Cullman County Moving Forward!

Welcome!

Cullman County Commission

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New Employee Orientation

March 2016

Cullman County Government

- Cullman County Government is overseen by an elected Commission Chairman and 2 Associate Commissioners
- Other County elected officials include County Sheriff, Revenue Commissioner, Probate Judge, County Coroner
- Cullman County has an annual budget of approximately $50,000,000 and employs approximately 500 employees.

Elected Officials

Kerry Watson
Associate Commissioner
Place 1

Kenneth Walker
Commission Chairman

Garry Marchman
Associate Commissioner
Place 2

Cullman County Road Department

Cullman County Parks & Rec

Cullman County Water Department

CCCDC
Cullman County Community Development Commission

Cullman Public Library System

Cullman County Animal Control
Tim McKoy
Director

State of Alabama SWCC Soil & Water Conser

Revenue Department

Cullman County Industrial Development Authority

Cullman County CCED Economic Development

Extension
Alabama A&M & Auburn Universities

Commission on Aging

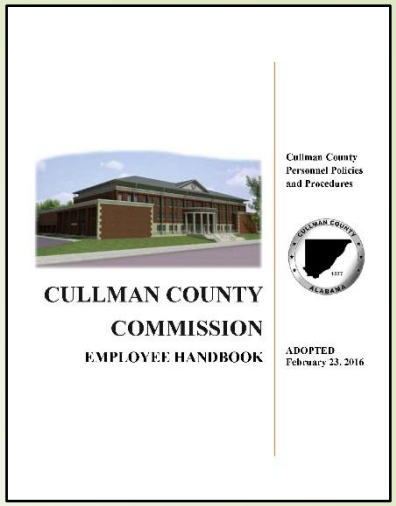
Cullman Alabama EMA
Emergency Management Agency

Cullman Regional Airport

Cullman County Courts

Cullman County Sheriff's Office
Sheriff Matt Gentry

Employee Handbook


Cullman County
Personnel Policies
and Procedures

CULLMAN COUNTY
COMMISSION
EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

ADOPTED
February 23, 2016

- The Cullman County Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook (commonly referred to as the "employee handbook") is not a contract. All personnel policies and procedures are intended to be guidelines and not a contract between the county and its employees and should not be viewed as such.
- Read it thoroughly and retain for future reference.
- Policies and practices are guidelines only and are subject to changes at the discretion of our elected officials.
- Updates will be communicated as they occur.
- New Employees receive a hard copy – latest version maintained on-line.

This presentation is designed to be an overview of some of the important policies and procedures set forth in the Cullman County Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook (the "employee handbook"). In the event of any inconsistency between this presentation and the employee handbook, the employee handbook will govern.

Important Cullman County Employment Policies & Procedures

- Workplace Rules of Conduct
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Appeals Process for Adverse Action
- Appeals Process to the Cullman County Personnel Board
- Non-Harassment Policy
- Discrimination and/or Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures
- Ethical Conduct
- Hiring of Relatives-Nepotism Policy
- Tobacco Use/Smoke Free Workplace
- Drug Free Workplace
- Workplace Violence Policy
- Technology Use Policy

- Internal Job Posting
- Employment Classifications
- Further Employee Classifications
- Classification and Pay Plan
- Performance Reviews
- Recording Work Hours
- Payroll Information
- Absenteeism and Tardiness
- FMLA Leave
- Equal Opportunity Employment
- Employee Assistance Program
- Safety/Accident Reporting

Workplace Rules of Conduct

Examples of workplace rules of conduct for which an employee will be subject to progressive discipline under the Progressive Discipline Policy from counseling up to and including termination include, but are not limited to the following:

- Insubordination or lack of cooperation;
- Failing to follow instructions or to perform work as requested;
- Failing to meet reasonable standards of efficiency and productivity;
- Unauthorized or excessive absences and/or tardiness;
- Excessive break time or repeatedly attending to personal affairs during work time.
- Sleeping or giving the appearance of sleeping;

The offenses and disciplinary actions described in these guidelines are neither all inclusive nor automatic. A department head is permitted and expected to treat individual situations according to the circumstances and facts involved.

Workplace Rules of Conduct, continued

Examples of workplace rules of conduct for which an employee may be subject to a letter of reprimand or other disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination include, but are not limited to the following:

- Abusing, damaging, wasting, stealing inappropriately removing or possessing County property, records or the property of other employees;
- Fighting, threatening violence or otherwise starting a disturbance on County premises or while performing job duties, including but not limited to, assaulting or intimidating a County employee or non-employee;
- Reporting to work in a condition unfit to perform his or her duties, including reporting to work with measurable amounts of illegal drugs, intoxicants, or controlled substances in the employee's system;
- See Employee Handbook for full list of examples

The offenses and disciplinary actions described in these guidelines are neither all inclusive nor automatic. A department head is permitted and expected to treat individual situations according to the circumstances and facts involved.

Disciplinary Procedures

In cases where an employee displays inappropriate conduct or poor performance, and the activity does not call for automatic termination, Cullman County follows a progressive discipline process. This is a system that consists of corrective action, documentation and adverse action.

The steps of progressive discipline may include:

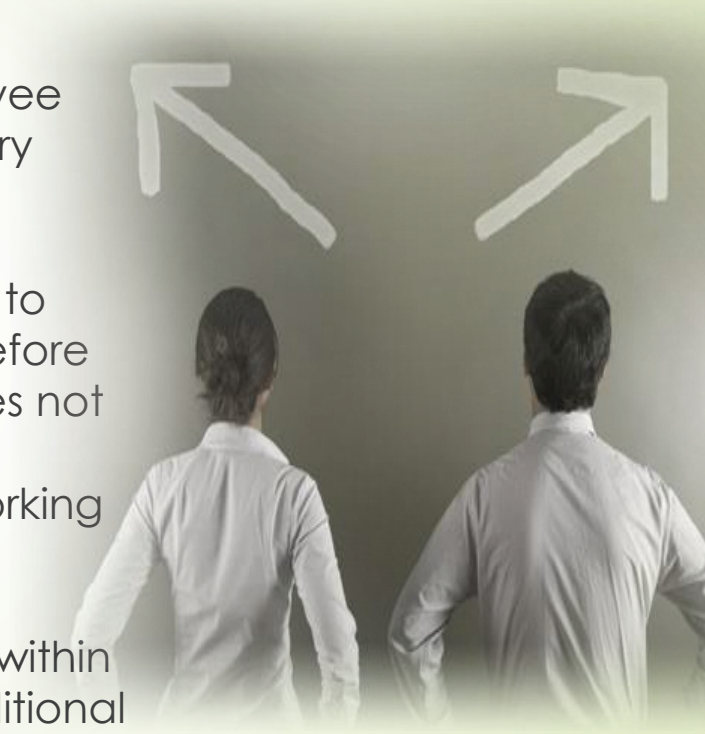
- Employee Counseling
- Written Warning
- Adverse Action

An employee who receives two (2) documented warnings for any reason within a twelve (12) month period may be subject to termination, unless automatic termination is justified.

Appeals Process for Adverse Action

1. When the Appointing Authority or Appointed Department Head seeks to discipline an employee either through suspension without pay, involuntary demotion or termination, he or she shall notify the employee In writing that they are proposing the disciplinary action.

2. The employee will have one (1) working day to request, in writing, a pre-disciplinary hearing before the County Administrator. If the employee does not request a hearing, the proposed discipline will become effective at the end of the one (1) working day period.



3. If a hearing is requested it will be scheduled within two (2) working days of the request, unless additional time is allowed. The hearing will be informal in nature. Within two (2) working days after the pre-disciplinary hearing, the County Administrator will issue a decision on the Appointing Authority of Appointed Department Head's recommendation. An employee may appeal the hearing officer's decision to the Cullman County Personnel Board.

Appeals Process to the Personnel Board for Adverse Action

This appeals process does not apply to probationary employees, part-time or temporary employees, appointed employees and Sheriff's Office employees.

1. An employee desiring to appeal any disciplinary adverse action (suspension without pay, involuntary demotion or termination)directed against him or her must first exhaust any administrative remedy provided.
2. A written appeal must be delivered to the County Commission within seven (7) calendar days of the last administrative action, and the employee must request a hearing before the Board.
3. The Board chair shall call a meeting of the Board to be held within thirty (30) days after the filing of charges to hear the appeal.

For a complete description of the appeals process to the Personnel Board, refer to sections III-G and III-H of the Employee Handbook

Non-Harassment Policy

- Cullman County maintains a "Zero-Tolerance" policy.
- Training is provided initially upon hire and periodically afterward as required.
- A few examples:
  - Behavior that can be perceived as creating a hostile work environment.
  - Unwelcome sexual advances including verbal & physical conduct.
  - Offensive comments, jokes, innuendo, or other sexually oriented statements.

Discrimination and/or Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures

When an employee believes that he/she is being discriminated against on the basis of race, religion, color, disability, national origin, gender, age, or political affiliation, he/she may register a complaint with their department head, the county administrator or the personnel department. The department head, county administrator or the personnel department will evaluate the complaint and ensure that it is thoroughly investigated.

- Complaint must be filed in writing
- All complaints will be investigated
- HR will recommend appropriate action
- Determination may be appealed to the County Administrator

Ethical Conduct

- It is the policy of Cullman County Commission to uphold, promote and demand the highest standards of ethics from all employees and officials, whether elected or appointed. Accordingly, all County employees should maintain the utmost standards of personnel integrity, truthfulness, honesty and fairness in carrying out their public duties; avoid any improprieties in their roles as public servants; and never use their county position for improper personal gain.
- Every employee of the Cullman County Commission is a "public employee". The taxpayers of this County entrust every employee with the responsibility of carrying on business beneficial to the taxpayer.
- Employees of the Cullman County Commission are subject to the provision of the Alabama Ethics Law (codified at § 36-25-1, et. seq., Code of Alabama 1976, as amended from time to time) (sometimes referred to as the "Alabama Ethics Law" or the "Ethics Law") and the decisions and enforcement of the Alabama Ethics Commission.

Employees may visit the Alabama Ethics Commission's website for Further information of interest at www.ethics.Alabama.gov

Hiring of Relatives – Nepotism Policy

For a full copy of the county's Nepotism Policy, refer to Section VI-E of the Employee Handbook.

- Cullman County Commission permits the employment of qualified relatives as long as such employment does not, in the opinion of the Commission, create actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
- For this policy, "relative" is a spouse (including civil union partner and registered domestic partner), child, parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt uncle, first cousin, or corresponding in-law or "step" relation.
  - Individuals who are related by blood or marriage are permitted to work for Cullman County, provided no direct reporting or supervisory/management relationship exists.
  - No relatives are permitted to work in the same department or in any other positions in which the Commission believes in inherent conflict of interest may exist.
  - It is the goal of Cullman County to avoid creating or maintaining circumstances in which the appearance of possibility of favoritism, conflicts, or management disruptions exist. The County will allow existing personal/working relationships to be maintained, thereby creating a "grandfather clause" for those employed as of the date of adoption (2/23/2016), under the following circumstances:
    - That the relationship will not create an adverse impact on work productivity or performance; and
    - That the relationship will not create actual conflict-of-interest.

Tobacco Use/ Smoke Free Workplace

- To protect and enhance indoor air quality and to contribute to the health and well-being of all employees, Cullman County facilities and vehicles shall be entirely smoke free. Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is prohibited in all of the enclosed areas within Cullman County work sites, without exception. This includes common work areas, conference and meeting rooms, private offices, hallways, stairs, restrooms, and county owned or leased vehicles and all other enclosed facilities.
- While Cullman County makes designated smoking areas available to smokers, it in no way has any legal responsibility to do so. Employees who choose to use these smoking areas do so at their own risk. No additional breaks are allowed to any employee who smokes. Smokers and users of tobacco products must dispose of the remains in the proper containers.

Drug Free Workplace

- Cullman County maintains a drug free workplace
- The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, sale or use of a controlled substance in the workplace or while engaged in Cullman County business off premises is strictly prohibited
- Such conduct is also prohibited during non-working time to the extent that, in the opinion of Cullman County Commission, it impairs an employee's ability to perform on the job or threatens the reputation or integrity of the Commission.

Employees in "safety sensitive" positions are subject to random drug testing (see Drug-Free Workplace Policy for details).

Workplace Violence Policy

Cullman County is committed to the health, safety, and welfare of its employees, and will make every effort to prevent violent incidents from occurring.

- Workplace Violence Defined – Any physical assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting.
- Zero Tolerance – The county will not tolerate workplace violence. Within the sole discretion of the county, any employee who engages in workplace violence will be disciplined, up to and including immediate termination with no further warning.
- Weapons Prohibited
- Reporting

Appropriate action will be taken when dealing with customers, former employees, or visitors to our facilities who engage in prohibited behavior.

Technology Use Policy

- County e-mail, Internet and telephone systems may be used for personal reasons on a restricted basis. Personal cell phones may also be used during the work day. Department supervisors may provide usage guidelines to their subordinate employees different than those listed in the employee handbook. Unless the department supervisors provide differing guidelines, the ones supplied in the employee handbook apply. Employees found abusing these privileges shall be disciplined according to the county policies and procedures.
- Equipment and communication systems can be monitored

Internal Job Posting

- We believe in promoting employees from within whenever possible and have a job-posting program to provide employees an opportunity for positions they may be qualified for.

Employment Classifications

- Exempt Employees: A limited class of employees that serve the County to whom the provisions of the personnel system of Cullman County shall not apply.

- Classified Employees: An individual who is assigned to a position authorized by the County Commission, whose salary is paid with funds allocated by the County Commission, and whose employment initially includes a probationary period of not more that six (6) months, during which time such a probationary employee is not a classified employee.

Further Employee Classifications

- Probationary Employee: An employee assigned to a classified position who has not achieved permanent status by being employed for more than six (6) months and who has not satisfactorily completed the probationary period.
- FLSA Exempt Employee: An employee not eligible for overtime as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act.
- FLSA Non-Exempt: An employee eligible for overtime as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Only an employee who has satisfactorily completed the terms and conditions of his or her initial probationary period is eligible for classified service. Classified service is subject to satisfactory performance of work, personal conduct inherent to public service, demonstration of skills and work habits necessary for the performance of the work and availability of funds.

Classification and Pay Plan

- All county job classifications are based on an analysis of the duties and responsibilities and requirements necessary for the position.
- Each job description has a pay grade associated with it.
- Each pay grade has 20 pay steps.
- Any recommendation for Grade/Step/Pay changes must be submitted by the department head and approved by the Cullman County Commissioners.

Performance Reviews

- Probationary Employees: Conducted after 6 months probationary period
- Regular Employees: Normally conducted annually during hire date anniversary month
- **Performance reviews do not guarantee a rate increase**

Recording Work Hours

A centralized attendance record will be maintained by the Personnel Department for all employees covered by the county's personnel system.

- Each employee's attendance record will record:
  - Approved workweek
  - Scheduled hours of duty and hours worked for each duty day during the workweek
  - Authorized and/or unauthorized absences, including sick leave, annual leave, non-pay leave, etc.
  - Earned overtime pay and overtime paid
- Department heads are responsible for ensuring the accurate completion of time and attendance reports/records for each employee within their activity. Such time and attendance reports/records will be submitted to the personnel office for each pay period in accordance with procedures established by the County Commission.

Payroll Information

- Cullman County Commission follows a bi-weekly pay cycle allowing for 26 pay dates throughout the calendar year.
- Direct Deposit is strongly recommended for all county employees
- Checks are dated and distributed on Wednesdays.
- All required deductions, such as federal, state and local taxes, and all authorized voluntary deductions (such as health insurance contribution) will be withheld automatically from your paycheck.
- You are responsible for reviewing your paycheck and reporting any errors or perceived errors to your Supervisor/Manager or to the Personnel Department

Absenteeism and Tardiness

- Each employee is expected to assume diligent responsibility for their attendance and promptness.
- Absenteeism or tardiness that is excessive in the judgement of Cullman County is grounds for disciplinary action as outlined in the Workplace Rules of Conduct section of the employee handbook.
- If you are going to be absent or late and unable to be at work, you must notify your supervisor within one hour of your start time.
- When your absence is due to illness you may be required to furnish appropriate medical documentation.
- If an employee fails to notify their supervisor for 3 consecutive days that they will not be able to come to work the employee will be considered to have provided a voluntary resignation.

FMLA Leave

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides certain employees with up to 12 weeks of un-paid, job-protected leave per year for each of the following reasons:

- For the birth and care of the newborn child of an employee;
- For placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition; or
- To take medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition

Employees are eligible for leave if they have worked for their employer at least 12 months and at least 1,250 hours over the past 12 months.

Normally, FMLA leave will be charged against an employee's accrued leave in the following order: (1) Sick leave; (2) Annual leave (after sick leave is exhausted). After an employee's accrued leaves with pay are exhausted, or if the employee does not have leave with pay accrued, the employee will be placed in a leave without pay status for the remainder of the leave.

Equal Opportunity Employment

- Cullman County is proud to be an equal opportunity employer.
- In recruiting and hiring, we simply look for the most qualified person for the job.
- We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran.

Employee Assistance Program

- Cullman County provides an Employee Assistance Program for all county employees and their qualified dependents. The program is contracted through American Behavioral and provides the following:
  - Confidential assessment, counseling and referral services for areas of drug and alcohol dependency; marital and family issues, mental and emotional problems, job related stress and financial and legal difficulties;
  - Comprehensive EAP service with 24/7/365 availability;
  - Unlimited access to online Work-Life website with resources related to family, marital, legal, financial, health and other topics.

EAP
help. when you need it.

Safety/Accident Reporting

- **Report any work-related accident (regardless of the severity) immediately to your Supervisor and/or Department Head.**
- All employees in a "safety-sensitive" position are required to review (and receive a copy of) the Cullman County Safety Policies & Procedures Handbook. These positions include:
  - Operations Managers
  - Truck Drivers
  - Equipment Operators
  - Bus Operators (Full and Part Time)
  - Mechanic (including Leadman)
  - Park Personnel
  - Animal Control Officers
  - Sanitation Collectors
  - Dispatchers
  - Jailers (Detention Deputies)
  - Deputies

Benefits

Health/dental options

Annual/sick leave/holidays

Life insurance

Retirement benefits

Disability insurance options

Other benefits

Other Resources

- Immediate Supervisor or Department Head
- Cullman County Employee Handbook
- Personnel Department – (256) 775-4884 or 4879

We're glad to have you join our team at Cullman County

Do you have any questions?