIC Director, Health District Director, or the Chairperson of the Health District Board of Health.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

200 Employee Benefits

Eligible employees at the Health District are provided a wide range of benefits. A number of the programs (such as Social Security, worker's compensation, and unemployment insurance) cover all employees in the manner prescribed by law.

Benefits eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee classification. Your supervisor can identify the programs for which you are eligible. Details of many of these programs can be found elsewhere in the employee handbook.

The following benefit programs are available to eligible employees:

- Retirement Plan
- Auto Mileage
- Benefit Conversion at Termination
- Bereavement Leave
- Deferred Compensation Plan
- Dental Insurance
- Educational Leave (Dietetic Internship)
- Employee Discounts (Sprint, Verizon)
- Health Insurance
- Holidays
- Jury Duty Leave
- Life Insurance
- Malpractice Insurance
- Membership Dues
- Annual Leave
- Sick Leave Benefits

201 Vacation Benefits

The Health District provides paid annual leave to employees for periodic vacations or other personal pursuits. This policy applies to employees appointed to work at least forty (40) hours per week for a period of at least six (6) months.

A. Accrual and Credit:

- 1) Employees will accrue annual leave for each month of employment based upon total Health District service credit. Annual leave will accrue according to the following Annual Leave Accrual Schedule:

ANNUAL LEAVE ACCRUAL SCHEDULE

Employees With Health District Service Credit	Hours Accrued Per Month	Maximum Carry-Over Hours To The Next Fiscal Year For Full Time Employees
Less than 2 years	8	192
At least 2 years but less than 5	9	216
At least 5 years but less than 10	10	240
At least 10 years but less than 15	11	264
At least 15 years but less than 20	12	288
At least 20 years but less than 25	13	312
At least 25 years but less than 30	14	336
At least 30 years but less than 35	15	360
At least 35 years but less than 40	16	384
At least 40 years but less than 45	17	408

Employees must have six (6) months of Health District employment before they can use accrued annual leave. Leave without pay (LWOP) status is not included in the calculation of service credit.

- 2) Credit for accrual will be given and posted to an employee's leave record on the last day of the month. Accrual is posted at the end of the month in which it is earned.

Note: Division Directors have the option to recognize employees with awards for longevity.

B. Limitations on Use: Annual leave may not be used before it is accrued. When an employee exhausts all appropriate and available leave, leave without pay is the only option. Annual leave requests and time off without pay are contingent on the approval of the employee's direct supervisor. An employee who becomes ill or is injured while on approved annual leave will be allowed to use accrued sick leave to cover the illness or injury. Upon receipt of a medical certification, an employee may request to have the actual time they were incapacitated due to illness or injury changed to sick leave.

C. Allowable Carryover Hours: Unused annual leave carries forward into the next fiscal year; however, the number of hours carried forward cannot exceed the limits outlined in the Annual Leave Accrual Schedule for a full-time employee. Annual leave hours in excess of the set carryover limits at the end of the fiscal year (August 31) will be lost.

D. Payment to an Estate: A deceased employee's estate is entitled to payment for unused annual leave if the employee had at least six (6) months of continuous Health District eligible employment benefits at the time of death. The payment is based upon the employee's rate of pay at the time of death.

E. Request for annual leave should be submitted at least five (5) days prior to taking annual leave.

F. Requests for leave may be granted on short notice at supervisors discretion and if there is adequate coverage. Some Health District divisions may require longer advanced notice for coverage purposes.

202 Sick Leave Benefits

The Health District provides paid sick leave benefits to all eligible employees for periods of temporary absence due to illnesses or injuries.

Eligible employees will accrue sick leave benefits at the rate of 8 hours per month. Paid sick leave can be used in minimum increments of a quarter hour. Eligible employees may use sick leave benefits for an absence due to their own illness or injury or that of a family member who resides in the employee's household.

Employees who are unable to report to work due to illness or injury must notify their direct supervisor before the scheduled start of their workday. The employee must talk directly to their supervisor (email or text is not acceptable). The direct supervisor must also be contacted on each additional day of absence. If an employee is absent for three or more consecutive days due to illness or injury, a physician's statement must be provided verifying the disability and its beginning and expected ending dates. Such verification may be requested for other sick leave absences as well and may be required as a condition to receiving sick leave benefits (at the discretion of the supervisor). Doctor's notes will be filed in the employee record. Failure to abide by these rules, including no call/no show absences, may result in disciplinary action to include employment termination.

Unused sick leave over 560 hours will be forfeited at the end of the fiscal year (August 31). Sick leave benefits are intended solely to provide income protection in the event of illness or injury, and may not be used for any other absence. Unused sick leave benefits will not be paid to employees while they are employed or upon termination of employment.

203 Compensatory Time

Purpose and scope - To establish guidelines for administering compensatory time for exempt and non-exempt employees. This policy applies to all Health District employees. In order to be eligible for compensatory time, all employees must have a letter of agreement that compensatory time is received in lieu of overtime pay in their personnel file.

Employees and supervisors are encouraged to flex time where possible to avoid accrual of compensatory time. No more than 80 hours of compensatory time can be accrued annually. Any compensatory time over 80 hours expires at the end of every calendar year and compensatory time is not eligible for payout if an individual resigns or retires.

A. Exempt Employee

According to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), exempt employees are employees

who:

- Regularly supervise two or more employees,
 - Management is their primary duty,
 - Have input into hiring, firing, promotions and job evaluations.
1. Employees may only accrue compensatory time with the permission of the Division or District Director.
 2. Exempt employees will not receive pay for overtime, however may receive one hour of compensatory time for each hour worked beyond forty (40) hours in one work week.
 3. Exempt employee may include those individuals occupying bona fide executive, administrative, and professional positions under FLSA. Exempt employees are expected to put in whatever hours are necessary to complete their job assignments. However, the Director may allow limited compensatory time off as compensation for additional hours worked. These hours are computed hour per hour. Upon separation of employment, exempt employees will not be paid for any compensatory time accrued.
 4. With approval from the Health District Director or their Division Director, exempt employees may take compensatory time off for any reason.

B. Non-Exempt employee

1. Employees may only accrue compensatory time with the permission of the Division or District Director.
2. A non-exempt employee is eligible for compensatory time. Compensatory time for such employees is calculated at 1 ½ times the number of hours worked above forty (40) hours per work week. Only hours actually worked in excess of forty (40) hours, in one work week, will be used to calculate entitlement to compensatory time. The employee's supervisor must approve the accrual and the taking of compensatory time in advance. Employees are strongly encouraged to take accrued compensatory time within thirty (30) days. Supervisors need to ensure employees are given the opportunity to take their compensatory time.
3. Non-exempt employees shall not accumulate more than 80 hours of compensatory time. Non-exempt employees, upon separation of employment, will not be paid for compensatory time.
4. With approval from their Division Director or their supervisor, non-exempt employees may take compensatory time off for any reason.

204 Family Medical Leave ACT (FMLA)

Full time employees with at least 12 months of continuous employment with the Health District and who have worked at least 1,250 hours in the period immediately preceding a request for leave are eligible to take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave for various reasons. Family Medical Leave may be taken for:

1. Birth of a child;
2. Placement of a child for adoption or foster care;

3. Care of the employee's spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition; or
4. Inability of the employee to work based on a serious health condition.

Employees who must take time off to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury are eligible for additional leave. All employees will be required to use accrued paid sick/vacation time concurrently with time off taken under FMLA. For questions relating to eligibility for FMLA leave, please contact Human Resources at 254-773-4457 for further information.

205 Holidays

The Health District will grant holiday time off to all employees on the holidays listed below.

*See your Supervisor for the Holiday List.

If a recognized holiday falls during an eligible employee's paid absence (such as annual or sick leave), the employee will not have to use accrued annual or sick leave time. However, if a recognized holiday falls while an employee is on LWOP status, credit for that holiday will not be given.

Neither the Health District nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by the Health District.

206 Bereavement Leave

The Health District grants up to three (3) consecutive days leave with pay to employees to attend services in connection with the loss of a member of the employee's immediate family. For purposes of this policy, immediate family means spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, sibling's child, grandparent, or grandchild.

207 Jury Duty

Serving on a jury is considered a civic duty and the Health District encourages employees to serve. Employees are required to notify their immediate supervisor as soon as they receive a jury summons, subpoena, or other witness notice. Employees will be paid at their regular rate of pay for time spent for jury service. Employees are required to report to work when released from court duty when the court no longer requires their presence. Documentation of jury service must be provided upon the employee's return to work at the end of jury service.

208 Military Leave

The Health District grants leave to its employees for military service in accordance with all applicable state and federal regulations relating to military and uniformed service leave.

209 Maternity/Adoption Related Leave

Applicants – Applicants or employees who are pregnant will be treated, for all job related purposes, in the same way as any other applicant or employee.

Job Continuation – No woman will be illegally denied a job or removed from a position because she is pregnant, considering pregnancy, or experiencing any pregnancy related problems. Any decision about a pregnant worker's placement or continuation in a job will be based on the same considerations that govern all such decisions, i.e., the employee's ability to satisfactorily perform the essential duties of the job in question.

Disability Leave for Pregnancy Complications – As with all cases of disability, the Health District may require a pregnant worker to provide a doctor's certificate before approving a request for disability leave. Similarly, the Health District may require a certificate of fitness to work before allowing an employee to return to work from a pregnancy-related disability leave. FMLA also applies.

Maternity/Adoption Leave – Parents may be granted up to twelve (12) weeks unpaid leave immediately following the birth or adoption of a child according to the FMLA rules. Such employees are expected to use all available accrued vacation/sick leave to cover absences from work. When sick/vacation leave is exhausted, employees on maternity/adoption leave may request unpaid leave on FMLA.

210 Mileage Reimbursement

Employees of Bell County Public Health District, who do not drive a company vehicle, are entitled to claim mileage expenses for travel from the employee's home site to sites (or the site closest to their home if the employee lives in between two sites) to conduct Health District business. Under no circumstances will an employee be reimbursed for travel from their home. When there is space in a company vehicle going to an event or work at a site, an employee who chooses not to ride in the company vehicle will not be reimbursed for travel to or from – travel will be at their own expense.

Mileage reimbursement rate for Bell County Public Health District are subject to periodic changes (as we follow the State mileage rate) so always check with your direct supervisor for the most current per mile rate before travelling. All staff members who use their personal vehicle for Health District business are required to furnish documentation to their Division Director that they have up-to-date automobile insurance for that purpose. Division Directors may not authorize travel reimbursement to a staff member unless current insurance records are maintained.

The following rules apply for mileage reimbursement in the event that an employee's personal vehicle is used for BCPHD business:

- No travel expenses may be incurred by any employee without authorization from a supervisor; and
- When two or more employees travel in the same vehicle, only one may claim mileage reimbursement. Employees are encouraged to carpool when feasible.

Employees claiming mileage reimbursement must submit a request for payment on the District's official travel form approved by their supervisor.

Travel Reimbursement Procedure

Mileage:

Employees, who drive their personal vehicles to a site different than their home site, will keep track of all mileage driven. Mileage will be reimbursed from their home site to other sites or outreach destinations. If an employee lives in between two sites, and they are to work at a site that is in the opposite direction from their home site, the employee will use the site closest to their home site for travel purposes. This mileage will be documented on the Travel sheet. If the employee travels round trip, the total mileage round trip can be used on the sheet with double arrows between starting and ending points to indicate the trip was round trip. If the mileage is calculated for one way, the employee can use a one-way arrow, or no arrow, to indicate a one-way trip. The full address of the originating point and destination will be documented on the Travel Sheet (see direct supervisor or Administration for a copy of the Travel Sheet). If the number of trips is more than will fit on the first page, additional pages may be used. Each page must be added up separately and the total placed on the page one. Employees must sign the form in order to be reimbursed.

Examples of travel situations: if an employee lives in Belton and has a home site in Killeen, but must travel to Temple to work, it is unreasonable to think the employee will go to their Killeen site first and then travel to Temple to work. In this case, the employee would use the Belton site as a starting point for travel purposes since it is the closest site to their home. If an employee lives in Temple, and is based out of the Belton site, and is working in Killeen, they will use Belton as their starting point because their home site is on the way to the Killeen site (not in the opposite direction). If an employee lives in Killeen, and Killeen is their home site, and they go to work in Temple, they will use Killeen as their starting point. If an employee is not sure how to determine which site to use, they need to contact their supervisor.

Supervisors are responsible for checking the travel forms of employees in their area to ensure that the employee was tasked to perform Health District business on the dates claimed for reimbursement on the travel sheet. Any inconsistencies or errors are to be addressed with the employee. If necessary, the employee will produce proof that they were at the stated site in order to receive reimbursement for travel to that site. It will be the supervisor's discretion to require proof that an employee's travel is justified. If it is discovered that an employee has falsified a request for travel, the employee will be disciplined and/or terminated.

Employees must submit an up-to-date proof of automobile insurance to their Division Director in order to receive reimbursement for travel. Travel checks may be held until proof of insurance is provided.

211 Business Travel Expenses Reimbursement

The Health District will reimburse employees for reasonable business travel expenses. All business travel must be approved in advance by their immediate supervisor. Abuse of this business travel expenses policy, including falsifying receipts to reflect costs not incurred by the employee, can be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employee will contact the Executive Secretary to make travel arrangements for hotel reservations and airfare (where necessary). Upon the employees return, receipts for meals and other eligible expenses must be submitted for review and, upon approval, the employee will be reimbursed by the Health District. Additional expenses arising from

nonbusiness activities are the responsibility of the employee. When travel is completed, employees should submit original receipts with a travel reimbursement form for all individual expenses to their supervisor upon return. Receipts for the hotel and airfare must be included for records, even if paid by the Health District in advance (invoices paid in advance by the Health District are not subject to reimbursement).

Employees who are involved in an accident while traveling on business must promptly report the incident to their immediate supervisor. This policy is subject to periodic updates and revision.

Out of Town Travel Procedure:

Approval

Out of town travel must be approved by the employee's supervisor and/or the Director. Conferences with high attendance fees or air travel must be approved by the Director.

Conference Registration

The employee will complete the registration form for the conference / meeting and submit to the accountant once approval is received by supervisor / Director. Complete the form as much as possible and highlight due dates and fees. Include an addressed envelope if possible. Keep a copy of the registration form for your records. If there is a short time for registration, inform the accountant of this information.

Hotel Reservations

Employees will be allowed overnight hotel stays when the conference or meeting starts in the morning, and the meeting or conference is not within reasonable driving distance of the Health District (1-2 hours' drive time is reasonable for attending meetings in Austin). If the conference or meeting starts at a time where the employee can drive to the meeting the day of, then no overnight stay will be allowed. Employees are expected to return the day of the last day of a meeting or conference, and will not be allowed to stay over an extra night (unless airline travel is involved and reservations were not possible on the last day of the meeting).

The employee will complete the top portion of the Overnight Travel form and submit to the Director's Executive Secretary. The Executive Secretary will make the hotel reservation and return the form to the employee with the credit card authorization and tax exempt form. The employee will need these forms when checking into the hotel. Employees should submit the Overnight Travel Form well in advance of travel, if possible, to give adequate time to make reservations and return the necessary forms to the employee. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure they have all these forms prior to travel. Obtain a copy at checkout of the hotel charges and submit with the Travel Expense Voucher. If the room is charged to the Health District credit card, on the lodging line on the Travel Expense Voucher form, write "charged to BC card" and submit the hotel folio with the form. An amount is only written on this line if the employee paid for the room with their own money and expects to be reimbursed.

Airline Reservations

Out of state and/or Air travel must be approved by DSHS (or the specific grant provider) and the Director prior to making any arrangements. If the trip was included in the approved grant budget and stated "out of state travel", then that is considered approval. If

not, then the employee must obtain written approval from DSHS (or other funding sources) prior to making arrangements. The employee will notify the Director's secretary, who will make flight reservations using the company credit card.

Mileage

All staff members who use their personal vehicle for Health District business are required to furnish documentation to their Division Director that they have up-to-date automobile insurance for that purpose. Division Directors may not authorize travel reimbursement to a staff member unless current insurance records are maintained.

Employees, who do not drive a company car, will be reimbursed travel from their home office to the meeting site and back. Under no circumstances will an employee be reimbursed for travel from their home. Employees are to keep track of the exact mileage using the odometer in their vehicle and submit on their monthly mileage reimbursement request. If the vehicle is driven for personal reasons during the trip, that mileage is subtracted from the total mileage of the trip.

Meals

Employees traveling overnight on approved Health District business will be reimbursed a maximum of \$45 per day (including **no more than** 15% tip and tax, which will not be charged to DSHS contracts) for breakfast, lunch, and dinner (with itemized receipts). The employee may tip more than 15%, but no more than 15% will be reimbursed.

Room service charges are not to be billed to the employee's hotel room. When bookings are done with Administration a notation will be made with hotels that food charges are not to be billed to the company credit card. Employees who wish to order room service may do so and they must pay with their own funds and submit an itemized receipt following their trip for reimbursement of allowable charges. Submit a copy of the folio and receipts with the Travel Expense Voucher. On the Travel Expense Voucher form, write "charged to BC card" on the line for meal amount (unless there are meals that were paid for by the employee).

Sign all receipts, tape the receipts to a blank piece of paper, and turn in with the Travel Expense Voucher when travel is complete.

Breakfast on the first day of travel is not reimbursable. Lunch costs will be reimbursed when an employee travels out of town and returns the same day if the event is an all-day affair (dinner will not be reimbursed unless there is overnight stay). No alcohol will be reimbursed. Keep all receipts to turn in when the trip is completed. Receipts must be itemized with the restaurant's name, date, and each item listed (do not turn in the credit card receipt, submit only the itemized restaurant receipt). Note the amount the employee paid for food on the Meals line on the Travel Expense Voucher form (only list amounts the employee has paid for – not room service charges). **Sign all itemized receipts, tape the receipts to a blank piece of paper, and turn in with the Travel Expense Voucher when travel is complete.**

Misc. Charges

Miscellaneous charges such as parking charges can be submitted for reimbursement if paid out of pocket by the employee. Parking via valet may only be reimbursed if self-park is not available as an option. **Sign all itemized receipts, tape the receipts to a blank piece of paper, and turn in with the Travel Expense Voucher when travel is complete.**

Reimbursement

Once travel is completed, the employee will complete the Travel Expense Voucher, attach all papers with taped receipts, and submit to their supervisor. Once the supervisor reviews the form and receipts, they will send in to the accountant for reimbursement. Employees should make a copy for their records.

212 Worker's Compensation Insurance

The Health District provides a comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical, or hospital treatment. Subject to applicable legal requirements, workers' compensation insurance provides benefits after a short waiting period, or if the employee is hospitalized, immediately. Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses should inform their supervisor immediately. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible.

WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS; EMPLOYEE COMPLAINTS

300 Work Schedules

Salaries are set by the Board of Health at a monthly rate based upon a 40-hour work week. The normal work week is Monday through Friday 8:00am to 4:30pm. However, the schedules of some departments may vary from this schedule. Departments can define the work week differently depending on work requirements.

All full-time employees are provided with one meal period each workday. Supervisors will schedule meal periods to accommodate operating requirements. Employees will be relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions during meal periods and will not be compensated for that time. Break periods other than meal times may be granted as work permits. Your supervisor will explain the work hours for your job and should advise you if any changes occur.

Some Divisions have different hours as dictated by their Division Director. Employees will adhere to work hours as directed and only work outside of those hours with permission from their direct supervisor. Employees found to be working or using Health District assets outside of normal hours without permission will be subject to disciplinary action. Such actions may include a write-up and/or revocation of privileges.

301 Attendance and Punctuality

Bell County Public Health District expects good and regular attendance from all employees. This means being at work on time each day, able and ready to work. While the Health District recognizes justifiable causes for absence or tardiness and follows a policy of granting reasonable requests for excused time off, a Health District employee's employment may be jeopardized by chronic absenteeism or excessive tardiness.

Supervisors have the main responsibility for controlling absenteeism. Absenteeism is any absence from work, whether excused or unexcused. Control over absenteeism can be

maintained by reviewing each employee's absentee or tardiness record monthly to determine whether it is excessive. Human Resources may be consulted for advice in these cases.

Absences that do not count as "hours missed" include:

- Jury duty
- Vacation
- Death in immediate family
- Military duty
- Absence to participate in legal proceeding as subpoenaed witness
- Holidays

Hours missed for holidays, inclement weather days, or other catastrophe should not be included in hours missed or hours scheduled. Supervisors should stay aware of attendance levels. In case of absence resulting from an On the Job Injury, the Human Resources personnel in the Admin office should be notified (254-773-4457).

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE

Unexcused absences (including tardiness and leaving early) are those for which the supervisor has not been properly notified or those involving a reason which may not be listed under the category for excused absences. An employee is considered tardy if he or she is not at his or her work station ready and able to start work as expected at the beginning of the assigned work shift. Any employee who leaves before the end of the assigned work shift (even if the employee returns to finish the shift) is counted as leaving early, which is recorded the same way as tardiness on the attendance record if the employee did not receive prior permission for leaving early.

The allowable number of "tardies" or "leave earlies" is two per month. Above that, the supervisor will counsel the employee and will evaluate the need for additional formal progressive

GUIDELINES

Recurrent unexcused absences are not acceptable, and an employee may be terminated without steps of progressive discipline for:

- Unexcused and/or unauthorized absences of 4 or more workdays in any 12-month period or 3 or more workdays during a 4-week period or
- Failure to report to work on the 1st workday after the expiration of an excused absence or approved leave of absence.

Supervisors should review each employee's absenteeism record on a 13 week average and each employee's tardiness record every month to determine whether absence or tardiness is excessive. If the rate is excessive, regardless of cause, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action. A guideline of two "tardies" or "leave earlies" per month has been set as the allowable maximum number of tardies. When an employee's total hours of absences, for whatever nature, exceeds 10 percent for the total scheduled hours in any 13 week period, the employee's supervisor must determine the nature and extent of corrective action necessary. The progressive steps of corrective action available to the supervisor are:

- Oral warning
- First written performance notice
- Second written performance notice
- Termination

*An “Unsatisfactory Performance Notice” will follow an Oral Warning if given within the **first 90 days of New-Hire employment** for continued attendance issues, and this will result in termination.

EXCUSED ABSENCE

Permission to be off work should be requested at least 5 days in advance. If prior notice is not possible, the employee should contact their immediate supervisor and explain the reason for the absence not later than the first hour of the first shift missed. When requesting time off, the employee is responsible for notifying the supervisor.

When a supervisor grants permission for time off or change in work hours in advance, it will not be counted as a tardy or leave early. However, the absence, if any, will be counted in computing the percent absent.

A supervisor may grant an excused absence for any of the following reasons:

- Personal illness or injury
- Pregnancy
- Illness or death in the immediate family
- Participating in legal proceedings as a subpoenaed witness or juror
- Annual reserve military training or other short term call to active military status
- Essential personal business that requires absence from work
- Similar special conditions that are of mutual advantage to the employee and the Health District

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

In some cases, a Leave of Absence should be considered due to the circumstance of an absence. The following should be considered for a Leave of Absence to insure we act in accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) which typically involves an absence of 3 or more scheduled days:

A “serious health condition” is defined as an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider. The “continuing treatment” test for a serious health condition under the regulations may be met through (1) a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days plus treatment by a health care provider twice, or once with a continuing regimen of treatment, (2) any period of incapacity related to pregnancy or for prenatal care, (3) any period of incapacity or treatment for a chronic serious health condition, (4) a period of incapacity for permanent or long-term conditions for which treatment may not be effective, or (5) any period of incapacity to receive multiple treatments (including recovery from those treatments) for restorative surgery, or for a condition which would likely result in an incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days absent medical

treatment.

The regulations specify that if an employee asserts a serious health condition under the requirement of a “period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition,” the employee’s first treatment visit (or only visit, if coupled with a regimen of continuing treatment) must take place within seven days of the first day of incapacity. Additionally, if an employee asserts that the condition involves “treatment two or more times,” the two visits to a health care provider must occur within 30 days of the first day of incapacity. Finally, the regulations define “periodic visits” for treatment of a chronic serious health condition as at least twice a year.

Please contact Human Resources in the Health District Admin office to discuss any consideration for a Leave of Absence or an absence that qualifies under the FMLA.

302 Employee Identification Badges

All employees in each department should wear an issued identification badge (ID) while on duty unless excused from doing so by the employee’s supervisor. The Human Resources Department will issue identification badges. Employees who have lost ID badges may be asked to reimburse the Health District for replacement costs.

303 Personal Appearance

Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the professional image the Health District presents to customers, clients, 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. Employees who appear for work inappropriately dressed will be sent home and directed to return to work in proper attire. Under such circumstances, employees will not be compensated for the time away from work.

Consult your supervisor or Division Director to receive your department’s Dress Code Policy.

304 Tobacco Use

In keeping with the Health District’s intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, tobacco use is prohibited throughout the premises. Tobacco use is defined to include all forms of tobacco including but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes (“vapes”), smokeless tobacco, snuff and chewing tobacco. This policy applies to all areas including parking lots and sidewalks at sites where we are responsible for those areas. Signage is posted at sites where possible. This policy applies equally to all employees, customers, clients, and visitors.

For employees who utilize tobacco products and would like resources to quit visit: www.yesquit.org.

305 Media Relations

Employees may be asked to provide interviews to newspaper or TV reporters. No

employee may grant an interview or make comments about Health District business without approval of the District Director. No one shall make off the record statements to the media.

Any contact from the media with any division of BCPHD should be forwarded to the BCPHD Public Information Officer (PIO). The PIO will contact the applicable BCPHD Division Director or staff member that they designate to ensure that the message delivered to the media is correct and appropriate. Once the information is coordinated between the PIO and the applicable Division then the PIO will contact the media to deliver the information. Some instances may dictate that a staff member other than the PIO do an on camera interview or some other form of communication with the media outlet directly, but that message must still be coordinated with the PIO in advance and those instances will be decided on a case by case basis between the PIO and the appropriate Division Director.

306 Employee Conduct and Work Rules

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, the Health District expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property,
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs,
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment,
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace,
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct,
- Smoking in prohibited areas,
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment,
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence that is no call/no show,
- Violation of personnel policies,
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct.

307 Violence in the Workplace

It is the goal of the Health District to provide a work environment for its employees that is safe, secure, and free of violence. In that regard, acts or threats of violence by any employee against another person will not be tolerated, and any such conduct by or directed towards any employee should be promptly reported. Furthermore, any employee engaging in fighting, physical attacks, assaults, or intimidation or who make threats of physical violence will be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination. Theft, damage to, or destruction of property is also prohibited.

308 Contraband in the Workplace

Health District employees without a Concealed Carry License (CCL) are not to possess weapons on Health District property at any time, including Health District vehicles.

Employees who obtain a CCL and choose to carry must submit a copy of their license to their Division Director who will submit a copy to the Executive Secretary.

309 Drug and Alcohol Use

It is the Health District's desire to provide a drug-free, healthful, and safe workplace. To promote this goal, employees are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their jobs in a satisfactory manner.

While on the Health District premises and while conducting business-related activities off the Health District premises, no employee may use, possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted on the job only if it does not impair an employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the job effectively and in a safe manner that does not endanger other individuals in the workplace.

Employees may be asked to undergo a random drug screen at any time if their supervisor has reason to believe they are performing under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Testing will be performed through Scott and White Reference Lab in Temple or Killeen. Employees who refuse to undergo the random drug screen may be subject to disciplinary action or termination. Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment, and/or required participation in a substance abuse rehabilitation or treatment program. Such violations may also have legal consequences.

Under the Drug-Free Workplace Act, an employee who performs work for a government contract or grant must notify the Health District of a criminal conviction of drug-related activity occurring in the workplace. The report must be made within five (5) days of the conviction.

310 Sexual and other Unlawful Harassment

The Health District is committed to providing a work environment where people can work together comfortably and productively, free from sexual harassment. Such behavior is illegal under both state and federal law and will not be tolerated. This policy applies to all phases of employment, including recruiting, testing, hiring, upgrading, promotion or demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, rates of pay and selection for training, travel, or district social events and all activities occurring during the course of the work day or district-sponsored activities.

Sexual Harassment

It is considered to be sexual harassment if:

- an employee expresses social interest after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome, or
- sexual behavior is being used to control, influence or affect the career, salary, or work environment of another employee.

Prohibited behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Written contact: such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations;
- Verbal contact: such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits, sexual propositions;
- Physical contact: such as intentional offensive touching, pinching, and brushing

against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse;

- Visual contact: such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters or magazines.

Reporting Sexual Harassment:

Complaints filed using grievance procedures: All complaints of sexual harassment and/ or retaliation for reporting sexual harassment should be reported utilizing the grievance processes outlined in this handbook.

- Chain of Command: Complaints involving the immediate supervisor or any other staff members is to be reported immediately to their Division Director and/or the District Director. Complaints involving the Division Director should be reported immediately to the District Director.
- Investigation: The Division Director or District Director will conduct an investigation regarding the reported incident. The investigation will be conducted as quickly and discretely as possible. If the complaint is against the Division Director, the District Director will conduct the investigation. Upon conclusion of the investigation, recommendations will be made to the Division Director and the employee will be advised accordingly. If an investigation reveals that sexual harassment has occurred, the accused may also be held liable for his or her actions under state and federal anti-discrimination laws or in separate legal actions.

Discipline: Any employee found to have violated this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Sexual Harassment Counselor: The District Director is designated as the Sexual Harassment Counselor. All employees desiring counseling regarding any sexual harassment incident may contact the District Director. Employees cannot be retaliated against for making reports of sexual harassment.

Harassing Behavior

It is an expectation that employees will treat each other with respect and professionalism. Any Health district employee found harassing another employee based on their race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, veterans' status or any other protected characteristic is in violation of the Health District's policy and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

Examples of harassing behavior include, but are not limited to: ethnic jokes, racial slurs, derogatory name-calling, or any verbal or physical conduct which creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment. Any applicant or employee who feels that they are a victim of harassment by any supervisor, customer, client, or any other person in connection with his or her supervisor, or who is not satisfied after bringing the matter to the attention of their supervisor, should report the matter to the Division Director or the District Director. Any questions about this policy or potential harassment should be brought to the attention of the same person.

Reporting and Investigating: The Health District will promptly investigate all allegations of harassment in a confidential manner. Appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted, which could result in termination.

311 Insubordination Policy

- **Insubordination Defined:** Each employee is expected to work in a cooperative manner with management/supervision, co-workers, and clients. Bell County Public Health District defines insubordination as an employee's refusal to carry out a request made in the course of their job duties by an employee's manager or supervisor, as well as any discourteous, disrespectful, threatening, intimidating or assaulting speech or conduct directed toward a supervisor, manager, co-worker, or client in the course of performing their job duties.
- **Insubordination Prohibited:** Bell County Public Health District strives to provide a safe, respectful atmosphere for its employees. Each employee is expected to abide by its policies to that effect. Therefore, all employees are barred from engaging in insubordination. Employees are expected to handle any disagreements or disputes with supervisors or management in a civil or professional manner, in accordance with the terms of this policy.
- **Consequences of Insubordination:** Employees who commit unexcused insubordination will be disciplined in accordance with Bell County Public Health District's formal disciplinary policy. The consequences of insubordination may vary depending on the nature and circumstances of the offense, but may include oral and written warnings, suspension and termination of employment.

Under limited circumstances, insubordination will be excused because of inability to comply with the negative consequences of compliance. These limited consequences are as follows:

- **Risk of Endangerment:** If a supervisor or manager directs an employee to take an action that the employee reasonably believes will endanger the employee or someone else, the employee's refusal to carry out that directive will be excused insubordination, so long as the employee promptly reports the incident to their immediate supervisor.
- **Immorality or Illegality:** If a supervisor or manager asks the employee to do something the employee reasonably believes is immoral or illegal, the employee's refusal will be excused insubordination, so long as the employee promptly reports the request to their immediate supervisor.
- **Impossibility of Assignment:** If a supervisor or manager asks an employee to do something the employee is incapable of doing, the employee's failure to accomplish the task is excused insubordination, so long as the employee promptly reports the incident to their immediate supervisor.
- **Manager/Supervisor Obligation to Report Insubordination:** All supervisors and managers who encounter insubordinate behavior among any of their subordinates must promptly report the incident in writing, with a full explanation of the facts and surrounding circumstances to the Director of Nurses.
- **Employee Witness Obligation to Cooperate:** Bell County Public Health District will conduct a fair and thorough investigation of any reported insubordination. Such

investigation may include interviewing witnesses to the incident. All employees are expected to cooperate fully with any disciplinary investigation. Bell County Public Health District will maintain the confidentiality of any witness statements and evidence to the fullest extent possible in the circumstances.

- **Employee Obligation to Report Circumstances Leading to Excused Insubordination:** It is crucial that Bell County Public Health District be made aware of incidents that give rise to excused insubordination. Therefore any employee who is asked to do something the employee reasonably believes is dangerous, illegal, immoral or impossible should report the incident to their immediate supervisor immediately. Failure to report such an incident may itself be the basis for disciplinary action. Employees making good faith reports of circumstances leading to excused insubordination will be protected from retaliation.

**Nothing in this policy prohibits an employee from reporting concerns, making lawful disclosures or communicating with any governmental agency about conduct that may violate any laws or regulations.*

312 Employee Complaints

Employees may bring informal complaints about any work-related condition to the attention of their supervisor. Formal complaints may only be filed based upon employment decisions relating to demotions, terminations, improper dismissal, transfers, and suspensions.

Although the filing of formal grievances is limited as set out above, the Health District encourages employees to informally work out any problems with their supervisor within the chain of command. If the problem cannot be resolved within the department, employees are encouraged to seek the assistance of the District Director, who is available to assist employees with any employment problem.

Nothing in this grievance procedure alters the employee's at-will status.

Grievance procedures are as follows:

Level One – Submit the grievance in written form to the employee's supervisor and District Director within five (5) working days of the action. The supervisor has five (5) working days to issue a written reply. If the grievance has not been resolved satisfactorily, the aggrieved employee may move to level two.

Level Two – Submit the grievance in written form to the District Director along with the written reply from the immediate supervisor within five (5) working days of receipt of a written replay under level one. The District Director has to respond to the employee in writing within five (5) working days. If the employee feels the grievance has not been resolved satisfactorily, the aggrieved employee may move to level three.

Level Three – If the employee is not satisfied after receiving the District Director's written reply, the problem or grievance must be submitted in written form to the Chairman of the Health District's Board of Health within five (5) working days of the District Director's reply. The employee must attach a copy of all documents or evidence regarding the action

complained of which relates to the grievance, the District Director's reply, and the actions which the employee feels should be taken.

Final Decision – The Board of Health will make a decision based on the written material supplied by the employee and others or the Board of Health may:

1. Provide a hearing with procedures for the hearing determined by the Board of Health and/or;
2. Provide a written reply and take appropriate action.

DECISIONS ISSUED BY THE HEALTH DISTRICT BOARD WILL BE FINAL AND BINDING.

313 Whistle Blowers Act

The Health District will not suspend or terminate the employment of, or otherwise discriminate against, an employee who reports a violation of law to an appropriate law enforcement authority if the employee's report is made in good faith. False reports made with intent to harm can result in termination.

314 Purchasing Policy

Policy: All purchases for supplies and equipment will be through the Purchasing Agent in the Administration office. Employees are not allowed to purchase items on their own and submit a receipt for payment. In addition, employees are not allowed to purchase items with a store card (Lowes, Staples, WalMart, Sam's), unless they have received prior approval by their Division Director and the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or District Director.

Procedure:

SUPPLIES:

Each office will request supplies twice a month on the Supply Request Form. The request must be approved by site supervisors, then faxed or emailed on the first and fifteenth of each month to the Purchasing Agent in the Administrative office. Requests for supplies that are not listed on the Supply Request Form will need to be approved by the site supervisor and/or Division Director prior to submitting the order request.

Each office is responsible for only ordering what is needed, and hoarding of supplies is discouraged. Any requests that appear out of the ordinary or excessive will be reviewed by the CFO or District Director for approval.

EQUIPMENT

Requests for equipment need to be submitted to the Division Director and approval is based on need and availability of funds. Requests are submitted via email to the Division Director. All equipment purchases must have final approval by the District Director. Any purchase over \$1000 must have three bids. Once bids are obtained, they will be discussed with the Division and District Directors. Approvals for equipment purchases will be emailed from the District Director to the Division Director with a copy to the Chief Financial Officer. Equipment with a value of \$500 or more must be added to the Health District's equipment list and tagged with an inventory sticker.

Grant funded programs must obtain approval in the grant in order to purchase equipment with grant funds. Approved equipment must be purchased within the first three months of the grant period. Division Directors are responsible for ensuring approved equipment is purchased before the end of three months.

HEALTH DISTRICT EQUIPMENT USAGE

400 Use of Equipment and Vehicles

Equipment and vehicles essential in accomplishing job duties are expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

Please notify the supervisor if any equipment, machines, tools, or vehicles appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others. The supervisor can answer any questions about an employee's responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment or vehicles used on the job.

The improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment or vehicles, as well as excessive or avoidable traffic and parking violations can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

The assignment and use of a Health District Vehicle is a privilege and it is the Health District's policy to insist that employees operate in a safe and economical manner all vehicles owned by the Health District.

Controls

1. You may operate your vehicle on company business, to and from work, and for personal business, provided it is either on the way to work or on the way home (i.e. to stop at the grocery store or bank).
2. Only Health District employees who have been pre-approved by the District Director may operate a company vehicle. Only passengers who are conducting or participating in official business with the Health District are allowed to ride in a Health District vehicle.
3. The vehicle must be in safe mechanical condition and its operation must not damage it.
4. You must be mentally and physically able to drive safely.
5. You must conform to all traffic laws, signals, and markings, and make proper allowance for adverse weather and traffic conditions.
6. You must be courteous at all times, respecting the rights of other drivers and pedestrians.
7. You and all passengers must wear seatbelts and all other available active restraints.

8. You may not smoke in a company vehicle or permit others to do so.

Driver Qualification

1. You must have a valid driver's license.
2. You must have and keep a favorable driving record and be willing to permit a periodic review of your driving record (MVR).

Accidents

If your company vehicle is involved in an accident *you must notify your supervisor* immediately and follow the procedures established and required by our insurance carrier.

Gas Cards

A gas card will be issued to employees who are issued a Health District vehicle. You will need to print your name on the gas receipt, sign the receipt, and submit to the CFO as soon as possible after purchase. You should make a copy for your records.

Income Tax

Employees who are issued a Health District vehicle must claim the vehicle use on their taxes annually. The use of the Health District vehicle is considered a source of taxable income. Monthly, with the submission of each employee's time sheet, days that vehicles were used should be selected to account for them.

401 Usage of Phone and Mail Systems

To ensure effective telephone communications, employees should always use the approved greeting and speak in a courteous and professional manner. Please confirm information received from the caller, and hang up only after the caller has done so.

Employees will be required to reimburse the Health District for any charges resulting from their personal use of the Health District telephone for long distance calls and faxes.

The use of the Health District paid postage for personal correspondence is not permitted.

402 Personal Use of Health District Owned Telephones (Not Official Business)

The following rules apply for employee use of Health District telephones and equipment:

- Employees may never call 900 numbers.
- Employees may not use the Health District phone system to make harassing calls.
- Personal calls may be made or received by employees but must be limited and must not interfere with the employee's official duties.
- Personal calls resulting in charges to the Health District are not allowed, except in an emergency or with authorization of the Division Director.

403 Health District Issued Cell Phones

The Health District provides cell phones to designated employees for conducting Health District business efficiently and effectively. The Health District may discipline employees for using cell phones in a manner that is not consistent with Health District business or for any use or purpose, which is improper. Health District employees authorized to drive a Health District owned vehicle are encouraged not to use cell phones while driving. If an employee receives or has a need to make a call while driving a Health District owned vehicle, the employee should stop the vehicle in a safe area to send or receive phone calls. The Health District prohibits any use of written messaging, including text-messaging while driving.

All Health District-paid devices (computers, phones, etc.) are provided to employees for official business and any information sent or contained on them is subject to have to be produced under the Open Records Act.

The same rules apply to employees who receive a Health District stipend – personal phones used for business.

Use of personal cell phones is permitted on a limited basis as long as use does not interfere with job functions. This is a privilege that can be revoked in the event of excessive personal cell phone usage during work hours.

404 Computers, Network and Internet Usage

Purpose: To outline the acceptable use of Bell County Public Health District's (BCPHD) information systems including hardware, software and electronic information.

Scope: Any individual using or attached to BCPHD's computing and/or networking resources.

Overview: The BCPHD provides computing services to employees and specified partners of BCPHD based upon the individual's job, responsibilities, and duties within the organization. These specified "Users" must utilize computer/network resources for furthering BCPHD's mission. Inappropriate use exposes BCPHD to risks including virus attacks, compromise of network systems and services, and legal issues.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

BCPHD

BCPHD does not provide a warranty, either expressed or implied, for the computing services provided. BCPHD is not responsible for any damage which may occur, including but not limited to, loss or data or interruptions of service. The BCPHD reserves the right to limit computer access to any staff member or approved user in the event of insufficient resources, policy violations, or determined misuse of abuse.

The network and all of its associated hardware and software remains BCPHD property at all times.

BCPHD will not be liable to the users' inappropriate use of the computing and networking resources, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. Nor is BCPHD responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system.

Users/BCPHD Employees

It is the responsibility of every computer user to know the guidelines and conduct their activities accordingly.

Any employee who witnesses any violation of this policy shall report it as soon as possible to the employee's supervisor and the IT Contractor. In the event that the violation involves the IT Contractor, the violation must be reported to the District Director or the District Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

USER REQUIREMENTS

Hardware/Software Use

- Users shall not install personal software on BCPHD computer or network systems, unless the employee's supervisor and the IT Contractor approve the action.
- Users shall not modify BCPHD computer systems' hardware or network infrastructure; all modifications shall be completed by the IT Contractor with approval from the District Director.
- Users must never download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto computing and/or network resources without prior authorization from the IT Contractor, District Director, or District CFO.
- BCPHD Users must not violate copyright laws.

Security

- All systems used by the employee that are connected to the BCPHD Internet/Intranet/Extranet shall be continually executing approved virus scanning software with current virus database/definitions.
- Users shall not share their password with another person unless requesting network support from the IT Contractor if required. Users should then change their password after the IT Contractor has concluded their work.
- Users are responsible for the security of their passwords and accounts. User level passwords should be changed bi-annually at a minimum.
- All PC's, laptops, and workstations should be in a physically secure location and secured with a password-protected screensaver with the automatic activation feature set at 15 minutes or less OR employees must log off of their system to lock it when leaving it unattended.
- Because information contained on portable computers is especially vulnerable, special care should be exercised.
- Employees must use extreme caution when opening e-mail attachments received from unknown senders or files on removable storage devices (e.g., CD's, USB drives), which may contain viruses, e-mail bombs, or Trojan horse code.
- Vandalism and/or "hacking" into any BCPHD system are prohibited.

Personal Use

- BCPHD allows incidental personal use of computing systems such as e-mail or social media accounts. Such use must be minimal, not interfere with an employee fulfilling his or her job responsibilities, interfere with other users' access to resources, or be excessive as determined by the employee's immediate supervisor. Department supervisors are able to determine whether or not incidental use of computer systems is appropriate for their direct reports.

- Examples of incidental use:
 - limited personal email use
 - Use of existing software applications for purposes such as writing a letter that DOES NOT incur personal financial gain
 - Casual surfing of reputable websites during approved work breaks and lunch time; and
 - Limited social media use during work approved breaks and lunch time.
 - See the larger Social Media Use Policy for additional information.
- Examples of misuse:
 - Excessive use reflected in volumes, time, or interference with job duties;
 - impacts other users;
 - Includes inappropriate, or illegal content such as a violation of copyright laws, pornography, pyramid schemes, promotes workplace violence or harassment; or
 - Activities that creates network security risks such as public instant messaging, or downloading of unapproved software.
- **As a government funded agency, BCPHD computing resources MAY NOT be used for non-BCPHD related commercial purposes, profit-making endeavors, private gain, or personal business.** Examples would be using BCPHD e-mail to advertise items for sale for personal gain, or to conduct any personal after-hour business transactions/sales/contacts.

Privacy

- Employees should take all necessary steps to prevent unauthorized access to non-public information and confidential information including protected health information (PHI) as defined by HIPAA.
- BCPHD requires that any electronic communications of sensitive confidential data be encrypted.
- Never give out another person's personal information without written permission.

Privacy Limitations

- BCPHD cannot guarantee privacy and users should not expect any guarantees of privacy when using BCPHD systems.
- Designated IT Contractor staff may access the files of any BCPHD device at any time that it deems appropriate. Users should be aware that the data that they create on BCPHD systems may remain as the property of BCPHD.
- Electronic communications and other documents are generally subject to the Public Records Act to the same extent as if they would be made on paper. Therefore, all employees are urged to use the same discretion and good judgement in creating electronic documents as they would use in creating written paper documents.

Enforcement

Any employee found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. BCPHD maintains the rights to physically or electronically monitor, discipline employees, pursue legal retribution, and/or report any unauthorized access or inappropriate use to appropriate authorities.

405 Return of Property

Employees are responsible for all the Health District property, materials, or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. Employees must return all the Health District property immediately upon request or upon termination of employment. Where permitted by applicable laws, the Health District may withhold from the employee's check or final paycheck the cost of any items that are not returned when required. The Health District may also take all action deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property.

Refer to Division Director for the list of equipment and sign out sheets for your division.

406 Social Media Policy

I. PURPOSE

The Bell County Public Health District (BCPHD) has a business need to augment traditional communication methods with the use of social media. This need primarily stems from public demand and the rapid growth of social media use by other local, state and federal government entities as an indication that social media can be used effectively to enhance communications. The use of social media presents opportunity and risk to individual divisions, as well as BCPHD as a whole. In general, BCPHD supports the use of social media to enhance communication, collaboration and information exchange to meet business mission and goals.

This document establishes BCPHD social media use policies, protocols and procedures intended to mitigate associated risks from use of this technology where possible. Shall BCPHD change its direction on social media use, this policy will be revised and BCPHD social media activity shall be adjusted accordingly.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all BCPHD employees and approved volunteers, performing business on behalf of BCPHD.

Those using social media prior to the implementation of the BCPHD Social Media Use Policy shall achieve full policy compliance within 90 days of the effective date of this document.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

The BCPHD Director, or designee, is responsible for facilitating the Social Media Policy in compliance with established rules and protocols. This includes responsibility to audit Division use of social media and enforce policy compliance.

Within the terms of this policy, Department Heads have authority to determine and establish social media activity at the department program level with approval from the District Director.

IV. POLICY

1. Department use of social media technology shall conform to the policies, protocols and procedures contained, or referenced, herein.
2. A Department's decision to embrace social media shall be a risk-based business decision approved by the Department Head and District Director and supported by a strong business case that considers the Division's mission and goals, audience, legal risks, technical capabilities and potential benefits.
3. Division Directors, or designees, are responsible for determining who is authorized to use BCPHD social media on behalf of the Division, and for designating appropriate access levels.
4. Divisions shall only utilize BCPHD approved social media networks for hosting official BCPHD social media sites.
5. BCPHD social media sites shall be created and maintained in accordance with BCPHD social network usage standards and with identifiable characteristics of an official BCPHD site.
6. Divisions are responsible for establishing and maintaining content posted to their social media sites and shall have measures in effect to prevent inappropriate or technically harmful information and links.
7. BCPHD use of social media shall be documented and maintained in an easily accessible format that tracks account information and preserves items that may be considered a record subject to disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act or required to be retained pursuant to the Government Code.
8. BCPHD social media sites shall be monitored regularly and prompt corrective action shall be taken when an issue arises that places, or has potential to place, BCPHD at risk.

V. PROCEDURES

Policy 1: BCPHD Social Media Technology Use

Bell County Public Health District (BCPHD) use of social media technology shall conform to the policies, protocols and procedures contained, or referenced, herein.

- 1.1. Comply with all applicable federal, state, and county laws, regulations and policies including, but may not be limited to, copyright, records retention, Texas Public Information Act, First Amendment, privacy laws, Information and Technology.
- 1.2. Be familiar with and carry-out social media activity in accordance with BCPHD's Social Media Guidelines (found below).
- 1.3. Establish and utilize social media in accordance with the BCPHD's Social Media Guidelines.

Policy 2: BCPHD Divisions and the Decision to Embrace Social Media

Divisions of BCPHD may decide to embrace social media and have accounts for their Division with approval from the District Director. The decision to embrace social media shall be determined by the Division Director in concert with permission from the District Director and based on a strong business case that considers the Division's mission and goals, audience, legal risks, technical capabilities and potential benefits. BCPHD has social media presence for the Health District as a whole and Divisions can communicate with administrators of those accounts to share information should they choose not to have social media accounts for their individual Divisions.

Divisions who choose to and obtain permission to utilize social media shall:

- 2.1. Have a strong understanding of the risks associated with using social media in order to make an effective business decision.
- 2.2. Engage the BCPHD Director to assess the risks of utilizing a specific BCPHD approved social networking sites in comparison with the business opportunities expected.
- 2.3. Establish a well thought out social media strategy.
- 2.4. Develop and maintain Division specific social media policies and procedures. HR shall be consulted to provide advisory on labor impacts.
- 2.5. Have security controls in place to protect BCPHD Information and Technology assets.
- 2.6. The Division Director shall be responsible for overseeing social media activity to ensure compliance with policies. The Division Director may designate a Social Media Coordinator responsible for overseeing the Division's social media activity and policy compliance.
- 2.7. Avoid sharing information from unreliable sources. This can perpetuate misinformation and BCPHD should seek to avoid participation in spreading of misinformation. If unsure about the validity of a source then don't share it.

Policy 3: Access to Social Media Networks

Access to BCPHD social media networks is limited to approved individuals performing official BCPHD business. No unapproved persons should utilize BCPHD social media accounts without permission. Incidental use of personal social media is acceptable during work breaks if approved by the District or Division Director.

- 3.1. BCPHD computers, laptops and mobile devices used to access social media sites shall have up-to-date software to protect against destructive technical incidents, including but may not be limited to, cyber, virus and spyware/adware attacks.

3.2. BCPHD shall make a diligent effort to provide authorized users access to social media networks from within Division work sites as necessary.

Policy 4: Authorized Use

The District Director or Division Directors are responsible for determining who is authorized to use social media on behalf of BCPHD, and for designating appropriate access levels. Access to social media accounts representing BCPHD as a whole is decided by the BCPHD Director.

4.1. BCPHD social media network access shall be limited only to those with a clear business purpose to use the forum.

4.2. Only select individuals shall have permission to create, publish or comment on behalf of BCPHD.

Policy 5: Approved Social Media Networks

Divisions shall only utilize BCPHD approved social media networks for hosting official BCPHD social media sites.

5.1. Social media networks under consideration will be reviewed and approved by the BCPHD Director.

Policy 6: Official County Social Media Sites

BCPHD social media sites shall be created and maintained in accordance with BCPHD identifiable characteristics of an official BCPHD site as outlined below.

6.1. BCPHD social media network accounts shall be created using an official BCPHD email account.

6.2. Sites shall contain visible elements that identify them as an official BCPHD site. Among other items, this includes displaying official BCPHD seals, contact information and a link to BCPHD website.

6.3. BCPHD social media sites shall display, or provide a link to, the BCPHD's social media disclaimer and any applicable policies.

Policy 7: Site Content

BCPHD and Divisions with permission to have their own social media accounts responsible for establishing and maintaining content posted to their social media sites and shall have measures in effect to prevent inappropriate or technically harmful information and links.

7.1. As is the case for BCPHD web sites, Divisions are responsible for the content and upkeep of their social media sites.

7.2. BCPHD websites shall remain the primary and predominant source for Internet information.

7.3. Social media content shall fully comply with the BCPHD's Social Media Policy.

7.4. Information and comments shared through social media channels shall not disclose confidential or proprietary information.

7.5. Sharing or posting content owned by others shall be performed in accordance with copyright, fair use and established laws pertaining to materials owned by others. This includes, but is not limited to, quotes, images, documents, links, etc.

7.6. Electronic information posted to a social media site by BCPHD, or a member of the public, may be considered a record subject to Texas Public Information Act.

7.7. It is not intended to use social media sites in a way that guarantees the right to protected free speech. BCPHD is responsible for monitoring postings, and taking appropriate action when necessary, to protect general site visitors from inappropriate or technically harmful information and links. Such postings should be documented and, where appropriate, removed.

7.8. Sites that allow public comment shall inform visitors of the intended purpose of the site and provide a clear statement of the discussion topic introduced for public comment so that the public is aware of the limited nature of the discussion and that inappropriate posts are subject to removal, including but not limited to the following types of postings regardless of format (text, video, images, links, documents, etc.):

7.8.1. Comments not topically related;

7.8.2. Profane language or content;

7.8.3. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regards to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;

7.8.4. Sexual content or links to sexual content;

7.8.5. Solicitations of commerce;

7.8.6. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;

7.8.7. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;

7.8.8. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

7.9. Divisions choosing to establish a blog or allow posts from the public on BCPHD social network sites, shall prominently display, or provide a link to, the BCPHD Social Media Public Comment Policy (available on the BCPHD website and below).

Policy 8: User Behavior

The same standards, principles and guidelines that apply to BCPHD employees in the performance of their assigned duties apply to employee social media technology use.

8.1. BCPHD workforce members authorized to use social media technology shall do so only within the scope defined by BCPHD per policy 4 of this document and in compliance with all BCPHD policies, practices and use agreements.

8.2. It is strongly recommended that social media use be performed within BCPHD's established Social Media Guidelines.

8.3. Authorized social network spokespersons participating in personal social networking discussions related to BCPHD business matters shall indicate that viewpoints are personal and may not reflect BCPHD opinion.

8.4. Authorized BCPHD social media users shall complete social media security training. This training is available through the FEMA online training site. The current applicable training is:

IS-29: Public Information Officer Awareness

Certificates for completion of these courses should be submitted to the Division Director or Health District Director. The names and offerings of courses may change. If the information provided herein is not available on the FEMA site then contact Administration about other training opportunities.

8.5. Workforce members should not be utilizing BCPHD social media sites outside of normal working hours without approval from the BCPHD Director.

Policy 9: Records Management

BCPHD use of social media shall be documented and maintained in an easily accessible format that tracks account information and preserves items that may be considered a record subject to disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act or required to be retained pursuant to the Government Code.

9.1. Divisions are responsible for the creation, administration and deactivation of social media accounts.

9.1.1. Account password information shall only be shared with authorized staff that has been designated by the Division Director, or her/his designee, to fulfill the role of site account administrator.

9.1.2. Passwords shall conform to BCPHD complex password requirements when permissible.

9.1.3. Account password shall promptly be reset when an employee is removed as an account administrator.

9.2. Divisions shall maintain a record of social media sites created for BCPHD use, including, but may not be limited to:

9.2.1. A log file containing the name of the social media network, account id, password, registered email address, date established, authorizing representative and name of person who created account and agreed to the sites terms of use agreement and/or policy. Contact Administration to add information to the master log.

9.2.2. A list of authorized site content authors and editors.

9.3. Electronic information posted to a social media site by BCPHD, or a member of the public if permitted, may be considered a record subject to Texas Public Information Act.

9.3.1. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to BCPHD business, including a list of subscribers and BCPHD or public posted communication, may be a public record. BCPHD shall have procedures in effect to preserve published social media content.

9.3.2. BCPHD is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for public records on social media. The BCPHD Director should be notified of any public records requests.

9.3.3. Posts deemed technically harmful or inappropriate per policy 7 shall be promptly documented, saved pursuant to policies and procedures regarding record retention and removed. Reporting to authorities may also occur where warranted.

Policy 10: Site Monitoring

BCPHD social media sites shall be monitored regularly and prompt corrective action shall be taken when an issue arises that places, or has potential to place, BCPHD at risk.

10.1. BCPHD social media site administrators shall review site activity and content weekly for exploitation or misuse.

10.2. BCPHD social media sites that allow the public to post comments, links or material directly onto their social media sites shall have an established

process, including technical capability outside of the BCPHD's network, to verify that postings meet the rules established under policy 7 of this document.

10.3. BCPHD Divisions shall be responsible for monitoring employee use of social media and social networking websites.

10.4. Perceived or known compromises to the BCPHD's internal network shall be promptly reported to the BCPHD Director and the BCPHD IT Contractor.

407 Social Media Guidelines

Guidelines for functioning in an electronic world are the same as the values, ethics and confidentiality policies employees are expected to live every day, whether you're Tweeting, talking with members of the community or chatting over the neighbor's fence. This policy applies to both company sponsored social media and as guidance on personal social media use as it relates to BCPHD representation.

What You Should Do:

- **State That It's YOUR Opinion:** When commenting on BCPHD. Unless authorized to speak on behalf of BCPHD, you must state that the views expressed are your own. Employees should err on the side of caution and avoid speaking on behalf of BCPHD when they are off the clock and using personal social media platforms.
- **Protect Yourself:** Be careful about what personal information you share online.
- **Act responsibly and ethically:** When participating in online communities, do not misrepresent yourself. If you are not the BCPHD Director, don't say you are.
- **Honor Our Differences:** Live the values. BCPHD will not tolerate discrimination (including age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, disability, or marital status or any other legally recognized protected basis under federal, state, or local laws, regulations or ordinances).

What You Should Never Disclose:

- **The Numbers:** Financial or operational information should not be disclosed on social media by employees. Such information should only be made available through formal request channels.
- **Personal Information:** Never share personal information about our employees or clients.
- **Legal Information:** Anything to do with a legal issue, legal case, or attorneys. All such requests should be forwarded to Administration for handling.

- **Anything that belongs to someone else:** Sharing something is acceptable with due credit given. Otherwise, let them post their own stuff; you stick to posting your own creations. This includes illegal music sharing, copyrighted publications, and all logos or other images that are trademarked.
- **Confidential Information:** Do not publish, post, or release information that is considered confidential or top secret. This includes all information protected by HIPAA or any identifying information about BCPHD clients.
- **Unsubstantiated Information:** If sharing information be sure that you are sharing information from reputable sources so as not to perpetuate unsubstantiated information. If unsure about the validity of a source, then don't share it.

Basically, if you find yourself wondering if you can talk about something you learned at work -- don't. Follow BCPHD's policies and live the Health District's values and philosophies. They're there for a reason.

Just in case you are forgetful or ignore the guidelines above, here's what could happen. You could:

- Get BCPHD in legal trouble.
- Negatively affect the reputation of BCPHD.

If you still have questions please contact your leadership.

408 Social Media Disclaimer

You have been directed to this page from a Bell County Public Health District Social Media Site. The following Disclaimer applies to the use of that site:

Materials and information on this site are provided to share information on matters of public interest related to the Bell County Public Health District (BCPHD).

BCPHD does not operate this site. Additionally, BCPHD is subject to the terms of use for this site and does not control those terms. Accordingly, BCPHD shall not be liable for any damages incurred due to errors, interruptions, inadequacies, or malicious computer code or components on this site or its servers. BCPHD does not warrant that all defects will be fixed. The materials contained on this site are provided "as is," and you are under no obligation to use them.

The information contained on this site is intended to supplement, not replace, information provided through official BCPHD channels, such as the BCPHD website (www.bellcountyhealth.org) and BCPHD links contained therein.

BCPHD does not warrant the completeness, accuracy, or timeliness of material on this site. The information in this site is not intended to serve as legal or financial advice. BCPHD disclaims all warranties, expressed or implied, for any of the materials provided on this site, including but not limited to links to third parties, or any improper or incorrect use of them.

Social media content must comply with BCPHD's Social Media Guidelines; posts violating this policy may be removed from public viewing. The policy states that content available through an online source shall not contain or hyperlink (link) to, information that:

- Threatens, condescends, or degrades any group belonging to a particular race, culture, religion, sex, sexual orientation or political party
- Is profane, vulgar, obscene, or sexually explicit
- Promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regards to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation
- Can be classified as confidential, private or proprietary, or can be classified as personal health information under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- May infringe on a third party's copyright or intellectual property rights
- Contains a solicitation of commerce
- Contains paid advertisements or endorsements, with the exception of a BCPHD contracted business lessee
- Contains plagiarized material
- May be illegal or encourages illegal activity
- May compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems

409 Social Media Public Comment Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the BCPHD Public Comment Policy is to make the public aware of BCPHD's terms for participating in BCPHD online discussions and to establish policy which identifies the types of public comment that may be considered inappropriate and subject to deletion from BCPHD online discussion sites.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all BCPHD online sites that permit public comment, including but may not be limited to: websites, portals, blogs and social networking sites.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

Divisions that establish and administer online discussions are responsible for ensuring policy compliance.

IV. POLICY

1. BCPHD Online Sites that permit public comment (websites, portals, blogs, BCPHD established social network sites, etc.) shall prominently display the link to the BCPHD's Public Comment Policy and Social Media Disclaimer on each online page that displays discussion content.

3. Comment postings that do not comply with BCPHD's Public Comment Policy shall be recorded and deleted when recognized. This includes, but is not limited to, statements, links, video, images, documents, etc.

4. BCPHD's Official Online Comment Policy is:

COMMENT POLICY:

BCPHD welcomes you and your comments.

The purpose of this discussion is to present information relevant to the stated purpose of this site, regarding matters of public interest with regard to Bell County Public Health, including its many residents, businesses and visitors. We encourage you to submit your comments, but please note this is a monitored online forum and all comments are subject to review and will be removed if in violation of this policy.

Please note that the comments expressed on this site do not necessarily reflect the opinions or positions of BCPHD, its agents, affiliates, or employees. If you have any questions concerning the operation of this online moderated discussion site, please contact us at 254-773-4457.

By posting anything to this site, you agree to the following terms:

- Users will treat others with respect.
- Users warrant that they own or have permission to post the information contained in their postings, including but not limited to video, photos, or digital reproductions and that no copyright or trademark infringement has taken place due to posting it on this site. Further, BCPHD does not guarantee or warrant that any information posted by users on this site is correct, and disclaims any liability whatsoever for any loss or damage resulting from reliance on any such information.
- Users of this site do not retain any rights over their postings. Postings are intended for public view and any personal information posted constitutes a waiver of any rights to privacy or confidentiality.
- Once posted, BCPHD reserves the right to delete submissions that contain vulgar language, personal attacks of any kind, or offensive comments that target or disparage any ethnic, racial, or religious group. Further, BCPHD also reserves the right to delete comments that are: (i) spam or include links to other sites; (ii) clearly off topic; (iii) advocate illegal activity; (iv) promote particular services, products, or political organizations; or (v) infringe on copyrights or trademarks.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

500 Employee Safety Responsibilities

Equipment Maintenance and Operations: It will be the employee's responsibility to check equipment to assure its proper operation as well as to promptly report any maintenance needed. It will also be the employee's responsibility to work in accordance with established working habits and rules.

Industry and Safety Code Standards:

- Employees will comply with all Health District and industry safety code standards. Reckless or careless driving and operation of the Health District vehicles and equipment are prohibited.
- Every employee will keep their work area(s) clean and will move all scrap, trash, etc., to a designated location.
- An employee's violation of safety regulations will result in disciplinary warning, suspension, or termination depending on the severity of the violation. Any hazardous conditions, work procedures, or other hazardous situations must be immediately reported to your supervisor.
- Use of safety equipment, including but not limited to, masks, gloves, goggles and safety shield, may be required. All employees must wear any required safety or protective equipment and should notify their supervisor if any required equipment is not available.
- Employees who do not have on the protective gear required of them should not begin work.
- Failure to dress appropriately or to wear the necessary protective equipment is a violation of Health District policy which may result in the disciplining or termination of the employee.

501 Reporting of Accidents

Reporting Procedures

- All accidents or injuries, regardless of their severity, must be immediately reported to your supervisor.
- The failure to report an accident is a violation of Health District rules and may affect any recovery under workers' compensation.
- The Health District accident report form must be used to start the report process. You may also have to fill out other forms or reports, which will be provided to you as necessary. All off-premises accidents that occur on the job or that result in your missing work must also be reported to your supervisor.

Vehicular Accidents: ALL VEHICULAR ACCIDENTS MUST BE REPORTED TO THE POLICE AND TO YOUR SUPERVISOR BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE SCENE OF THE ACCIDENT except when leaving for necessary medical treatment.

502 Emergency Closings

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, and power failures, can disrupt Health District operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of a work facility. When operations are officially closed due to emergency conditions, the time off from scheduled work will be paid. In times of severe weather, each employee will follow the course of action announced for the school district in which they work and/or live.

503 Research Policy

It is the policy of the Bell County Public Health District that any and all clinical and sociological research conducted by employees be ethical. As such, all research must be approved by the Director and all departments operating under grants will first gain the

approval of the Director to pursue research and having received that approval must have the approval of the grant agency (i.e., the State of Texas) including any and all required Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals before any such activities are undertaken.

Research projects done with publically available data are not subject to these limitations.

All staff will be made aware of this policy upon employment and review of this policy will be done periodically with required updates as needed.

504 OPEN CARRY POLICY

Policy: The Bell County Public Health District will comply with all aspects of the Open Carry Law effective January 1, 2016 as it pertains to public entities. Employees are required to adhere to the law. Employees will be trained upon hire and as needed due to changes in the law.

Legislative summary:

Starting January 1, 2016, a person holding a License To Carry (LTC) will be able to carry a handgun openly as long as it is carried in a belt holster or a shoulder holster. The law will allow open carry on property anywhere that it is not otherwise prohibited by law.

Members of the public who have a LTC may carry handguns on property except where expressly prohibited. The law also permits other specific categories of persons to legally carry in public.

Licensed handgun carriers may not carry on the premises

- of a court or offices utilized by a court,
- of a jail,
- of a room or rooms where public meetings are being held,
- of a polling place while an election is being conducted,
- of a hospital,
- of a school,
- where a professional, collegiate or high school sporting event is taking place,
- where a school activity is taking place,
- on a vehicle transporting students to and from school activities,
- of a church or other house of worship,
- Of a racetrack.
- of a business licensed to sell alcoholic beverages which derives more than 51% of its sales from alcohol.
- of an amusement park which meets certain criteria,
- the secured areas of an airport, or
- Within 1000 feet of a building where an execution is taking place.

Handguns may be banned only if children are present as part of an activity sponsored by a school or other educational institution. Handguns may be banned from parks, libraries or community centers only when school or other educational institutions are conducting activities there, and then only during the time and on the premises where the activities are taking place.

Presently, the carrying of handguns is prohibited on the campus of a public university or junior college, but the concealed carry of handguns will be allowed for universities beginning August 1, 2016, and on the campus of junior colleges beginning August 1, 2017. A private university may ban the carrying of handguns from its entire campus after those dates if it chooses.

Public entities **may not** prevent the carrying of handguns in any area where it is legal to do so. Private property owners may do so with their own property, but public entities may not.

A person who appears to pose a danger to Health District personnel due to his behavior always can be excluded, regardless of whether a handgun is present. It is a crime to interfere with, intimidate or coerce a public servant in the performance of his or her duties. It is also a crime to disrupt a public meeting, coerce or threaten a voter, or interfere with the service of process. It is a crime for any person to display a firearm in public in a way that is calculated to alarm. If an employee of the Health District reasonably believes that someone is interfering with the execution of the employee's duties or reasonably believes he or she is threatened or intimidated, the employee should immediately call law enforcement.

Any person can be prevented from coming into areas not ordinarily open to the public. However, an office **may not** adopt a policy that denies access to all members of the public who are carrying handguns.

Admission to a non-public area **may not** be denied to any individual solely on the grounds that the person is carrying a handgun nor on the condition that the handgun first be surrendered (except the offices of the Sheriff, which may require visitors to secure areas to lock their weapons in a locker provided for that purpose before being admitted).

The following groups, if they have a LTC, may carry a handgun anywhere:

- licensed peace officers,
- parole officers in the discharge of their duties,
- on-duty community supervision officers,
- active judicial officers,
- retired police officers with a proficiency certificate,
- District and County Attorneys and their assistants,
- bailiffs,
- juvenile probation officers with authorization, and
- Members of the armed forces and prison guards while on duty.

Public entities may be subject to fines (with a second offense being as much as \$10,500 per day) if it posts signs or gives some other notice that licensed carriers are banned from carrying in areas where the law does not prohibit carrying. A citizen or a person licensed to carry a concealed handgun may file a complaint with the Attorney General that a Governmental entity has improperly posted notice. If the attorney general determines that legal action is warranted and that the state agency or political subdivision has not cured the violation within the 15-day period, the attorney general or the appropriate county or district attorney may sue to collect the civil penalty.

Procedure:

The Health District is a public entity and therefore cannot prevent the carrying of handguns in any area where it is legal to do so. The Health District will not deny access to members of the public just because they are carrying a handgun, but can prevent someone from entering an area that is not regularly open to public persons. Employees are not expected to require proof of license to carry from anyone who is openly carrying a handgun in Health District offices.

Health District employees shall contact law enforcement any time they reasonably believe that someone is interfering with them performing their duties, or if the employee believes they are being threatened or intimidated.

A public employer may prohibit an employee from carrying a handgun while on duty. Your supervisor and District Director may impose rules banning or limiting the carrying of handguns while you are performing your duties or riding in a Health District vehicle (depending on your job duties). The Health District may impose a ban on the open carry of handguns by employees but allow licensed persons to carry a concealed weapon while on the job. The Health District may neither ban its employees from carrying handguns while not on duty nor prohibit an employee from keeping a handgun locked in a personal vehicle while he or she is at work, even if the vehicle is parked in a Health District parking lot.

The Health District **does not** allow handguns, concealed or open carry, at its Board of Health meetings.

HANDBOOK RECEIPT FORM AND POLICY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have received and read the Bell County Public Health District's Employee Handbook. This handbook supersedes all other employee handbooks. I understand the handbook provisions including the drug and alcohol policy, computer use policy and safety rules and policies. I agree to abide by the handbook's rules and regulations. I understand that:

- The handbook is to provide information only, it is not a contract, and Bell County Public Health District (Health District) is not required to abide by any provision of this handbook;
- The rules and policies noted in the handbook or otherwise set forth, may be waived or changed by the Health District without notice;
- The benefits provided by the Health District may be changed without notice;
- The Health District may terminate my employment at any time without notice or cause just as I have the right to terminate my employment at any time (unless the Health District and I have entered into a written agreement to the contrary and I understand such contracts cannot be made orally, but must be made in writing, approved and signed by the District Director);
- I understand that each supervisor has the right to determine who is employed in his/her office, and I understand that my employment in the office of any supervisor may be terminated at any time, with or without notice of cause, at the discretion of the supervisor;
- All references in any Health District materials to masculine pronouns such as "he" or "his" will be read to mean the feminine equivalent "she" or "hers" and similarly all reference to female pronouns will be read to mean the masculine equivalent;
- I understand that confidential information, which I may have access to or receive from the Health District, must be kept confidential and is not to be used by me outside the business of the Health District or disclosed to any other persons except as authorized by the Health District. I agree that I will keep all such information confidential and not use such confidential information myself or disclose them to others either during my employment or thereafter except as authorized by the Health District.

I further agree that the value of any Health District property or advance not returned by me upon the Health District's request and any other amounts owed by me to the Health District may be deducted from one or more of my paychecks.

Employee's Signature_____Date_____

Printed Name_____

Employee Handbook Adoption Date: 6/12/2017