

Chippewa County
Department of Administration
Human Resources Division



Human Resources Policy Manual



County Board Action/History

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION MATTERS

General Policy Statement

This Policy Manual is not a contract of employment. This Policy Manual supersedes and replaces all previous personnel policies and procedures on issues that are addressed in this Policy Manual. This Policy Manual applies to non-represented, general municipal employees (management and non-management employees).

For public safety employees who remain covered under a collective bargaining agreement, the terms of the bargaining agreement supersede the terms of this Policy Manual. Those provisions in this Policy Manual that are not addressed in the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s) shall apply to all employees of the County.

Nothing contained in this Policy Manual shall imply, either implicitly or explicitly, that this Policy Manual is a contract between employer and employee. Nor is there any guarantee of employment or job tenure. Chippewa County subscribes to the viewpoint of employment at will.

This Policy Manual is subject to change and modification by Chippewa County with or without notice.

Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of Chippewa County to provide equal opportunity in employment to all qualified employees and applicants for employment. Positive action is required from all employees to help ensure that Chippewa County complies with its obligations under state and federal law. Equal consideration to all qualified persons includes, but is not limited to, the following functions:

1. Hiring, placement, promotion, transfer, or demotion;
2. Recruitment;
3. Compensation for employment;
4. Conditions of employment;
5. Training; and,
6. Involuntary layoff or separation from employment.

The policy objective of Chippewa County is to employ individuals who are qualified for specific work by such job-related standards as experience, demonstrated attitude and skill, education, training, overall ability and other relevant considerations.

Chippewa County is an equal opportunity employer and complies with the principles and practices of equal opportunity employment applicable by Federal, State and local laws and regulations prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, political affiliation, arrest and conviction record or other non-job related factors protected by law. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Chippewa County shall provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities and encourages employees to discuss potential accommodations with the employer.

Violations and/or complaints of this section shall be referred to the Human Resources Director or County Administrator. It is the intent that issues be dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner.

Employees found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

At Will

This Policy Manual sets forth Chippewa County employee policies. The purpose of this Policy Manual is to familiarize employees with the personnel policies of the County. All employees are considered "at-will" employees; nothing contained in this document is to be construed by any employee as establishing, creating or constituting a written, oral or implied contract of employment. Furthermore, nothing herein shall be construed as a guarantee of continued employment or as a guarantee of any benefits or conditions of employment.

Employment Relationship

An employment relationship is the day-to-day interactions between an employee and an employer.

An employment relationship under the FLSA shall be distinguished from a strictly contractual one. Such a relationship shall exist for any provision of the FLSA to apply to any person engaged in work which may otherwise be subject to the Act. In the application of the FLSA, an employee is distinguished as a person who is engaged in a business of his or her own, is one who, as a matter of economic reality, follows the usual path of an employee and is dependent on the business which he or she serves. The employer-employee relationship under the FLSA is tested by "economic reality" rather than "technical concepts." It is not determined by the common law standards.

The Role of Management

Certain rights and responsibilities are imposed by state and federal laws and regulations. Many of these rights and responsibilities have implications for policies and procedures governing employment. For this reason, Chippewa County reserves any and all management rights regarding employees' employment status. These rights and responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the right to:

1. Manage and direct the employees;
2. Hire, promote, schedule, transfer and assign employees;
3. Lay off and recall employees;
4. Discharge employees or take disciplinary action;
5. Schedule overtime as required;
6. Develop job descriptions;
7. Assign work duties;
8. Introduce new or improved methods or facilities or change existing methods or facilities;
9. Contract out for goods and services;
10. Discontinue certain operations;
11. Direct all operation of Chippewa County; and
12. To establish work rules.

CHAPTER 2 – TIME AT WORK AND TIME AWAY FROM WORK

1. Hours of Work

a. Purpose

To provide employees with hours of operation and a policy to assist Department Heads, managers and employees in creating work schedules that ensure proper office coverage for effective operations. Work schedules shall generally be approved by the Department Head and in some cases shall be approved by the County Administrator.

b. Hours of Operation

Note: The Hours of Operation are established by County ordinance Sec. 2-2.

All offices in the courthouse are generally staffed and open to the public from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Friday except for established holidays as determined by the County Board.

All offices in the Law Enforcement Center are generally staffed and open to the public from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Friday.

All offices at the Highway Department are generally staffed and open to the public from 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday for all months except December and January, during which all offices at the Highway Department are generally staffed and open to the public from 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

c. Schedule

The County reserves the right to schedule and/or change all hours and schedules of work as deemed necessary and nothing contained herein shall be construed as a guaranteed work week. The core hours of operation for County Courthouse offices are generally 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Friday. However, this does not guarantee a work schedule of such, and scheduling may be adjusted according to the operational needs of a department.

The core hours of operation for the Highway Department are generally 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday from May to November and 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Thursday from November to May. However, this does not guarantee a work schedule of such, and scheduling may be adjusted according to the operational needs of a department.

Certain departments may work varied hours based on 24/7 operations, customer needs, including the Sheriff's Department.

d. Alternate Schedule

Alternate schedules are typically permanent schedules that deviate from the core hours of operation for the County. Examples include 8-hour shift schedules, 9-hour shift schedules, 10-hour shift schedules, 12-hour shift schedules, mixed shift schedules or schedules starting or ending earlier or later in the day than the core hours of operation detailed above under the Schedule section. Alternate schedules require the approval of the County Administrator. The

Department Head may discontinue the alternate schedule and should provide advance notice of such change to affected employee(s) whenever possible.

e. Flexible Schedules

Flexible Schedules enhance the ability of the County to fulfill its responsibilities, render services to the public, and enhance employee morale. For purposes of this section, a flexible schedule is not a permanent schedule or shift change. Rather, a flexible schedule is designed to offer the employee and the Department Head flexibility to alter a shift as needed for a Short-Term, temporary or one-time basis. A flexible schedule may be established upon request of the employee, with the prior approval of the Department Head or designee. The Department Head may discontinue or alter the flexible schedule. When discontinuing or altering an established flexible schedule, the Department Head will normally provide advance notice of such change whenever possible.

f. Workweek

The normal work week shall consist of seven consecutive calendar days, starting at 12:00 a.m. on Sunday and ending at 11:59 p.m. on the following Saturday of each calendar week for all departments.

g. Maximum Hours Worked

Employees may be required to work additional hours in a day to meet operational demands for a department. Employees are required to have at least eight (8) hours off after 16 consecutive hours worked.

1. Extended Operations Exceptions

Certain operations may require employees to work longer consecutive hours (such as snow removal or dispatch emergency communications). During extended operations, employees may request rest time to their Department Head/Manager. The Department Head is then required to make arrangements for such rest time on an individual basis, giving consideration to the needs of the employee as well as continued coverage for these services. The Department Head/Manager has the authority to require employees take rest time and remove them from work at any point while providing extended operations. Rest time shall not count as hours worked.

h. Work Performed Outside the County Workplace

Generally speaking, non-exempt employees shall perform their duties only at a County worksite. (Examples of an obvious exception to this are those positions which require employees to travel to clients' homes and other similarly situated positions.) Non-exempt employees shall receive advanced approval from their Department Head for any work performed outside the County workplace. Non-exempt (hourly) employees approved for work outside the County workplace shall document and submit their hours, including but not limited to any and all time spent accessing work related emails and other programs and files, according to the payroll policies.

i. Daylight Savings Time

Employees who are required to work during the change of Daylight Savings Time shall be paid for the hours actually worked.

j. Annual Hours

1. Full-Time Status

The normal workweek for regular full-time employees is generally 40 hours as designated by the County. The annual hours of full-time employees are normally 2080+ hours.

2. Part-Time Status

The workweek for any regular part-time employee shall be designated by Chippewa County and normally is scheduled between 20-28 hours/week. The annual hours of part-time employees ranges between 1040-1500 hours.

3. Limited-Term (Annual or Seasonal) Status

The workweek for any limited-term employee (LTE) shall be designated by Chippewa County. The annual hours of an LTE shall not exceed 975 hours without County Administrator approval. Approval may be granted for a temporary increase in hours, which is budget neutral and does not result in becoming WRS eligible. The normal schedule of an Annual LTE is variable and between 1-19 hours/week for the entire year. The normal schedule of a Seasonal LTE is up to 40 hours/week and by the very definition, shall be seasonal. If the Seasonal LTE returns the following season, there should be a 6 month break in service. In rare circumstances, with Human Resources Division approval, a minimum of a 13 week break in service may occur.

(Section 1 amended by the County Board 05/14/13; 12/10/13; 12/09/14; 12/08/15; 03/13/18; 11/6/18; 11/10/2020; 09/13/2022; 11/08/2022; 06/11/2024)

2. **Breaks and Lunches**

a. Purpose

To provide employees with regular break periods and lunch periods throughout the normal workday.

b. Lunch Periods

All full-time employees are entitled to an unpaid thirty (30) minute lunch period. Lunch periods should be scheduled midway in the workday. Lunch periods are not required when approved by the Department Head, but shall not result in an employee working unapproved overtime.

c. Break Periods

Unless otherwise determined by a Department Head, full-time employees may receive two (2) paid break periods of no more than fifteen (15) minutes in duration, one in the first half of the work day and one in the second half, as the position allows. Unused break periods cannot be accumulated for use at a later date. Employees who miss a break period may not arrive at work later than the normal starting time, or leave work before the normal quitting time. Department Heads shall determine break periods for part time employees or full-time employees working a partial shift. An employee working four (4) hours or less shall not receive a paid break.

d. Scheduling

Break periods and lunch periods may not be taken in the first or last hour of the work day. Break periods and lunch periods may be combined only if approved by the Department Head. If the Department Head approves to combine, the employee shall create a note on their timesheet that states "combined breaks/lunches for a 45- or 60-minute lunch" and record the 30-minute unpaid lunch as a Time In and Time Out. Department Heads are responsible for scheduling lunch periods and break periods to ensure that adequate staff coverage is provided.

During paid break periods, employees should remain on the premises unless approved by the Department Head. It is acceptable for employees to use paid break periods for outdoor or indoor walks or for smoking breaks.

e. Office Closures Over Breaks and Lunches

Department Heads shall make every effort to keep offices open during break and lunch periods and employees should stagger their breaks and lunches to accommodate this. If an office must be closed, the Department Head or designee shall place a visible sign as to when the department will reopen.

(Section 2 amended by the County Board 12/08/15; 09/10/19; 09/13/2022; 01/14/2025)

3. Holidays

a. Purpose

To identify observed employee holidays and to establish a consistent procedure for scheduling and payment.

b. Eligibility

All regular full-time or part-time employees are eligible to receive compensation for the paid holiday benefit. In order to receive holiday pay, employees shall work the full scheduled day before and the full scheduled day after each observed holiday unless the employee substitutes PTO (scheduled or unscheduled). Part-time employees shall be compensated on a prorated basis. Employees receiving Workers' Compensation benefits are not eligible for compensation for holidays that fall during their period of disability. Employees on any type of unpaid leave of absence on the observed holiday are not eligible for compensation for the holiday.

All limited term (annual or seasonal) status employees (LTEs) are eligible to receive compensation for the paid holiday benefit only if they actually work the day of the holiday or observed holiday.

c. Holidays Observed

The following holidays shall be paid holiday for eligible employees:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Spring Holiday (Friday before Easter)	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Independence Day	December 24 th
Day after Independence Day	December 25 th

d. Compensation

Holiday pay is calculated at the straight time hourly rate of pay of the employee on that day.

1. Full-time employees shall be compensated for eight (8) hours of holiday pay on the observed holidays regardless of the scheduled shift (4-, 5-, 6-, 7-, 8-, 9-, 10-, 11-, or 12-hour day).
2. Part-time employees shall receive four (4) hours of holiday pay on the observed holidays.
3. LTES shall receive holiday pay for the exact hours worked on the day of the holiday or observed holiday in addition to their actual hours worked. If the employee does not work on the day of the holiday or observed holiday, they are not eligible for holiday pay.

e. Work on Holiday

In cases where a full-time or part-time employee is required to work on a holiday due to unforeseeable circumstances, or required to work on a holiday as part of their normal work schedule, the employee shall receive holiday pay for the holiday in addition to the actual hours worked.

Holiday pay is considered time worked for the purposes of overtime.

f. Holidays During Leave

Holidays falling within any unpaid period of absence for any reason shall be without pay.

For employees on paid FMLA over an observed holiday, the holiday shall be counted as FMLA leave.

Employees are permitted to use scheduled or unscheduled PTO during an approved FMLA or County medical leave before and after the Holiday to be eligible for Holiday pay, even if the employee doesn't have enough PTO or Compensatory time for the entire leave period.

g. Holidays Falling on a Weekend

Whenever any of the observed holidays falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be observed as the holiday, and when falling on a Sunday, the succeeding Monday shall be observed as the holiday. When December 24th falls on Friday and December 25th on Saturday, the preceding Thursday and Friday shall be observed as the holidays. When December 24th falls on Sunday and December 25th on Monday, the succeeding Monday and Tuesday shall be observed as the holiday.

h. Holidays Falling on a Scheduled Day That is Not 8 Hours for a Full-Time Employee

Whenever an observed holiday falls on a day that an employee is scheduled to work more than eight (8) hours, the employee shall be paid for eight (8) hours of holiday pay. The employee shall use PTO, Compensatory time or work a flexible schedule to make up the additional hours within the same work week.

Whenever an observed holiday falls on a day that an employee is scheduled to work less than eight (8) hours, the employee shall flex their schedule during the week to work less hours on other days, so not to earn overtime or compensatory time without Department Head approval.

Flexible schedules during the week of a holiday shall be established and approved by the Department Head to best meet the needs of the department for efficient operations, to reduce overtime or compensatory time and to remain open during established business hours.

i. Sheriff's Department Dispatcher and Jailer Exceptions

Due to the nature of the scheduling within the Sheriff's Department, the dispatchers and jailers who are eligible for holidays and required to work on an observed holiday shall receive the holiday pay for that day in addition to hours worked.

j. Exceptions

Due to the nature of work required from the Highway Department and Facilities and Parks Division for unforeseen emergency circumstances, in cases when a regular status non-exempt employee of the Highway Department or Facilities and Parks Division is required to work on an observed holiday, the non-exempt employee shall receive overtime pay at a rate of time and one-half for those actual hours worked by the non-exempt employee in addition to receiving holiday pay for the holiday. Overtime hours worked on an observed holiday are considered premium overtime pay and shall not be calculated in the regular rate of pay for the purposes of calculating FLSA overtime (29 C.F.R §778.201).

(Section 3 amended by the County Board 05/14/13; 12/10/13; 12/09/14; 12/08/15, 03/13/18; 11/6/18; 09/13/2022; 12/13/2022)

4. Paid Time Off (PTO)

a. Purpose

The purpose of the Paid Time Off (PTO) plan is to provide regular full time and regular part-time employees a flexible means to carefully plan their time away from work and maximize time spent on the job. It is the County's belief that employees empowered to control their time at work and away from work do so responsibly. PTO can be utilized for any purpose, subject to necessary request and approval procedures consistent with County policies and written departmental procedures.

b. Calculation

Employees earn PTO for each pay period based upon the number of hours that an employee is paid during the pay period, up to 80 hours. The payroll hours are tied to a multiplier, based upon years of service, and a new accrual amount is added to an employee's balance each pay period. The following are the multipliers to be used:

Multiplier Level	Years of Continuous Service	Hour for Hour Multiplier Used	Per Pay Period Multiplier (Full Time Employee)	Approximate Annual Accrual
Level 1	Less than 5	.0886	7.09	184
Level 2	5-less than 10	.0983	7.86	204
Level 3	10-less than 15	.1079	8.63	224
Level 4	15-less than 20	.1271	10.17	264
Level 5	20 and greater	.1464	11.71	304

Movement to Higher Multiplier

When the employee's length of service reaches the next higher rate of accrual, accrual at the new rate shall begin on the first day of the pay period that the employee's Full Time or Part Time anniversary date is within.

c. Accrual Limits (Maximum and Minimum)

An employee's total accrued PTO shall not exceed four hundred eighty (480) hours at any given time for full time and three hundred-sixty (360) hours for part-time. Upon reaching the maximum hours, the employee shall no longer continue to accrue hours until PTO hours are used; except as otherwise provided in this policy, employees may not have a negative PTO balance.

Employees are not authorized to carry a negative PTO balance (except as provided below under Newly Hired Employees). There is no minimum requirement per policy, however PTO shall be used for both planned time off (typically a vacation) and unplanned time off (sick time or other emergencies). So it is recommended to maintain a healthy minimum PTO balance for unplanned events.

d. Timeframe for Available Use

Employees may request to use PTO only in a pay period following the pay period in which the PTO was accrued.

e. Newly-Hired Employees

PTO is earned on a pay period basis and can only be used in a pay period following the pay period in which the PTO was accrued. Consequently, newly-hired employees may submit a request to the Human Resources Division that their PTO bank be authorized to carry a negative balance within the first seven (7) pay periods from the newly-hired employee's date of hire for emergency situations or pre-approved absences only. Requests for authorization of a negative PTO balance shall be made in writing to the Human Resources Division by the Department Head or designee. The Human Resources Division shall consult with the Department Head and render a determination. The determination of the Human Resources Director or designee shall be final and binding. Any authorized negative balance shall not exceed forty (40.0) hours. Authorized negative balances shall be restored through accrual to a positive balance before any further PTO may be taken by the employee. Employees who separate employment and have a negative PTO bank balance at the time of separation shall have their final paycheck adjusted from regular hours worked to restore the PTO bank to a zero (0) balance.

f. PTO Service Credit at Hire

The Department Head may submit a request to the Human Resources Director that a prospective applicant be granted a one-time beginning balance credit of PTO or be given credit for length of service for employment experience that is directly related to the position. The request shall be in writing before the applicant is hired and shall be based on the Department Head's assessment of the candidate's qualifications beyond the minimum requirements, recruitment considerations, or service accrual provided by the previous employer. No additional length of service credit shall be granted after initial appointment with the County. The Human Resources Director shall make all determinations for length of service credit, and the determination of the Human Resources Director shall be final and binding.

g. Rate of Pay for PTO Bank Hours

PTO hours shall be paid at regular straight time pay for the workday the PTO is taken. Shift differentials are excluded from the rate of pay.

h. PTO Departmental Scheduling Procedures

Each department shall establish written procedures to ensure that paid time off requests are processed in a fair and equitable manner, with first consideration to be given to the efficient operation of the department. All procedures shall include the following components: notice requirements for scheduled vs. unscheduled absences, process for requesting PTO, reminder that the employee is responsible for monitoring PTO and Compensatory Time balances, hours that the department shall be staffed and open to the public, how the department shall handle employees reporting to work sick and compensatory time or flex time requirements if relevant. All departments shall file a copy of their updated written time off procedures with the Human Resources Division.

i. PTO Scheduling Authority

The department head or designee has final authority in authorizing accrued and available PTO.

j. Scheduled Absences

PTO shall be requested by the employee as far in advance as reasonably possible and shall be approved in advance by the Department Head or designee. Individual departments shall define advanced notice for Scheduled Absences and list the definition in the departments PTO scheduling procedure. Employees shall follow written departmental procedures for requesting PTO. Requests for PTO may be denied based on the needs and workload of the department or if other employees are already scheduled for time off.

k. Unscheduled Absences

Employee PTO usage for unscheduled, unforeseen circumstances shall be made according to written departmental procedures. The employee may be requested to provide a physician's verification statement for absences spanning more than three (3) consecutive work days.

l. Coordination with FMLA

The County reserves the right to require substitution of paid leave, subject to applicable state and federal law. Therefore, an employee shall use PTO for any federal FMLA qualifying leave including, but not limited to, intermittent leaves.

m. Coordination with Workers' Compensation

The employee may use accrued PTO to compensate for time lost that is not reimbursed by workers' compensation.

n. Unpaid Time

With the exception of qualified Wisconsin and Federal FMLA leave, an employee may not take unpaid leave until such time that the employee's PTO bank has been exhausted. At no time shall an employee be authorized to carry a negative PTO balance (except as provided above under Newly Hired Employees). In the event an employee has an insufficient PTO balance to cover an absence for any reason, the employee shall immediately revert to unpaid time. In the event an employee is reverted to unpaid time without prior authorization by the Department Head and the Human Resources Director, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

Employees on unpaid status, for any reason other than as outline in Chapter 2, under Leave-Military, shall not accrue PTO on the unpaid time.

1. Unpaid Time for Exempt Employees

Unpaid time or partial-day deductions for exempt employees are permitted in the case of a public employee who is in a position that earns PTO or Compensatory Time and is absent for a partial day or full day due to personal reasons, illness or injury under the following circumstances:

- a). PTO or Compensatory Time has not been requested or has been denied;
- b). Accrued PTO or Compensatory Time is exhausted; or
- c). The employee is qualified under Wisconsin FMLA leave and specifically chooses to take time off unpaid.

The employee will not accrue PTO on the unpaid time. This policy is established pursuant to principles of public accountability and complies with the requirements of 29 C.F.R. 541.710

o. Part-Time Employee Utilization of PTO

The number of hours that a part-time employee may record when taking a “day off” from work is what they would normally have been scheduled to work. Part-time employees may only take PTO on days that they would have normally been scheduled to work.

p. Increments of Time

Employees shall use PTO in increments of fifteen (15) minutes.

q. Presenteeism

PTO is designed to provide for effective planning of work hours and time away from work and encourages employees to maximize time spent on the job. If an employee has any communicable disease, the employee shall report it to his or her Department Head or designee. The Department Head or designee may require a return-to-work form from the employee's physician. The Department Head or designee has the right to send an employee home if the employee is unfit or unable to perform the functions of his/her position or if the Department Head or designee determines the ill employee poses a threat to the health or safety of customers or other employees in the department. The employee shall use PTO or compensatory time, if available to the employee, for their remaining work day.

r. Restrictions

1. An employee shall not be paid for time at work and receive PTO pay for the same time.
2. An employee may not donate PTO to a third party.

s. Department Transfers

PTO balances shall transfer with the employee when an employee transfers from one department to another.

t. Optional Annual PTO Payout

Full time employees that have 150 hours of PTO on the books as of the first paycheck in November each year, shall have the option to elect 24 hours of PTO paid out on the second paycheck in November that year at the employee's regular rate of pay or waive a payout.

Part time employees that have 75 hours of PTO on the book as of the first paycheck in November each year, shall have the option to elect 12 hours of PTO paid out on the second paycheck in November that year at the employee's regular rate of pay or waive a payout.

Payout is optional at the election of the employee and the Human Resources Division shall collect employee election and authorization to payout PTO annually by October 15. If the employee does not authorize to pay out PTO by October 15, no payout shall occur.

u. PTO as a Reward or Prize

The County Administrator may approve providing PTO as a reward or prize to a PTO eligible employee. Offering PTO as a prize or a reward is a creative way to acknowledge or reward employees for taking an action they normally may not take, without an incentive.

The amount of the PTO reward shall be determined by the County Administrator and shall be no more than twenty (24) hours total per year and a maximum of eight (8) hours per employee per year. Upon approval, the Human Resources Director shall communicate the reward details and amount to the employee(s) via email to ensure employee(s) are aware of the PTO reward and/or why they earned it or how to earn it.

The Human Resources Division shall notify the Finance Division of the final reward amount and date to be added to the employee's accrual total. A letter or form shall be placed in the employee's personnel file detailing the date, hours of PTO received and reason for the PTO reward or prize. PTO as a reward is not transferable to a third party.

v. Separation

1. Definitions

a). A Qualified Separation is defined as follows:

1. resignation or retirement from employment with Chippewa County with advanced written notice as defined in Chapter 3, Separation of Employment Section.
2. permanent layoff from employment
3. discharge from employment when the employee has 3 or more years of continuous years of service with the County based on most recent date of hire unless the employee is discharged for misconduct. Misconduct is defined as intentional and substantial disregard of or intentional and unreasonable interference with the employer's interests.
4. County employee who becomes an elected official for the County.

b). Discharge: Discharge is defined as dismissal from employment for involuntary reasons.

2. PTO Conversion

The accumulated PTO of those employees leaving Chippewa County employment due to a qualified separation shall be converted into the County's Conversion Plan, (herein referred to as the "Plan"). The conversion of PTO is mandatory upon a qualified separation and all separating employees with unused PTO on the date of their separation shall participate in the Plan. The employee shall have all PTO converted to a dollar value calculated by taking the number of total PTO hours multiplied by the regular straight time hourly rate of pay at the time of separation (hereinafter "Benefit").

Within thirty (30) days of receiving written notice of an employee's qualified separation, the County shall elect the form in which the separating employee shall receive the Benefit. The Benefit paid to the separating employee shall be limited to one of the following forms:

- a). The County shall make a contribution to a Medical Expense Trust for the benefit of the separating employee to be applied toward health insurance premiums and un-reimbursed medical expenses specified under IRS Code Section 213. This benefit shall continue until fully exhausted by the separating employee or their qualified dependent beneficiaries.
- b). The County shall make a contribution to a 401(a) qualified deferred compensation plan (as selected by the County in its sole discretion) in the amount of the Benefit, which shall be paid to the separating employee according to the terms of the selected plan.
 1. An employee whose separation is non-qualified shall not be eligible for the PTO payout.
 2. An employee who is discharged with less than 3 years of continuous service with the County based on most recent date of hire shall not be eligible for the PTO payout.
 3. An employee may not use PTO beyond his/her last day actually worked.

w. Death

Upon the death of an employee, the County shall pay to the estate of the deceased employee all accumulated and unused PTO for which the deceased employee may have otherwise been eligible to use at the time of his/her death.

x. Elected Officials

Elected Officials are not eligible for PTO. Elected officials who were county employees immediately prior to their election shall mandatorily convert their PTO as described in the PTO conversion upon taking Office.

(Section 4 amended by the County Board 12/10/13; 12/08/15; 03/13/18; 11/9/18; 11/12/19; 09/13/2022; 01/14/2025)

5. Catastrophic Illness Bank

a. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees with Catastrophic Illness (CI) bank guidelines to utilize these hours should a medical related event of the employee require their absence upon depletion of their PTO as a bridge to return to work.

As of 01/05/2013, employees shall no longer accrue hours into the CI bank. The hours that are in the CI bank as of 01/05/2013 shall be frozen and no additional hours may be accrued.

b. Definition

Catastrophic Illness (CI) is defined as:

1. The employee is unable to perform the duties of the position held at the time of the injury or upon inception of the illness and is unable to perform available light duty work (if available); and
2. The anticipated duration of the medical absence is not less than 45 calendar days; and
3. The employee's illness is confirmed in writing by a physician chosen by the employee, and subject to reconfirmation by a physician chosen by the County.

c. Rate of Pay

CI hours shall be paid at regular straight time pay at the time the CI hours are taken/used. Shift differentials are excluded from the rate of pay.

d. Part-Time Employee Utilization

The number of hours that a part-time employee may record when using CI hours is what they would normally have been scheduled to work. Part-time employees may only take CI hours on days that they would have normally been scheduled.

e. Coordination with FMLA

The County reserves the right to require substitution of paid leave, subject to applicable state and federal law. Therefore, an employee shall apply for federal FMLA while using CI hours, to count against the employee's annual FMLA entitlement.

f. Coordination with Workers' Compensation

The County reserves the right to require the use of CI hours while the employee is on Workers' Compensation if PTO is exhausted. An employee shall be required to use available CI hours while on Workers' Compensation to recover the employee share of benefits and mandatory deductions.

g. Coordination with Medical Leave

Upon expiration of federal FMLA, the employee is required to apply for a County Medical Leave as provided for under County Policy. The County Medical Leave shall run concurrent with CI hours taken.

h. Requesting CI Hours

Once an employee reasonably believes they shall have to use CI hours, he/she shall immediately contact the Human Resources Division for necessary forms.

i. Restrictions

1. Use of the CI hours may only occur upon exhaustion of PTO and all other accrued hours.
2. Hours in the CI bank shall not be paid out at time of separation or death.
3. Use of CI hours is limited to an employee's own medical situation.
4. An employee may not donate CI hours to a third party.
5. PTO hours shall not accrue on CI hours taken.

(Section 5 amended by the County Board 11/9/18; 09/13/2022)

6. Leaves – Family Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA)

a. Purpose

To provide time off from work for child rearing leave, family illness leave, employee medical leave, military call to-duty leave and military caregiver leave to eligible employees as specified below. The intent of this Policy is to comply with both the Wisconsin and federal Family and Medical Leave Acts. Should this policy conflict in any way with the applicable federal and state statutes or regulations, the statutes, or regulations shall control.

b. Eligibility

1. Wisconsin FMLA: Any employee who has worked for more than 52 weeks (for a minimum of 1,000 paid hours) is eligible for unpaid leave under Wisconsin's Family and Medical Leave Act (§103.10, Wis. Stats.).
2. Federal FMLA: Any employee who has worked for more than 12 months (for a minimum of 1,250 hours worked) is eligible for unpaid leave under the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

c. Length of Leave

1. Wisconsin FMLA: provides six (6) weeks of child-rearing leave, two (2) weeks of family illness leave, and two (2) weeks of employee medical leave. Wisconsin Family Medical Leave operates on a calendar year basis.
2. Federal FMLA: provides a combined total of twelve (12) weeks of leave for various reasons, described below, during any 12-month period. Chippewa County shall use a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee is on a designated leave under this policy to determine whether an employee has exhausted his or her 12 weeks of federal leave.

Wisconsin and federal FMLA provided for the same purpose runs concurrently. For example, an absence in which an employee uses accrued PTO or Compensatory time, even if for a work or non-work related illness or injury that qualifies as a “serious health condition” will be counted under the employee's FMLA leave entitlements under the state and federal laws.

d. Definitions:

1. **Child** means a biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom you have assumed the obligations of a parent and who is either under 18 years of age or unable to care for him or herself due to a physical or mental incapacity or serious health condition.
2. **Parent** includes parent's in-law only if you are requesting leave under the WFMLA.
3. **Domestic Partner** includes individuals who file “declarations of domestic partnership” in their county of residence and individuals in less formal “domestic partnerships” that satisfy the requirements set forth in the WFMLA.
4. **Serious health condition** under this policy means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves one of the following:
 - a. **Hospital Care**: Inpatient care (i.e., an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility) including any period of incapacity or any subsequent treatment in connection with inpatient care.
 - b. **Absence Plus Treatment**: A period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days* including any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition that also involves:
 1. Treatment two or more times by a health care provider, by a nurse or physician's assistant under direct supervision of a health care provider, or by a provider of health care services (e.g., physical therapist) under order of, or referral by, a health care provider;
 2. Treatment by a health care provider on at least one occasion which results in a regimen of continuing treatment under direct supervision of a health care provider.

*Under the WFMLA, leave may also be available for a serious health condition of less than three (3) consecutive days in duration.

- c. **Pregnancy**: Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy, or for prenatal care.
- d. **Chronic Conditions**: Requires periodic visits for treatment by a health care provider, continues over an extended period of time (including recurring episodes of a single underlying condition), and may cause episodic rather than a continuing period of incapacity (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.).
- e. **Permanent/Long-Term Conditions Requiring Supervision**: A period of incapacity which is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective. The employee or family member shall be under the continuing supervision of, but need not be receiving active treatment by, a health care

provider. Examples include Alzheimer's, a severe stroke, or the terminal stages of a disease.

- f. **Multiple Treatments (Non-Chronic Conditions)** Any period of absence to receive multiple treatments (including any period of recovery there from) by a health care provider or by a provider of health care services under orders of, or on referral by, a health care provider, either for restorative surgery after an accident or other injury, or for a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three (3) consecutive calendar days in the absence of medical intervention or treatment, such as cancer, (chemotherapy, radiation, etc.) severe arthritis (physical therapy) and kidney disease (dialysis).

e. **Basic FMLA Leave Entitlements:**

1. **Childbirth/Adoption Leave:** Provides child rearing leave for the following:
 - a). The birth of the employee's natural child; or
 - b). The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or as a precondition to adoption under section 48.90(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes, but not both; or
 - c). The placement of a child with the employee for twenty-four (24) hour foster care that is made by or with agreement of a government agency.

2. **Family Illness Leave**

Family illness leave may be used to care for the employee's spouse, child, parents, or spouse's parent (i.e., parent-in-law), or domestic partner as defined by law or a domestic partner's parent as defined by law, who have a serious health condition.

3. **Employee Medical Leave**

Employee medical leave that may be used by an employee who has a serious health condition which renders the employee unable to perform his or her job duties.

4. **Military Call-to-Duty Leave**

Military call-to-duty leave may be used as a result of a qualifying exigency arising from an employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent being on active duty or having been notified of an impending call or order to active-duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation. Exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative child-care, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

5. **Injured/Ill Service Member Caregiver Leave**

Injured/ill service member caregiver leave may be used in addition to the basic FMLA leave entitlements discussed above, to provide an eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of a covered service member up to 26 weeks of military caregiver leave during a single 12-month period to care for the service member with a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty.

6. Intermittent/Reduced Schedule Leave

When employees seek intermittent leave or a reduced leave schedule for reasons unrelated to the planning of medical treatment, employees shall, upon request, advise the County of the reason why such leave is medically necessary. In such instances, the County and employee shall attempt to work out a leave schedule that meets the employee's needs without unduly disrupting the County's operations, subject to the approval of the health care provider.

f. Employee Notice of the Need for Leave:

Employees who take FMLA leave shall timely notify the County of their need for FMLA leave. Employees should request FMLA leave in writing whenever possible and submit the request to the Human Resources Division. For ease, a Leave Request Form is available by contacting the Human Resources Division.

Employees shall provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days' notice is not possible, or the approximate timing of the need for leave is not foreseeable, the employees shall provide the County with notice of the need for leave as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case. Failure of the employee to give 30 days' notice for foreseeable leave, without a reasonable excuse for the delay, or to otherwise satisfy FMLA notice obligations, may result in FMLA leave being delayed or denied.

The employee shall inform the Human Resources Division of the need for FMLA qualifying leave and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave, if known. The employee may do this by either requesting FMLA leave specifically, or explaining the reasons for leave so as to allow the Human Resources Division to determine that the leave is FMLA qualifying. Calling in with an unscheduled or scheduled absence without providing the reasons for the needed leave, shall NOT be considered sufficient notice for FMLA.

The employee shall respond to the County's questions to determine if absences are may qualify as FMLA. If the employee fails to explain the reasons for FMLA leave, the leave and time off may be denied. When the employee seeks leave due to FMLA-qualifying reasons for which the County has previously provided FMLA-protected leave, he or she shall specifically reference the qualifying reason for the leave or the need for FMLA leave.

g. FMLA Documentation / Forms Required for Leave

1. Notice of Eligibility & Rights and Responsibilities under the FMLA:

Employees requesting FMLA leave or employees requesting time off from work that may qualify as FMLA leave are entitled to receive written notice from the County telling them whether they are eligible for FMLA leave and, if not eligible, the reasons why they are not eligible. This notice shall also include details regarding additional information needed, such as medical certifications or other military leave documentation needed to assist in designating the leave.

2. Medical Certifications

Depending on the nature of FMLA leave sought, employees may be required to submit medical certifications establishing that a "serious health condition" (described above) is involved and supports their need for FMLA leave.

Employees requesting leave because of their own, or a covered relative's, serious health condition, or to care for a covered service member, shall submit a complete medical certification form, provided by the Human Resources Division, to assist in establishing that a qualifying medical condition (described under Basic FMLA Leave Entitlements) exists and supports the need for leave.

Medical certification shall be submitted prior to the leave beginning if the employee is able to provide a 30-day notice or more of leave. If notice for leave is not feasible, due to the circumstance of the leave, the employee shall provide a medical certification within 15 calendar days of the date of the notice of leave to the Human Resources Division.

Depending on the circumstances and duration of FMLA leave, the County may require an employee to provide a medical recertification of the medical condition giving rise to the need for leave. The County shall notify the employee if recertification is required and shall give the employee at least 15 calendar days to provide medical recertification.

3. Designation Notice under the FMLA

Leaves covered under FMLA must be designated as FMLA-protected and the County must inform the employee with 5 business days of having sufficient information to determine whether the leave is for an FMLA-qualifying reason. The designation shall state if the leave request is approved, not approved or additional information is necessary. The designation shall also include the amount of leave that will be counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement and if some, all or none of the leave will be paid or unpaid.

The County may retroactively designate leave as FMLA leave with appropriate written notice to the employee, provided the County's failure to designate leave as FMLA qualifying at an earlier date does not cause harm or injury to the employee. In all cases where the leave qualifies for FMLA protection, the County and employee may mutually agree that leave shall be retroactively designated as FMLA leave.

4. Return to Work Report or Return to Work Medical Certifications

An employee returning to work from FMLA leave that was taken because of the employee's own serious health condition that made the employee unable to perform his/her job duties shall provide the County with a medical certification confirming the employee is able to return to work and the employee's ability to perform the functions of the employee's position. The County may delay and/or deny job restoration until an employee provides a requested return to work/medical certification.

5. Certifications Supporting Need for Military Family Leave

Upon request, the first time an employee seeks leave due to a qualifying exigency arising out of the active duty or call to active duty status of a covered military member, the County may require the employee to provide: (1) a copy of the covered military

member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military indicating the covered military member is on active duty or called to active duty status and the dates of the covered military member's active duty service; and (2) a certification from the employee setting forth information concerning the nature of the qualifying exigency for which leave is requested. An employee shall provide a copy of new active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military for qualifying exigency leaves arising out of a different active duty or call to active duty status of the same or a different covered military member.

When leave is taken to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness, the County may require the employee to obtain certifications completed by an authorized health care provider of the covered service member. In addition, the County may request that the certification submitted by the employee set forth additional information provided by the employee and/or the covered service member confirming entitlement to such leave.

h. Using Paid Time While on FMLA Leave

1. Wisconsin FMLA

While on Wisconsin FMLA leave (including when running concurrently with federal FMLA leave), an employee may, but is not required to, substitute definite and quantifiable paid leave benefits for unpaid leaves under the state law (e.g. PTO, holiday and compensatory time).

2. Federal FMLA

When solely utilizing federal FMLA leave, an employee shall be required to substitute definite and certain paid leave benefits for unpaid leave including PTO and compensatory time unless the employee does not have sufficient paid time to cover the duration of the leave period. In this case, substitution of available paid time shall be applied evenly and intermittently across the leave period. In addition, employees may be allowed to maintain up to approximately 40.0 hours of paid time in their accrual bank (including any combination of PTO, and/or compensatory time) following expiration of FMLA, unless the paid time is needed to be used to recover employee benefit and mandatory deductions during the leave period. The Human Resources Division shall calculate necessary PTO or compensatory time to be exhausted to comply with this rule. Due to rounding, The Human Resources Division may allow/require up to 39-41 hours of paid time to be maintained in the employee accrual bank. An employee's use of County provided paid leave shall comply with the terms and conditions of the County's applicable paid leave policies.

The substitution of paid time for unpaid FMLA leave time does not extend the length of FMLA leave, the paid time runs concurrently with an employee's FMLA entitlement.

3. Coordination of FMLA with Disability Plans

Chippewa County reserves the right to require substitution of paid leave, subject to state and federal law. If an employee qualifies for and is approved for Short-Term Disability (STD) or Long-Term Disability (LTD), the employee can choose to use their earned paid time (PTO, Holiday, Compensatory Time or CI) or take Unpaid FMLA. FMLA shall run

concurrently with approved STD or LTD. STD or LTD does not extend an employee's FMLA entitlement.

4. Coordination of FMLA with Catastrophic Illness Bank

The County reserves the right to require substitution of paid leave, subject to applicable state and federal law. Therefore, an employee shall apply for federal FMLA while using CI hours, and if approved, shall count against the employee's FMLA entitlement.

5. FMLA Around Holidays

Holidays falling within any unpaid period of absence for any reason shall be without pay.

Employees are permitted to use scheduled PTO during an approved FMLA leave before and after the Holiday to be eligible for Holiday pay, even if the employee doesn't have enough PTO or Compensatory time for the entire leave period.

For employees on paid FMLA on the days both before and after an observed holiday, the holiday shall be counted as FMLA leave.

i. Health Insurance, Dental Insurance, Vision Insurance and Other Benefits

1. Continuation of Benefits

The County is required to maintain group health, dental and/or vision insurance coverage for an employee on FMLA leave whenever such insurance was provided before the leave was taken and on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work.

Arrangements will need to be made for employees to pay the employee portion of health, dental and/or vision insurance premiums while on leave.

Employees shall be required to pay the employee portion of all other benefits including life insurance, supplemental insurance, disability insurance, etc. during FMLA leave.

Failure to make the required payments shall result in termination of the employee's insurance coverage as indicated under "Termination of Benefits".

Employees may elect to continue or terminate Flexible Spending Account deductions during a FMLA leave. If an employee terminates the deductions, the employee shall be allowed to resume election upon return from the FMLA leave.

While on FMLA leave, it is still the responsibility of the employee to ensure that all insurance and benefit changes, elections, and updates occur in accordance to the County imposed deadlines.

2. Coordination of Paid Time for Benefit Continuation

Under Federal FMLA, the County shall require the use of PTO or compensatory time to recover the employee share of benefits and mandatory deductions if such paid time is available.

3. Termination of Benefits

The County's obligation to maintain health, dental and/or vision insurance and all other benefits shall stop if and when the following occur:

- a). An employee informs the County of intent not to return to work during or at the end of the leave period; or
- b). The employee fails to return to work when the leave entitlement is used up; or
- c). The employee fails to make any required payments while on leave after appropriate waiting periods and time periods as specified by law. The County's obligation to maintain health care, dental and/or vision coverage ceases if an employee's premium payment is more than 30 days late. If an employee's payment is more than 15 days late, the County shall send a letter notifying the employee that coverage shall be dropped on a specified date unless the payment is received before that date. Health, dental and/or vision insurance coverage shall then be dropped retroactively to the first of the month for the month of coverage that premium payments was not received.

4. Recovery of Premium Payments

The County has the right to collect from an employee the County's portion of the health, dental and/or vision insurance premiums during a period of unpaid leave if the employee chooses not return to work after the leave entitlement for reasons other than the FMLA leave request or for circumstances outside of the employee's control. Such premium amounts may be deducted from any compensation owed to the employee upon termination of employment. An employee shall return to work for at least thirty (30) calendar days in order to be considered to have "returned" to work. However, an employee's liability to repay health, dental and/or vision insurance premiums does not apply if his/her failure to return to work is due to a serious health condition or specific circumstances beyond the control of the employee.

j. Other FMLA Provisions

1. Return from Leave

An employee returning from family and/or medical leave can return to his or her old position, if available, at the time the employee returns to work. If the position no longer exists, the employee may be offered an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.

The determination as to how an employee is to be restored to "an equivalent position" upon return from FMLA leave is made on the basis of established policies and practices, and provisions of the federal FMLA.

2. Outside Employment

An employee who is solely utilizing federal FMLA leave (i.e., Wisconsin FMLA leave has been exhausted) and/or a County provided and approved leave, is prohibited from working for another employer while on federal FMLA leave.

(Section 6 amended by the County Board 12/8/15, 03/13/18, 11/6/18; 11/10/2020; 09/13/2022)

7. Leave – County Medical (Non-FMLA)

a. Purpose

To provide time off to be used by an employee who has a serious health condition which renders the employee unable to perform his/her job duties and has exhausted or does not qualify for federal or state FMLA.

b. Eligibility

Employees may request county medical leave for continued time off upon exhausting Wisconsin and Federal FMLA entitlement; or if the employee does not qualify for Wisconsin and/or Federal FMLA. The medical leave is for the employee's own serious health condition.

c. Length of Leave

Employees may request a continuous (not intermittent) medical leave under this policy for up to four (4) weeks, as supported by medical documentation supplied by the employee's health care provider upon request from the County. Intermittent may be requested by the Department Head and approved by the Human Resources Director in extenuating circumstances when driven by the department workload and/or inability to provide services to the public.

d. Request

Any employee requesting a County Medical Leave of absence shall submit a Leave of Absence Request form directly to the Human Resources Division at least 30 days in advance and shall state the reason for such leave, the period of time expected to be absent, and medical documentation supporting the need for the leave. The 30-day notice may be waived under emergency circumstances by the Human Resources Director.

e. Using Paid Time While On County Medical Leave

1. Substitution of Paid Time

Employees on a County Medical Leave shall be required to substitute all available PTO and compensatory time. The Human Resources Division shall calculate necessary PTO or compensatory time to be exhausted to comply with this rule. Due to rounding, The Human Resources Division may allow/require up to 2 hours of paid time to be maintained in the employee accrual bank.

2. Coordination of County Medical Leave with Disability Plans

Chippewa County reserves the right to require substitution of paid leave under a County Medical Leave. If an employee qualifies for and is approved for Short-Term Disability (STD) or Long-Term Disability (LTD), the employee can choose to use their earned paid time (PTO, Compensatory Time or CI) or use Short-Term Disability (STD) or Long-Term Disability (LTD). County Medical Leave shall run concurrently while on approved STD. STD does not extend an employee's County Medical Leave.

3. Coordination of County Medical Leave with Catastrophic Illness Bank

Upon exhaustion of available PTO, and compensatory time, the employee is required to apply for CI hours as provided for under County Policy. If approved, the County Medical Leave shall run concurrent with CI hours taken. Use of CI hours does not extend an employee's County Medical Leave.

4. Unpaid Time

Employees shall be on unpaid status once PTO, holiday, compensatory time, and CI hours have been exhausted; or if on an approved STD or LTD benefit.

f. Health Insurance and Other Benefits While on County Medical Leave

1. Continuation of Health Insurance Benefits

Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) provides employees covered under an employer's group insurance plan eligibility to continue insurance coverage under the group plan. COBRA contains provisions giving certain individuals the right to temporary continuation of insurance coverage at the group rate plus a 2% administration fee. This coverage is only available when coverage is lost due to a COBRA qualifying events.

A COBRA qualifying event while on County Medical Leave occurs due to a reduction in hours and occurs when an employee crosses from one month to another month on unpaid time. The employee shall remain covered under the group health insurance plan and pay the employee portion of the premium, while the County pays the employer portion during the month in which the employee had paid time only (i.e. work time, PTO or Compensatory time). If the employee returns to work after County Medical Leave, the group health insurance coverage would be reinstated the first day of the month that follows the return to full time employment.

2. Continuation of Dental and Vision Insurance Benefits

When an employee is on unpaid time while on County Medical Leave, the employee shall be required to continue paying for dental and/or vision benefits. Failure to make the required payments shall result in termination of employee's dental and/or vision benefits coverage as indicated under "Termination of Benefits".

Continued group dental and/or vision coverage through Chippewa County shall be available, per the Summary Plan Documents, for a maximum of six (6) months while on a leave of absence. After the six month period and if the employee is still on a leave of absence, COBRA rights shall be offered. If the employee returns to work, group insurance coverage shall be reinstated the first day of the month that follows the return to full time employment.

3. Continuation of Disability, Life Insurance and Flexible Spending Account Benefits

When an employee is on unpaid time while on County Medical Leave, the employee shall be required to pay for all Disability, Life Insurance and/or Flexible Spending Account benefits. Failure to make the required payments shall result in termination of employee's Disability, Life Insurance and or Flexible Spending Account benefits coverage as indicated under "Termination of Benefits".

4. Termination of Benefits

Maintaining health, dental and/or vision insurance and all other benefits shall stop if and when the following occur:

- a). An employee informs the County of intent not to return to work during or at the end of the leave period; or
- b). The employee fails to return to work when the leave period is used up; or
- c). The employee fails to make any required payments while on leave. Health, dental and/or vision insurance, life insurance, or disability insurance coverage ceases if an employee's premium payment is more than 30 days late. If an employee's payment is more than 15 days late, the County shall send a letter notifying the employee that coverage shall be dropped on a specified date unless the payment is received before that date. Health, dental and/or vision insurance coverage shall then be dropped retroactively to the first of the month for the month of coverage that premium payments was not received.

5. Paid Time Off and Holidays

PTO and holiday benefits shall accrue while substituting time with PTO, holiday, and compensatory time only.

Employees are permitted to use scheduled PTO during an approved County Medical leave before and after the Holiday to be eligible for Holiday pay, even if the employee doesn't have enough PTO or Compensatory time for the entire leave period.

There shall be no PTO accrual or holiday benefits while on CI hours or unpaid leave. PTO and holiday benefits shall resume upon the employee's return to active employment.

g. Other County Medical Leave Provisions

1. Outside Employment

An employee who is utilizing County Medical Leave is prohibited from working for another employer while on County Medical leave.

(Section 7 amended by the County Board 12/08/15, 03/13/18, 11/6/18, 07/09/19; 11/10/2020; 09/13/2022)

8. Leave – Personal

a. Purpose

To provide employees time off for personal reasons when an employee is not eligible for other leave options or they have been exhausted.

b. Length of leave

A leave of absence for personal reasons may be requested for a period of up to three (3) months.

c. Request

The employee requesting a Personal Leave of absence shall submit a Leave of Absence Request Form directly to the Department Head. If the leave of absence is considered by the Department Head, the Department Head shall submit the written request to the Human Resources Division for review and approval by the County Administrator. Requests not being considered by the Department Head shall be denied in writing and returned to the employee.

The approvals of personal leave of absences are discretionary, with consideration given to the staffing needs of the department, and determining the best interests of the County.

If the purpose or the personal leave request is for time off due to a serious health condition or other reasons covered under FMLA, the employee shall exhaust FMLA and/or County Medical Leave before a personal leave may be requested or approved.

d. Using Paid time While on Personal Leave

1. Employees on a Personal Leave shall be required to substitute all available PTO and compensatory time if available. The Human Resources Division shall calculate necessary PTO or compensatory time to be exhausted to comply with this rule. Due to rounding, The Human Resources Division may allow/require up to 2 hours of paid time to be maintained in the employee accrual bank.
2. Employees shall be on unpaid status once PTO, holiday, compensatory time, and CI hours have been exhausted; or if on an approved STD or LTD benefit.

e. Health Insurance and Other Benefits While on Personal Leave

If an employee was on County Medical Leave and immediately reverts to a Personal Leave, the starting period for the continuation of all benefits does not start over or extend the ability for continuation of coverage.

1. Continuation of Health Insurance Benefits

Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) provides employees covered under an employer's group insurance plan eligibility to continue insurance coverage under the group plan. COBRA contains provisions giving certain individuals the right to temporary continuation of insurance coverage at the group rate plus a 2% administration fee. This coverage is only available when coverage is lost due to a COBRA qualifying events.

A COBRA qualifying event while on Personal Leave occurs due to a reduction in hours and occurs when an employee crosses from one month to another month on unpaid time. The employee shall remain covered under the group health insurance plan and pay the employee portion of the premium, while the County pays the employer portion during the month in which the employee had paid time only (i.e. work time, PTO or Compensatory time). If the employee returns to work after Personal Leave, the group health insurance coverage would be reinstated the first day of the month that follows the return to full time employment.

2. Continuation of Dental and Vision Insurance Benefits

When an employee is on unpaid time while on Personal Leave, the employee shall be required to continue paying for dental and/or vision benefits. Failure to make the required payments shall result in termination of employee's dental and/or vision benefits coverage as indicated under "Termination of Benefits".

Continued group dental and/or vision coverage through Chippewa County shall be available, per the Summary Plan Documents, for a maximum of six (6) months while on a leave of absence. After the six month period and if the employee is still on a leave of absence, COBRA rights shall be offered. If the employee returns to work, group insurance coverage shall be reinstated the first day of the month that follows the return to full time employment.

3. Continuation of Disability, Life Insurance and Flexible Spending Account Benefits

When an employee is on unpaid time while on Personal Leave, the employee shall be required to pay for all Disability, Life Insurance and/or Flexible Spending Account benefits. Failure to make the required payments shall result in termination of employee's Disability, Life Insurance and or Flexible Spending Account benefits coverage as indicated under "Termination of Benefits".

4. Termination of Benefits

Maintaining health, dental and/or vision insurance and all other benefits shall stop if and when the following occur:

- a). An employee informs the County of intent not to return to work during or at the end of the leave period; or
- b). The employee fails to return to work when the leave period is used up; or
- c). The employee fails to make any required payments while on leave. Health, dental and/or vision insurance, life insurance, or any other benefit ceases if an employee's premium payment is more than 30 days late. If an employee's payment is more than 15 days late, the County shall send a letter notifying the employee that coverage shall be dropped on a specified date unless the payment is received before that date. Health, dental and/or vision insurance coverage shall then be dropped retroactively to the first of the month for the month of coverage that premium payments was not received.

5. Paid Time Off and Holidays

There shall be no PTO accrual or holiday benefits while on unpaid leave. PTO and holiday benefits shall resume upon the employee's return to active employment.

6. Outside Employment

An employee who is utilizing an approved Personal Leave is prohibited from working for another employer while on Personal leave.

(Section 8 amended by the County Board 11/6/18, 07/09/19; 11/10/2020; 09/13/2022)

9. Leave – Military

a. Purpose

To allow unpaid leave for purposes of fulfilling service in the uniformed services and ensure compliance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) for any employee performing duty on a voluntary or involuntary basis in a uniformed service under competent authority and includes active duty, active duty for training, initial active duty for training, inactive duty training, full-time National Guard duty, an examination to determine the fitness of the person to any such duty, or performing funeral honors duty as authorized by section 12503 of title 10 or section 115 of title 32., upon return from such service, be entitled all provisions of USERRA.

b. Length of Leave

Employees shall be granted a Military Leave of absence without pay for the period of military service outlined in the orders, in accordance with applicable laws. Eligibility for reinstatement after military duty is completed is also determined in accordance with applicable laws.

c. Notification

Employees who are called to perform duty on a voluntary or involuntary basis in a uniformed service under competent authority and includes active duty, active duty for training, initial active duty for training, inactive duty training, full-time National Guard duty, an examination to determine the fitness of the person to any such duty, or performing funeral honors duty as authorized by section 12503 of title 10 or section 115 of title 32 shall provide advanced written notice whenever possible of the obligation/intention and submit any applicable copies of their military orders to the Human Resources Division. When immediate duty is required and no advanced notice can be provided, the employee shall communicate their obligations to their Department Head and the Human Resources Division as soon as they are able.

d. Health, Dental and/or Vision Insurance and Other Benefits While on Military Leave

1. Continuation of Health, Dental and/or Vision Insurance

Under USERRA, federal law requires that health plans shall offer to continue coverage for employees who are absent due to service in the uniformed services and/or their dependents. Coverage may continue for up to twenty-four (24) months after the date the employee is first absent due to uniformed service. The period of coverage available under USERRA shall run concurrently with the COBRA period available to an employee and/or eligible dependents.

Employees entering military service shall be allowed the opportunity to continue to participate in Chippewa County's group health, dental and/or vision insurance plan by utilizing their Federal COBRA rights. Upon employee continuation election, Chippewa County shall continue to pay the employer's portion of the health insurance premium for the first 18 months of leave, provided the employee continues to pay the employee's portion monthly.

2. Continuation of Life Insurance

Life Insurance shall continue as allowed under §40.70 and §40.72 provided the employee continues to pay the employee's monthly premiums.

3. Termination of Health, Dental and/or Vision and Life Insurance

The County's obligation to pay the employer portion of the health, dental and/or vision insurance for the first 18 months of leave or life insurance premiums shall stop if and when the following occur:

- a). An employee informs the County of intent not to return to work during or at the end of the leave period provided under USERRA; or
- b). The employee fails to return to work when the leave entitlement is used up under USERRA; or
- c). The employee fails to make any required payments while on leave after appropriate waiting periods and time periods as specified by law. The County's obligation to maintain health, dental and/or vision care coverage ceases if an employee's premium payment is more than 30 days late. If an employee's payment is more than 15 days late, the County shall send a letter notifying the employee that coverage shall be dropped on a specified date unless the payment is received before that date. Health, dental and/or vision insurance coverage shall then be dropped retroactively to the first of the month for the month of coverage that premium payments was not received.
- d). The employee dies during military service. If an employee dies during military service, the Human Resources Division shall work with any eligible dependents on the plan at the time of death to assist with the provisions of COBRA, if desired by the dependents, to ensure no lapse in coverage occurs.

4. Disability Insurance

Disability insurance cannot be continued during military leave of absences, and the plan shall be cancelled in accordance with the provisions of the benefit plan. Disability coverage may be reinstated upon the employees return to active employment in accordance with the provisions of the benefit plan.

5. Wisconsin Retirement (WRS)

USERRA allows for employee required make-up contributions to a contributory defined benefit plan (including WRS) beginning with the date of reemployment and ending on the earlier of three times the period of military service or five years.

Employees shall have the choice to repay all, some, or none of the mandatory employee required contributions (WRS employee contributions). Employee contributions shall be made pre-taxed. Employees cannot be required to pay interest charges. Employer contribution matches are only required on the actual contributions repaid by the employee.

The employee shall provide to the County, in writing, their decision to repay the WRS contributions upon return within time limits specified under USERRA. In addition, the employee has the following responsibilities to WRS:

- a). Notify employer of military leave as far in advance as possible. Employee shall be required to provide orders when received.
- b). Leave the military under honorable conditions.
- c). Return to the same employer within the following time limits depending on length of service:
 1. Fewer than 31 days; report on next regular scheduled workday after receiving adequate travel and rest
 2. 31-180 days; return within 14 days after completion of service
 3. More than 180 days; return within 90 days after completion of service
- d). Upon return, provide employer with a copy of your leave and earnings statement or DD-214 showing the date of entry and discharge.

e. PTO

PTO shall accrue during unpaid military leave for up to four (4) pay periods per unpaid military leave event, not to exceed a total PTO maximum accrual of four (4) pay periods per calendar year for all combined unpaid military leave.

f. Holidays

Employees on unpaid military leave are not eligible for paid holidays.

(Section 9 adopted by the County Board 11/13/12)

10. Leave – Funeral

a. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for Funeral Leave for employees. In the event of the death of an employee's loved one, the employee will be permitted time off without loss of pay or without being required to use accrued PTO or Compensatory Time.

The purpose of Funeral Leave is to allow time for the employee to make funeral arrangements, attend or travel to/from the funeral, celebration of life, visitation, wake, burial or pay respects to family; and/or to handle any estate related activities in which the employee has a role.

Employees not involved or attending the funeral may not qualify for Funeral Leave.

b. Eligibility

This Policy shall apply to all full time and part time employees who have been a Chippewa County employee for 30 days or more. Limited Term Employees (LTEs) are not eligible for paid Funeral Leave.

c. Family Member Definitions

The following are definitions for each classification of deceased family members or other individuals that will qualify an eligible employee to use Funeral Leave:

1. Family Members Group 1: Defined as the employee's spouse, parent (includes step-parent), and child (includes biological, adopted, step or foster child).
2. Family Members Group 2: Defined as father in-law, mother in-law, son in-law, daughter in-law, grandparent, step grandparent, grandparent in-law, grandchild, step grandchild, sibling (including step), sister in-law, brother in-law, uncle or aunt.
3. County Board Supervisor / County Employee: Any active County Board Supervisor, active County employee or retired County employee that was with the County for 1 year or more.

d. Time Off and Paid Funeral Leave Permitted by Classification

1. Family Members Group 1: Up to five (5) days and no more than forty (40) hours paid at the employee's regular straight time hourly rate at the time of the Funeral Leave multiplied by the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked at the time of the absence.
2. Family Members Group 2: Up to three (3) days and no more than twenty-four (24) hours paid at the employee's regular straight time hourly rate at the time of the Funeral Leave multiplied by the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked at the time of the absence.
3. County Board Supervisor / County Employee: Up to four (4) hours paid at the employee's regular straight time hourly rate at the time of the Funeral Leave multiplied by the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked at the time of the absence to attend the funeral or visitation of a County Board Supervisor or co-worker at the discretion of the Department Head.
4. Part-time employees are eligible for Funeral Leave pro-rated based on the normally scheduled hours on the day in which the Funeral Leave is taken. For example, if someone typically works 4 hours a day, 20 hours a week and a Group 1 family member dies, they would be eligible for five (5) days and no more than twenty (20) hours paid (4 hours per day) at the employee's regular straight time hourly rate at the time of the Funeral Leave.

e. Other Requirements:

1. Funeral Leave will not be approved if the employee is on a paid or unpaid leave of absence, worker's compensation leave, on scheduled PTO or laid-off. If the employee chooses to cancel future PTO scheduled due to an upcoming funeral, Funeral Leave may be approved by the Department Head and Human Resources Director or designee.
2. Funeral Leave may be taken continuously or non-continuously.
3. Funeral Leave shall be taken within 30 days of death unless approved by the Department Head and Human Resources Director or designee.
4. Funeral Leave will not be counted as time worked for overtime calculation purposes.
5. Payment for Funeral Leave shall only be for days lost from the approved regularly scheduled work days/hours of the employee.

6. Funeral Leave is limited to ten (10) days and no more than eighty (80) hours maximum per calendar year per employee.
7. Employee shall complete a Funeral Leave Request form and submit it to their Direct Supervisor and/or Department Head for approval. The Department Head shall submit it to the Human Resources Division for processing.
8. Funeral Leave Request Forms shall have an obituary or other documentation attached that includes date of death and date of funeral. In rare instances, the obituary or other documentation may be provided after the form is submitted, if approved by the Human Resources Division.
9. Additional time off may be granted at the discretion of the Department Head and chargeable to the accrued Paid Time Off (PTO) or Compensatory Time balances.
10. The County recognizes that the individuals designated in the policy may not recognize other people within the family who are cared about deeply. In these instances, accrued Paid Time Off (PTO) is available and may be approved by the Department Head.
11. Funeral Leave is not applicable to the loss of a pet.

(Section 10 adopted by the County Board 09/13/2022)

11. Leave - Emergency Conditions

a. Purpose

To provide a plan for employees in the event of an emergency closing or inclement weather.

As a general practice, Chippewa County makes every effort to maintain its normal schedule of operations. Chippewa County shall close all or part of its operations only in cases of extreme emergency, energy loss, or other conditions seriously endangering the health and safety of employees and the general public.

b. Reporting to Work

Each employee accepts the responsibility for reporting to work at the regularly scheduled time, regardless of prevailing weather conditions. Employees not reporting to work shall not be paid; however, such employees shall substitute PTO or compensatory time to minimize or avoid a loss of wages as a result of absence or speak with their Department Head to work additional hours in the same workweek to make up the loss of hours.

c. Responsibility for the Decision to Close

In the event that Chippewa County is forced to close operations, or delay the opening, the decision shall be made by the County Administrator.

d. Official Announcements

When the County Administrator determines that it is necessary to close or delay the opening of various operations, the starting time shall be communicated to the following media outlets.

WEAU-TV 13 (NBC), WQOW TV 18 (ABC), WEUX TV 48 (FOX), WBIZ 100.7 FM, WAXX 104.5 FM, WQRB 95.1 FM, WWIB 103.7 FM, Leader Telegram and Chippewa Herald.

e. Delayed Start Times

In the event the County Administrator announces a delayed opening of various operations, all employees that report to work at their normal starting time or on or before the delayed starting time shall be paid for any hours worked.

Employees reporting for work after the delayed starting time shall be paid for actual hours worked. Employees shall use PTO or compensatory time to minimize or avoid a loss of wages as a result of absence or speak with their Department Head to work additional hours in the same workweek to make up the loss of hours.

f. Partial Closings

In the event the County Administrator announces certain departments providing non-essential services to be closed or staffing curtailed due to emergency conditions or inability to provide a work site, employees shall be paid for actual hours worked. Employees shall use PTO or compensatory time to minimize or avoid a loss of wages as a result of absence or speak with their Department Head to work additional hours in the same workweek to make up the loss of hours.

g. Closing after the Normal Business Day has Begun

When the County Administrator determines there is sufficient reason to close various operations after the workday has started, this information shall be given to Department Heads and employees.

If employees are sent home early, they shall use PTO or compensatory time to minimize or avoid a loss of wages as a result of absence or speak with their Department Head to work additional hours in the same workweek to make up the loss of hours.

Employees working in operations where they cannot be released early, due to the nature of their service being provided, shall be required to complete the normal workday.

h. Closing before the Normal Business Day has Begun

When the County Administrator determines there is sufficient reason to close various operations before the normal business day has begun, this information shall be announced as described under Official Announcements.

Employees not reporting to work shall not be paid; however, such employees shall use PTO or compensatory time to minimize or avoid a loss of wages as a result of absence or speak with their Department Head to work additional hours in the same workweek to make up the loss of hours.

Employees working in operations where they shall report to work, due to the nature of their service being provided, shall be required to complete the normal workday.

i. Employees Who Desire to Leave Early

Employees who desire to leave early when operations have not been shut down may do so with approval of the Department Head. Employees shall be paid only for the time actually worked. Such employees shall use PTO or compensatory time to minimize or avoid a loss of wages as a result of absence or speak with their Department Head to work additional hours in the same workweek to make up the loss of hours.

12. Leave – Bone Marrow and Organ Donation

a. Purpose

Bone marrow and organ donation leave is available to employees as specified below and complies with Wisconsin Bone Barrow and Organ Donor Leave law (WDLA) under Wis. Stat. §103.11.

b. Eligibility

Employees who have been employed by the County for more than fifty-two (52) consecutive weeks and who have worked at least one thousand (1,000) hours during the preceding fifty-two (52) weeks are eligible for the leave provided under Wisconsin law. Wisconsin Bone Marrow and Organ Donation leave is separate from and does not run concurrently with Wisconsin or Federal Family and Medical Care Act leave.

c. Length of Leave

The Wisconsin Bone Marrow and Organ Donation Leave Law provides for up to a maximum of six (6) weeks of unpaid leave to serve as a bone marrow or organ (e.g., kidneys, partial livers, partial lungs, partial pancreas, partial intestine) donor in a calendar year. Leave may be taken only for the period necessary for the employee to undergo the donation procedure and to recover from it. If more than six (6) weeks are necessary, refer to Leaves – Family Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA) section of the Human Resources Policy Manual.

d. Employee Requirements

1. An employee requesting Bone Marrow and Organ Donation (WDLA) leave shall provide the County with medical certification by the health care provider of the bone marrow/organ donee or of the employee (whichever is applicable) of any of the following:
 - a. That the donee has a serious health condition that necessitates a bone marrow or organ transplant.
 - b. That the employee is eligible and has agreed to serve as a bone marrow or organ donor for the donee.
 - c. The amount of time expected to be necessary for the employee to recover from the bone marrow or organ donation procedure.
2. Employees shall make a reasonable effort to schedule the procedure so that it does not unduly disrupt the department's operations, subject to the approval of the health care provider of the bone marrow or organ done
3. Employees shall provide the County with advance notice of the procedure in a reasonable and practicable manner.

e. Using Paid Leave While on Unpaid WDLA Leave

The substitution of paid time for unpaid Wisconsin Bone Marrow and Organ Donation Leave (WDLA) time does not extend the length of WDLA leave - the paid time runs concurrently with an employee's WDLA entitlement.

f. Insurance and Benefits While on WDLA Leave

1. Payment of Premiums

While an employee is on WDLA leave, the County shall maintain group health, dental and vision insurance coverage under the conditions that applied before the leave began. If prior to the leave, the employee was required to participate in the premium payments, the employee is required to continue with payment of his/her share of the premiums while on leave. An employee's failure to make the required payments may result in termination of the employee's insurance coverage.

Unless the County notifies employees of other arrangements, whenever employees are receiving pay from the County during WDLA leave, the County shall deduct the employee portion of the insurance premiums from the employee's paycheck in the same manner as if the employee was actively working. If leave is unpaid, employees shall pay their portion of the group health, dental and vision premium beginning the first of the month following the start of using unpaid time through a method determined by the County and shall be communicated to the employee by the Human Resources Division.

2. Termination of Benefits

The County's obligation to maintain health benefits shall stop if and when: (1) an employee informs the County of intent not to return to work at the end of the leave period; (2) the employee fails to return to work when the leave entitlement is used up; or (3) the employee fails to make any required payments while on leave after appropriate waiting periods and time periods as specified by law. The County's obligation to maintain health, dental and vision insurance coverage ceases if an employee's premium payment is more than 30 days late. If an employee's payment is more than 15 days late, the County shall send a letter notifying the employee that coverage shall be dropped on a specified date unless the co-payment is received before that date.

3. Recovery of Premium Payments

If the County chooses to do so, it may pay an employee's required premium payments while the employee is on leave. If the County does so and an employee does not immediately repay the County upon the employee's return to work, the County shall deduct the amount of the payments from the employee's paycheck.

The County has the right to collect from an employee the health, dental and vision insurance premiums the County paid during a period of unpaid leave if the employee does not return to work after the leave entitlement has been exhausted or expired. Such premium amounts may be deducted from any compensation owed to the employee upon termination of employment. An employee shall return to work for at least thirty (30) calendar days in order to be considered to have "returned" to work. However, an employee's liability to repay health, dental and vision insurance premiums does not apply if his/her failure to return to work is due to a serious health condition or specific circumstances beyond the control of the employee.

13. Leave - Jury/Witness Duty

a. Purpose

Employees are encouraged to appear before a court, public body, or commission for witness duty when subpoenaed to do so. Employees are excused from work to fulfill their civic responsibilities when required.

b. Compensation for Jury Duty

An employee who is excused for jury duty shall receive the regular County wages that normally would have been paid during the period required for jury duty.

Jury duty pay shall be calculated on the employee's base pay rate multiplied by the number of normal hours scheduled the employee would otherwise have worked on the day of absence.

The employee who is summoned for jury duty is required to provide a copy of the jury duty summons to the employee's supervisor and the Human Resources Division as soon as is reasonably possible.

Employees shall return any jury duty fees less travel allowance and any jury duty pay earned to the County Treasurer and provide the proper department salary account number the fee shall be reimbursed to.

c. Compensation for Witness Duty

1. In the event an employee is subpoenaed to provide deposition testimony, or to testify as a witness in court proceedings or before an administrative body, commission or hearing officer in a matter that is not connected with County business, said employees shall be granted unpaid time off to appear in any such proceeding.

a. Under the circumstances listed in subsection c1 above, the employee shall use any available PTO, holiday, or compensatory time to receive compensation for the period of the absence or they may speak with their Department Head to work additional hours in the same workweek to make up the loss of hours.

2. In the event an employee is subpoenaed to provide deposition testimony, or to testify as a witness in court proceedings or before an administrative body, commission or hearing officer in a matter that is connected with County business, said employee shall be granted paid time to appear in any such preceding.

Employees shall return any witness fees less travel allowance earned to the County Treasurer and provide the proper department salary account number the fee shall be reimbursed to.

a. The provisions of subsection c. shall not apply to an employee who files a grievance under the County's Employee Grievance Policy. The provisions of the County's Employee Grievance Policy shall prevail.

b. Unless otherwise required by law, the provisions of subsection c.1 shall apply to an employee who initiates an administrative appeal to a determination of the County concerning that employee's County employment benefits.

d. Excusal from Jury Duty

Employees who reported to, but were excused from jury duty shall receive the regular County wages that normally would have been paid during the period they reported for jury duty.

Employees shall return any jury duty fees less travel allowance and any jury duty pay earned to the County Treasurer.

e. Documentation

Employees are required to supply copies of the jury duty summons, or the subpoena to their Department Head upon request.

Employees are expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits, and shall discuss scheduling with their Department Head.

f. Reporting to Work

When possible, employees are to work any of their regularly scheduled hours that do not conflict with the jury or witness duty.

First-shift employees shall be required to report for work before jury duty unless the time they are to report to the courts prohibits them to do so.

If a second-or third-shift employee is selected to serve on a jury panel, the employee shall not be required to work their next scheduled shift, if such shift begins on the same calendar day.

Should an employee not be selected to serve on a jury panel, the employee shall report back to work within one hour of dismissal by the court (exceptions shall be made for employees whose county seat is greater than one hour in distance from their work location on a case by case basis). Chippewa County resident employees whose work location is at the Chippewa County Courthouse shall report back to work within 30 minutes of dismissal by the court.

(Section 13 amended by the County Board 12/08/15, 07/09/19; 09/13/2022)

14. Leave – Voting

a. Purpose

To encourage employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by participating in elections.

b. Time Off to Vote

If employees are unable to vote in an election during their nonworking hours, Chippewa County shall authorize up to 3 consecutive hours of time away from work to vote, in compliance with Wis. Stat. §6.76.

Chippewa County may specify the time during the day that leave can be taken.

c. Requesting Time Off

Employees are required to request time off to vote, by following their department time off procedures, at least two working days prior to Election Day.

Advance notice is required so that the necessary time off can be scheduled at the beginning or end of the work shift or at another alternative time; whichever provides the least disruption to the normal work schedule.

Employees are not entitled to paid leave. Employees who choose to exercise their right to take time off from work to vote shall use PTO, holiday, or compensatory time, or may speak with their Department Head to work additional hours in the same workweek to make up the loss of hours.

(Section 14 adopted by the County Board 11/13/12)

15. Leave - Workers' Compensation

a. Purpose

To provide employees workers' compensation insurance for work-related illnesses and injuries that arises from, and occurs in the course of, employment. Employees should follow the Workers' Compensation policy and complete required forms located on the Employee Portal or available in the Human Resources Division.

b. Worker Related Injuries or Illnesses

Work-related injuries or illnesses may be covered under the County's workers' compensation insurance. To be considered work-related, the injury or illness shall arise out of and occur in the course of employment. All injuries, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, should be reported within 24-hours to the immediate supervisor and the Human Resources Division.

c. Medical Expenses

When authorized by applicable workers' compensation laws, medical expenses related to the treatment of a work-related injury or illness are covered by the County's workers' compensation insurance in response to properly submitted claims under the program. Examples of covered expenses are doctor visits, hospital visits, physical therapy visits, surgical procedures, prescription medication and medical equipment. Retraining benefits may also be authorized under specific circumstances directed by worker's compensation laws.

d. Lost Time

Workers' compensation insurance may also pay for lost income as a result of an employee's inability to work due to a work-related injury or illness, provided that the injury or illness is compensable under workers' compensation laws.

Temporary disability benefits are approximately two-thirds of the employee's average weekly wage subject to a maximum amount specified by law. During the date of injury, an employee is compensated for their entire regularly scheduled day of work, regardless of time lost due to injury that day. Temporary disability is not paid for the date of injury or when three-day waiting period for disabilities lasting seven days or less. If the period of disability extends beyond eight days after the date of injury or last day worked, compensation is paid for the entire period including the three day waiting period. Benefits are payable until you reach a healing plateau. The County encourages early return to work within work restrictions submitted by a doctor.

Contact your supervisor or the Human Resources Division to see if light duty is available within your restrictions.

e. Paid Time Off

Unless the employee is designated as being on WI FMLA, the employee shall use accrued PTO or Compensatory Time for any unpaid time due to not being eligible for temporary disability payment. This may occur for the date of injury and/or the waiting period or an employee being unavailable for work for personal reasons not related to the work injury.

f. Notification Process

Following a work-related injury or illness, an employee shall notify the Trifecta First Report Hotline at (888) 589-6492 and their immediate supervisor within 24-hours, or if medically unable to do so, as soon as reasonably possible. The Human Resources Division will be notified by Trifecta and will contact the employee to follow up on the injury or illness. Supervisors shall complete a Chippewa County Supervisor Injury Report form found on the Employee Portal. All forms shall be submitted to the Human Resources Division within 24-hours of the injury/illness or claim payment may be delayed.

g. Coordination of Benefits

The employee has an obligation to continue paying for the employee cost of benefits (including health insurance, retirement, and other elected benefits) while out on workers' compensation leave. Benefits shall be discontinued for non-payment if the payment is more than thirty (30) days late. Employees shall not accrue PTO while receiving lost time compensation through the Workers' Compensation Program. An employee in this situation should contact the Human Resources Division for further information.

h. Where to Seek Immediate Medical Treatment

An employee who sustains a work related injury or illness requiring immediate medical attention should seek treatment from an appropriate facility or qualified physician of his or her choice. Urgent injuries should be treated at an appropriate location such as the nearest urgent care facility or hospital.

i. Job Status

Approved workers' compensation does not automatically guarantee continued employment in the same or any other position at the County. Employees who believe they may need a reasonable accommodation in order to perform the primary functions of their job, including a period of leave, should promptly contact the Human Resource Division.

J. Applicability of other County Leaves

Employees are responsible for reviewing and applying for any other applicable County leaves, including, Family and Medical Leave, Short-Term Disability or Long-Term Disability. Please be aware that application for workers' compensation may affect eligibility for certain leave programs.

FMLA and workers' compensation provisions shall overlap or run concurrent under either of the following circumstances:

1. Employee's work related injury meets the criteria under FMLA for a serious health condition, as defined in the handbook under Leaves - Wisconsin and Federal Family and Medical Leave.
2. Employee is receiving workers' compensation payment to replace lost wages from time off work.

An approved leave of absence is required for all periods of absence exceeding five (5) consecutive work days.

k. Communication Requirements

An employee on workers' compensation is responsible for keeping their supervisor and the Human Resources Division informed of current work status through the submission of medical restriction documentation, return to work documentation or a medical statement completed by the treating physician. The injured employee shall make contact with Human Resources Division at least once every thirty (30) lost work days and after each doctor visit.

All documentation from the treating physician noting the dates absent from work and the diagnosis of the work-related injury or illness shall be provided to the Human Resources Division immediately. Any time an injured employee visits the doctor, documentation of the visit and updated work restrictions shall be submitted to the Human Resources Division immediately. If this documentation is not provided, the employee's continued absence from work may be considered unauthorized, and the workers' compensation benefits may be suspended.

l. Light Duty

An employee with a work related injury may be offered light duty work if the work available is within their medical restrictions provided by the treating physician. If light duty work is available and within the employee's medical restrictions and the employee refuses the light duty work, the employee is no longer eligible for workers' compensation benefits for lost time and shall use PTO or Comp time for the unworked time.

m. Return to Work

When an employee has been released by the treating physician to return to work, the employee shall notify the Human Resources Division and the employee's supervisor. Employees are required to submit a Return to Work form to the Human Resources Division indicating the employee can return to work with or without restrictions. Return to Work forms shall be submitted immediately (typically the same day or within 24 hours) following any appointment prior to returning to work.

n. Fraudulent Claims

Inappropriate and fraudulent claims shall be denied. Information related to fraudulent claims shall be forwarded to the District Attorney for appropriate action and Human Resources Division for appropriate discipline, up to and including discharge.

Workers' compensation claims are subject to investigation by the County, its Third Party Administrator or by an Independent Medical Evaluation (IME). Full cooperation by the employee is essential and expected for the effective and timely management of claims.

o. Outside Employment

Any employee who is unable to work, due to a work related injury, is prohibited from working for another employer while off on workers' compensation leave.

(Section 15 amended by the County Board 12/08/15, 03/13/18, 11/6/18, 07/09/19; 09/13/2022)

CHAPTER 3 – WAGES AND OTHER FORMS OF COMPENSATION

16. Compensation System

It is the Policy of the County to administer a uniform employee Compensation System. The salary and benefits provided by the County to its employees are for the purpose of obtaining and retaining competent individuals to perform services which the County is either required to or discretionarily provides to its residents. The County shall provide salaries and benefits on the basis of external competitiveness and internal equity and within the financial limits established.

a. Position Placement on the Salary Schedule

All positions within the Chippewa County Salary Schedule (Appendix) shall be placed on the Salary Schedule based upon the external market rate of similar positions and based upon internal equity.

b. Position Titles

All positions within the Chippewa County Salary Schedule are assigned an official title. All position requests are expected to conform to the identified titles. New or modified titles shall be approved only by the Human Resources Director, and reflected on the Salary Schedule.

All employees are to utilize the official assigned title when representing Chippewa County as an employee performing their duties. This reduces the potential for misrepresentation of authority and potential liability.

c. Salary Administration

1. New Hires for All Pay Grades

Placement of new hires with the minimum skills and qualifications shall normally be hired at Minimum / Starting Wage. A new hire may be hired up to Control Point subject to the approval of the Human Resources Director, under the following conditions:

a). The new hire has a level of experience or skill set immediately usable upon hire.

b). The market conditions demand a higher Minimum/Starting Wage.

It is discouraged to start a new hire at the Control Point, and considerations of other current employees within the salary range and classification shall be considered before approval at the Control Point occurs.

A new hire should not be brought in above the Control Point unless there are extenuating circumstances. Any new hire requested to be brought in above the Control Point shall require the written approval of the Human Resources Director and County Administrator.

2. Salary Schedule Adjustments

Salary Schedule Adjustments shall be applied to the Salary Schedule upon approval of the County Board. Schedule Adjustments shall generally be considered on an annual basis.

The Schedule may be adjusted based on consideration of (a) Consumer Price Index; (b) County's ability to pay; and (c) West Central Wisconsin comparables. Any recommended Schedule Adjustments shall be recommended by the Executive Committee for final approval by resolution to the County Board.

3. Market Adjustment

When it is determined by the Human Resources Director that a position is placed on the appropriate Pay Grade, but insufficiently compensated based on such factors as external comparables, the County Administrator may authorize a Market Adjustment within the Pay Grade.

4. Annual Employee Wage Adjustments

Employees may be eligible for an across-the-board percentage wage adjustment each year, depending on the County's ability to pay and market conditions. Recommended wage adjustments shall be approved via resolution by the County Board annually as part of the budget process. Approved percentage wage adjustments shall take effect for employees on July 1st of the approved budget year.

No employee is permitted to earn a salary above the Maximum rate of the Salary Range as defined on the Salary Schedule.

Employees eligible for the annual percentage wage adjustment shall be employed by the County for at least six (6) months prior to the July 1st effective date.

An employee who receives a change in pay with an effective date between January 2nd and the July 1st for whatever reason (promotion, demotion, pay grade change, etc.) is not eligible for the Annual Employee Wage Adjustment. The Human Resources Division and the Department Head shall take this into consideration when establishing the new rate of pay.

d. Promotions

A promotion is the movement of an employee from a position in one Pay Grade to a different position in a higher Pay Grade.

The effective date for pay increases as a result of a promotion shall be the first date of work in the new position.

When promoted, an employee with the minimum skills and qualifications shall normally be placed at the Minimum / Starting Wage of the new grade on the Salary Schedule. A promoted employee may be placed up to Control Point subject to written approval of the Human Resources Director, under the following conditions:

1. The employee has a level of experience or skill set immediately usable upon promotion.
2. The market conditions demand a higher Minimum / Starting Wage.

It is discouraged to start a promoted employee at the Control Point, and considerations of other current employees within the salary range and classification shall be considered before approval at the Control Point occurs.

When promoted, an employee should not be brought in above the Control Point unless there are extenuating circumstances. Any promotions requested to be brought in above the Control Point shall require the written approval of the Human Resources Director and County Administrator.

e. Compression

There may be occasions when either a new hire or promoted employee may make less than a subordinate employee or employees with greater tenure within the County. The Salary Schedule is designed so there is some overlap in pay. In this circumstance, an adjustment of pay may be considered by the Human Resources Director or County Administrator. There may be situations in which a new hire or promoted employee may earn less than others.

The effective date of any adjustment of pay authorized due to compression shall be prospective only.

f. Demotion

Demotion is the movement of an employee from one Pay Grade to a lower Pay Grade resulting from a disciplinary measure, as a request for voluntary demotion, or in response to position/department changes.

Salary Schedule placement for demotions shall be as follows:

1. For demotions that occur because of position changes and/or position consolidations (not based on the performance of the employee), the salary shall be “red circled” and frozen at that level until the Salary Range of the new Pay Grade catches up to the employee’s salary.
2. For demotions that occur because the employee voluntarily applied for and accepted a position in a lower Pay Grade, the employee with the minimum skills and qualifications shall normally be placed at the Minimum / Starting Wage of the new grade on the Salary Schedule. A demoted employee may be placed up to Control Point subject to written approval of the Human Resources Director, under the following conditions:
 - a). The employee has a level of experience or skill set immediately usable upon demotion.
 - b). The market conditions demand a higher Minimum / Starting Wage.

It is discouraged to start a demoted employee at the Control Point, and considerations of other current employees within the salary range and classification shall be considered before approval at the Control Point occurs.

When demoted, an employee should not be brought in above the Control Point unless there are extenuating circumstances. Any demotion requested to be brought in above the Control Point shall require the written approval of the Human Resources Director and County Administrator.

3. For a demotion that is a result of the employee’s performance or discipline, the employee’s salary is decreased to within the salary range of the new Pay Grade, as determined by the Department Head and Human Resources Director or County Administrator.

g. Transfer

A transfer is the movement of an employee from one position to another in the same Pay Grade. Whenever an employee transfers to another position, there shall be no salary adjustment.

h. Pay Grade Adjustment

Pay Grade Adjustment is movement of an employee from one Pay Grade to another Pay Grade outside the promotional process. Pay Grade Adjustments can occur in two (2) ways:

1. An employee meets additional education, certification, and/or experience required for a higher level of their current position as outlined in the 'Procedure for Requesting a Pay Grade Adjustment' on the Employee Portal.

Employees who qualify for a higher Pay Grade in this manner shall follow the Procedure for Requesting a Pay Grade Adjustment and if approved shall be placed on the higher Pay Grade at their current salary, provided they have been placed at the Minimum Rate of the new Pay Grade.

The effective date shall be first day of the new pay period following written approval of a higher Pay Grade.

2. A position's Pay Grade is evaluated by a third party consultant. A Pay Grade Evaluation may occur for two (2) reasons:

a). Human Resources Director Initiation for a Pay Grade Evaluation

The Human Resources Director with County Administrator approval may determine a position needs to be evaluated as a result of county initiated position and/or program changes, organizational structure changes, recurring minimal modification to a position that over time may result in substantive change in a position, or recruitment/retention challenges. The Human Resources Director shall be responsible for the coordination of the Pay Grade Evaluation with the Consultant.

The effective date of a Pay Grade change due to a Human Resources Director initiation shall be determined based on the following:

1. If the change in position is current, the effective date shall be the first day of the next pay period following the written determination by the Consultant and shall be prospective only.
2. If the change in position is at a future date, the effective date shall be determined by the Human Resources Director and Department Head for a prospective date.

The Pay Grade determination of the third party consultant is final.

b). Market Analysis

The County shall evaluate each position against market conditions and internal comparable data at least once every four (4) years. The positions scheduled for market analysis each year shall be determined by the Human Resources Director. The Human Resources Director shall be responsible for the coordination of the Pay Grade Evaluation with the consultant.

All Pay Grade changes resulting from market analysis shall be made effective January 1st of the following year.

The Pay Grade determination of the third party consultant is final.

c). Salary Schedule

In coordination with a third-party consultant, the County shall evaluate the salary schedule against market conditions annually to determine if the Salary Schedule as a whole should be adjusted. It is a best practice to move the salary schedule annually. Upon approval by the County Board, the Salary Schedule adjustment shall occur on July 1st annually, along with the Annual Employee Wage Adjustments, if needed.

d). Salary Placement

If, after a Pay Grade Evaluation, it is determined the employee's current salary is below the Minimum / Starting Rate of the new Pay Grade, the employee's new rate of pay shall be increased to at least the Minimum / Starting Rate of the new Pay Grade. If the employee's current rate of pay is within the new Salary Range, additional compensation may be added to the current rate of pay subject to the discretionary approval of the County Administrator.

If, after a Pay Grade Evaluation, it is determined the employee's current salary exceeds the Maximum Rate of the new Pay Grade, the employee's salary shall be "red circled" and frozen at that level until the Salary Range of the new Pay Grade catches up to the employee's salary. If an employee is at Maximum and the salary schedule moves, the employee who is currently at Maximum shall move to the new Maximum of the new Salary Schedule as long as the salary schedule movement is less than the Annual Employee Wage Adjustment.

(Section 16. approved by the County Board 08/13/13; 12/08/15, 03/13/18, 11/6/18; 09/10/19; 10/08/19; 11/10/2020; 09/13/2022; 09/12/2023; 01/14/2025)

17. Total Base Wages and Other Forms of Compensation

a. Purpose

To review and provide total base wages in accordance with State law which authorizes collective bargaining for total base wages only for general municipal employees. The County may consider other forms of compensation outside of collective bargaining.

b. Procedure

Employers are prohibited from engaging in collective bargaining with represented general municipal employees on any form of compensation except for total base wages. Premium pay, merit pay, automatic pay progressions and any other form of supplemental compensation may be considered, but not bargained, by the employer.

Employers may bargain with units comprised exclusively of public safety employees, as defined by law, on any term or condition of employment, including any form of compensation.

(Section 17 adopted by the County Board 11/13/12)

18. Overtime and Compensatory Time

a. Purpose

To provide a consistent system for distributing overtime in compliance with the overtime-pay provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

b. Definitions

Each position is designated as either “Non-exempt” or “Exempt” from the federal Fair Labor Standards Act and state wage and hour laws. Employees should contact the Human Resources Division if they are unsure of their position’s designation.

1. Non-Exempt positions that are paid on an hourly basis and are entitled to overtime pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week, excluding premium overtime pay (29 C.F.R. §778.201).
2. Exempt positions that are generally paid on a salary basis and are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws and are not eligible for overtime pay.

c. Overtime

Non-exempt employees may receive pay for overtime hours. This shall be paid at time and one half the hourly rate of pay for any hours worked in excess of 40 hours per workweek.

1. Facilities and Parks Division Exception

Non-exempt Facilities and Parks employees shall receive overtime at a rate of time and one-half their regular hourly rate for all hours worked for winter maintenance between the hours of 6:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m., unless normally scheduled, and for hours worked for winter maintenance on Saturdays and Sundays.

Non-exempt Facilities and Parks employees shall receive overtime pay at time and one-half their regular hourly rate for time worked outside of their normal work schedule/shift for emergency situations. A minimum of two (2) hours shall be paid except for those hours that are part of the normal work schedule/shift. Management shall have the discretion to determine the workday thereafter. Emergency situation examples include weather-related damage, facility damage, and flooding, but excludes snow/ice removal and construction projects.

Overtime hours worked under this section is considered premium overtime pay and shall not be calculated in the regular rate of pay for the purposes of calculating FLSA overtime (29 C.F.R §778.203 and §778.204 or as amended).

2. Sheriff's Department Management Exception

Sheriff's Department Management who are exempt may be paid overtime at their straight hourly rate for hours in excess of forty (40) in any one (1) workweek for special events in which all operating costs, salaries, and fringes are billed back to the event organizer for reimbursement. Such events do not include normal duties and responsibilities of the job (i.e. reporting to the scene of an accident after normal work hours). Events covered include large assembly events and music events.

3. Sheriff's Department Exception

Chippewa County has established an alternate work period for Jailers, Jail Sergeants and Patrol Sergeants working 12 hour shifts. If the Jailer, Jail Sergeant or Patrol Sergeant is assigned the alternate work period, the following exception applies. As allowed under Section 7(k) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the alternate work periods for Jailers, Jail Sergeants and Patrol Sergeants rotates on a 14-day work period basis. The work period for Jailers, Jail Sergeants and Patrol Sergeants shall consist of fourteen (14) consecutive calendar days starting at 12:00 a.m. on Sunday and ending at 11:59 p.m. on Saturday 14 days later. The overtime threshold within this work period shall be 84.0 hours for purposes of hours worked. Calculation of overtime and/or compensatory time shall be based on hours of work in excess of 84.0 hours per 14-day work period for the purposes of this Policy. In instances when a Jailer, Jail Sergeant or Patrol Sergeant uses PTO or Compensatory Time during one week of the 14-day work period, the employee shall earn OT after the scheduled hours for that week (36 hours or 48 hours) only in the week in which the PTO or Compensatory Time were not used, as long as there are no unpaid normally scheduled hours during the 14-day work period.

4. Highway Department Exception

Non-exempt Highway employees shall receive overtime at a rate of time and one-half their regular hourly rate for hours worked outside of their normal work day/shift. All hours worked in excess of, or outside of, the normal work day/shift shall be approved by the Highway Commissioner or designee. A minimum of two (2) hours shall be paid if an employee is called into work, except for those hours that are part of the normal work day/shift that precede or immediately follow the shift.

Overtime hours worked under this section is considered premium overtime pay and shall not be calculated in the regular rate of pay for the purposes of calculating FLSA overtime (29 C.F.R §778.203 and §778.204 or as amended).

d. Compensatory Time

1. Exempt

It is understood that Department Heads, Managers, and other exempt positions (as classified by your job description) are paid a salary for their overall responsibility and accountability and may work in excess of the normal work week in order to complete necessary job tasks. At the discretion of the Department Head, (and County

Administrator in cases of Department Heads) exempt employees who work in excess of 40 hours in a workweek (including Holiday pay) may qualify for compensatory time. Compensatory time shall be earned prior to use, is earned at straight time (hour for hour), and shall be tracked accordingly on the timesheet. Compensatory time balances for exempt non-management positions in the Criminal Justice Services, Public Health and Human Services Departments shall not exceed 40.0 hours. All other exempt employees shall not exceed 80.0 hours.

2. Non-Exempt

Non-exempt employees may receive overtime in the form of compensatory time (earned at time and one half) or paid time at one and one-half times their rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 in a workweek (excludes hours paid, such as workers' compensation, PTO, jury duty and/or compensatory time taken) at the employer's discretion. "Non-exempt" status is determined by the employer on a job-by-job basis. Compensatory time shall be tracked on the timesheet. Compensatory time balances shall not exceed 40.0 hours for all non-exempt positions (80.0 hours for non-exempt management positions). Once the maximum accrual amount has been met, employees shall be paid for any time worked in excess of 40 in a workweek at a rate of time and one-half.

- a). Section 7(O) of the FLSA allows public sector employers to provide certain non-exempt employees with an option of whether to receive cash overtime or compensatory time earned at time and one-half. Department heads shall determine employee eligibility for earning compensatory time.
- b). Non-exempt highway employees are not eligible for compensatory time and shall receive overtime in the form of pay only.

3. Increments of Time

Employees shall use Compensatory Time in increments of fifteen (15) minutes.

e. Compensatory Time Payout

All accrued and unused compensatory time shall be paid out for the following reasons:

1. If an employee changes positions that results in an exempt or non-exempt status change; or
2. If an employee transfers to another department; or
3. If an employee becomes an elected official for the County; or
4. If a non-exempt employee transfers to a new non-exempt position and there is also a pay change, the employee's Compensatory Time shall be paid out at the time of transfer at the rate of pay prior to the transfer; or
5. When an employee separates employment from Chippewa County. A separation is defined as follows:
 - a). resignation or retirement from employment with Chippewa County

- b). permanent layoff from employment
- c). discharge from employment with Chippewa County

Compensatory time payout due to a change in position that results in an exempt or non-exempt status change, transfer to another department, or when an employee becomes an elected official shall be added to the payroll on the last day worked in the former position, paid at the regular rate of pay, to be paid in cash via the employee paycheck. The compensatory time paid shall not be considered time worked.

Compensatory time payout due to separation of employment shall be paid in accordance with Chippewa County's Separation from Employment Policy.

f. Approval

All overtime/compensatory time earned shall be approved in advance by the Department Head. If advanced approval is not obtained, the employee is not authorized to work the overtime. The Department Head has the sole right to approve or deny overtime and compensatory time requests. Failure to obtain prior approval may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Requests to trade shifts cannot result in creating overtime/compensatory time for either party.

g. Compensatory Time Off

Use of compensatory time shall be requested by the employee as far in advance as reasonably possible, and shall be approved in advance by the Department Head. Employees shall follow written departmental procedures for requesting to take compensatory time. Requests to use compensatory time may be denied based on the needs and workload of the department or if other employees are already scheduled for time off. The Department Head has full authority to approve or deny said request.

h. Department Scheduling Procedures

Each department shall establish written procedures to ensure that compensatory time off requests are processed in a fair and equitable manner, with first consideration to be given to the efficient operation of the department. All departments shall file a copy of their updated written time off procedures with the Human Resources Division.

i. Accrual

Employees are not able to earn compensatory time or paid overtime (earned at straight time or time and one half) as a result of the use of paid leaves. No paid leave time shall be counted as hours worked for overtime purposes, including PTO, workers' compensation, jury duty, and compensatory time taken.

j. Non-Exempt Employee Annual Payout of Compensatory Time

Non-exempt employees shall be paid-out, at straight time, any unused Compensatory Time earned each calendar year on the last paycheck of the year it was earned. All non-exempt employees shall start every new year with a zero balance in their Compensatory Time accrual bank.

k. Safe Harbor

It is the policy of Chippewa County to comply with the salary basis requirements of the FLSA. Therefore, improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees are prohibited. If it is felt that an improper deduction has been made to your salary, you should immediately report this to the Human Resources Director. Reports of improper deductions shall be promptly investigated and reimbursements provided if it is determined improper deductions occurred.

29 C.F.R 541.710 outlines the principles of public accountability in which public agencies and elected officials are held to a higher level of responsibility under the public trust which demands effective and efficient use of public funds in order to serve the public interest including the view that public employees should not be paid for time they do not work excluding the use of paid time as outlined in Chippewa County policy.

(Section 18 amended by the County Board 05/14/13; 12/09/14; 12/08/15, 03/13/18, 11/6/18; 11/10/2020; 09/13/2022; 11/08/2022)

19. Additional Compensation

a. Sheriff Department - Field Training

1. Purpose

To provide an incentive to dispatch employees working 24/7 operations for providing an extensive hands-on training program for new hires into dispatcher and jailer positions.

2. Compensation

Dispatchers and Jailers assigned to and designated as Field Training Officers shall receive an additional 50 cents (\$.50) per hour for each hour worked training new hires.

b. Sheriff's Department – Shift Differential

1. Purpose

To provide extra compensation to nonexempt employees who are scheduled on a regular, rotating or sporadic basis to work during evening or night shifts.

2. Compensation

Nonexempt employees who work between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. shall receive an additional dollar (\$1.00) per hour for those hours worked. It shall only be paid when recording regular or overtime hours and no other pay codes.

c. Clerk of Courts – Jury Bailiffs

1. Purpose

To provide compensation to Jury Bailiffs scheduled for a jury trial when the trial is cancelled due to settlement, rescheduling or other reasons as determined by the County.

2. Compensation

Except as provided in sub-section 3 below, in the event a Jury Bailiff is scheduled to work for a jury trial that is canceled prior to the Jury Bailiff reporting to work, the Jury Bailiff shall be paid two (2) hours at his or her regular rate of pay. In the event a Jury Bailiff is scheduled and reports to work for a jury trial that is canceled subsequent to the Jury Bailiff reporting to work but before the Jury Bailiff has worked two (2) hours, the Jury Bailiff shall be paid two (2) hours at his or her regular rate of pay. In the event a jury trial is canceled after the Jury Bailiff has worked at least two (2) hours, the Jury Bailiff shall be paid for those hours worked.

3. Waiver

An employee may voluntarily elect to waive the Clerk of Courts-Jury Bailiffs additional compensation provided in sub-section 2 above. If an employee elects to waive the additional compensation, the employee shall provide written documentation of the waiver to the Human Resources Division to be placed in the employee's personnel file. A voluntary election to waive additional compensation may be withdrawn by the employee by providing a written notice of the change to the Human Resources Division to be placed in the employee's personnel file.

(Section 19 revised and approved by the County Board 08/13/13, 05/12/14, 11/6/18; 09/13/2022; 09/12/2023; 01/14/2025)

20. Longevity Bonus

a. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to recognize, express appreciation for and reward long standing employees for their dedicated service to the County.

b. Eligibility

This Policy shall apply to all active full time and part time employees at the time of the longevity bonus pay out. Eligibility and payment are based on consecutive years of service and as of May 1st of each calendar year.

c. Bonus Schedule and Amount

All eligible employees shall receive a longevity bonus according to the following schedule:

Years of Consecutive Service as of May 1 st	Bonus Amount
5 Years	\$500
10 Years	\$1,000
15 Years	\$1,500
20, 25 and 30 Years	\$2,000
35, 40 and 45 Years	\$2,500

The longevity bonus is paid in a lump sum on the second paycheck in May to all eligible employees with a milestone year defined above and is subject to federal, state and local income tax withholding and the withholding of the Employee's FICA and Medicare taxes.

d. Other Requirements

1. Longevity bonuses are not prorated. Employees who terminate from the County and return at a later date, no matter how long the gap in employment, shall use the most recent rehire date to establish years of service for purpose of a longevity bonus.
2. A break in service as a result of time off on an approved FMLA, Military, County Medical, Personal or Workers' Compensation Leave will not reduce eligibility or unqualify an employee to receive a longevity bonus. If an employee is on an approved leave when the annual bonus is paid, they are not eligible to be paid the longevity bonus until the second paycheck upon return from leave.
3. In the event an employee transfers to another department, the longevity bonus will be charged to the account in the department that the employee is working and paid from on the date the longevity bonus is paid.
4. In the event an eligible employee retires (as defined in the Separation section of the HR Policy Manual) prior to May 1 and they reached a milestone year, they will be eligible to receive the applicable longevity bonus on their last paycheck. This does not apply to those resigning (as defined in the Separation section of the HR Policy Manual).

(Section 20 adopted by the County Board 09/13/2022)

21. On-Call Pay

a. Purpose

To ensure specific employees are available at any time to respond to after normal business hours emergency situations as they arise.

b. Authorized Departments

Any requests for a formal on-call system for individual departments or program shall be approved in advance by the County Administrator.

c. Compensation

When an employee is assigned to on-call, he/she shall receive compensation as follows:

1. \$20.00/day – Weekdays (Monday-Friday) outside regular office hours
2. \$50.00/day – Saturdays and Sundays
3. \$100.00/day – Observed Holidays and Holidays

When on-call work requirements result in an exempt employee being called, and the employee actually performs their duties, the on-call employee shall receive, in addition to the on-call compensation defined above, straight time compensatory time in increments of no less than 15 minutes for time worked.

Whenever possible, Department Heads should consider the use of flex time during the same workweek for employees who have provided service while on-call to reduce additional hours worked in the workweek.

d. Travel Time

When on-call requires an employee to leave their home/current location to provide onsite work, the employee shall be compensated for travel time to and from the place of work. Required response times shall be determined by the individual department on call system, and shall be indicated in the departments written on-call procedures.

e. Mileage

Employees who are called out may submit round-trip mileage from the Courthouse to place of onsite work, or employee's location to place of onsite work, whichever is less. Reimbursement rates are determined in accordance with the Vehicle Fleet Policy.

f. Department Procedures

The development of, assignment to, duties during, and adjustments to a department's on call system/rotation shall be at the sole discretion of the Department Head/Manager. Each department with an on call system shall submit written on-call procedures to the Human Resources Division outlining their on-call system, including method of compensation allowed within the provisions of this Policy.

g. Response Times

Response times to an on-call situation are dependent upon the department. Response time expectations are to be clearly communicated to employees assigned to on-call within the individual department's on-call procedures.

h. Restrictions

Employees assigned to on-call are prohibited from responding to any on-call situation while under the influence of alcohol or other substance which deems them unable to work. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure they are able to respond during an on-call situation. Individual department procedures may outline how an employee may request prior arrangements to switch on-call with another employee if necessary.

(Section 21 revised and approved by the County Board 08/13/13; 12/08/15; 09/10/19; 09/13/2022)

22. Lead Worker Pay/Assignment

a. Purpose

To compensate an employee if selected as a lead worker based on knowledge, skills and abilities for specified departments.

b. Authorized Departments

Any requests for a lead worker assignment within a department or program shall be approved in writing and in advance by the Human Resources Director and County Administrator.

c. Compensation

Additional Lead Worker responsibilities shall be documented in writing and provided to the employee and the Human Resources Division. Employees assigned as a Lead Worker shall be

compensated an additional \$1.00 per hour for all hours paid, regardless of the number of actual hours worked as a lead.

d. Assignment

The selection process for Lead Worker shall be at the sole discretion of Chippewa County.

A Lead Worker assignment shall not be considered permanent. The employee assigned may opt out of the assignment at any time via written notice to the Department Head/Manager. The Department Head/Manager may remove the employee from the assignment at any time via written notice to the employee.

The additional lead worker pay shall stop when the assigned employee leaves the lead worker assignment.

(Section 22 revised and approved by the County Board 08/13/13; 12/08/15, 03/13/18; 10/08/19)

23. Prevailing Wage

a. Purpose

To assure equitable wages for applicable building or construction work that is financed in whole or in part with County funds.

Chippewa County shall adhere to the prevailing wage law on applicable construction projects.

(Section 23 adopted by the County Board 11/13/12)

24. Temporary Assignment of Work

a. Purpose

Some vacated positions may require an interim appointment be made in order to continue effective operations of the department or work unit. This typically occurs when a Department Head position is temporarily vacated. Employees may be assigned an interim position to assist in carrying out those duties which must be continued.

b. Request

Any temporary assignment of an employee to work “out of title” shall be requested in writing by the Department Head to the County Administrator and the Human Resources Director. The County Administrator may also make assignments absent a Department Head.

c. Determination

The final determination of the temporary assignment shall be made by the County Administrator, and the determination shall be final.

d. Length of Assignment

A temporary assignment shall be no less than four (4) weeks, and not greater than six (6) months.

e. Determination of Pay

An employee temporarily assigned to a position in a higher Pay Grade shall receive a temporary increase in pay equivalent to the difference between the employee's current salary and the minimum placement into the temporary Pay Grade that provides at least a 2% increase only while in that position; when such placement results in no increase in compensation, or less than a 2% increase, the Human Resources Director shall recommend to the County Administrator a placement within the Pay Grade that provides an appropriate gain in compensation.

An employee temporarily assigned to a position with a lower Pay Grade shall receive their regular rate of pay.

f. Effective Date

If it is determined the employee shall receive additional compensation, the effective date shall be the first day where the exact duration of the assigned duties is known, or retroactive to the first day when the exact duration of the assignment was known.

g. Rights of the Executive Committee

This policy is not intended to conflict with the County Administrator and Department Head Succession Policy. The Executive Committee retains its rights to make salary adjustments to acting County Administrators as set forth in the County Administrator and Department Head Succession Policy.

(Section 24 revised and approved by the County Board 08/13/13; 12/08/15, 11/6/18)

25. Payroll and Deductions from Payroll

a. Purpose

To provide standardized payroll procedures in accordance with applicable State and Federal guidelines.

b. Employee Responsibility

To review all advice of deposits and direct any questions or concerns to the Finance Division. Items for review include, but are not limited to: salaried status and deductions that have been made from pay.

c. Employer Responsibility

1. To comply with applicable wage and hour laws and regulations.
2. To investigate and resolve all complaints as promptly, and as accurately, as possible. Consistent with the U.S. Department of Labor's policy, any complaint shall be resolved within a reasonable time given all the facts and circumstances.
3. If an investigation reveals that an improper deduction from pay has occurred, the employee shall be reimbursed and the Employer shall take whatever action it deems necessary to ensure compliance with the salary basis test in the future.

(Section 25 amended by the County Board 05/14/13 and 03/11/14; 12/09/14, 03/13/18)

26. Payroll and Timekeeping

a. Purpose

To provide standardization of time and provide each department the information needed to accurately record and submit their timesheets in accordance with applicable State and Federal guidelines. Accurately reporting time worked is the responsibility of each employee.

b. Workweek

The workweek covers seven consecutive days for the purpose of compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, and shall consist of seven (7) consecutive calendar days starting at 12:00 a.m. on Sunday and ending at 11:59 p.m. on the following Saturday of each calendar week for all departments.

c. Pay Periods

A pay period shall be the two (2) consecutive workweeks, on the conclusion of which payroll is completed.

d. Pay Schedule

Paychecks are generally directly deposited biweekly on Fridays. See payroll schedule on the Employee Portal for any variances due to the Federal Reserve holiday schedule.

e. General Information

1. Time Worked

Time worked includes time that an employee is required and authorized to do work and should be recorded to the nearest quarter of an hour. The following provisions count as time worked:

- a). Work Away From Premises or at Home. Employees shall receive advanced approval from their Department Head for any work performed outside the County workplace. Employees approved for work outside the County workplace shall document and submit their hours, including but not limited to any and all time spent accessing work related emails and other programs and files, according to the payroll policies.
- b). Break Periods. Authorized break periods of 15 minutes or less are counted as time worked.
- c). Travel/Training Time. Travel and training time is to be considered and included in actual time worked in accordance with the Travel Time Policy and the Training/Development Policy.
- d). Holidays. Observed Holidays as defined in the Holiday Policy are to be considered time worked.

2. Time Not Worked

The following provisions do not count as time worked:

- a). Paid Leave. PTO, other substituted leaves of absence, workers' compensation, jury duty, and Compensatory Time taken are not counted as time worked and should be recorded to the nearest 15 minutes.
- b). Meal Periods. Uninterrupted time off for lunch or dinner of at least 30 minutes is not counted as time worked and shall be unpaid.

f. Payroll Reporting Procedures

In accordance with Wisconsin and Federal Labor Standards, all employees shall accurately record the following on a daily basis:

1. Time beginning/ending work each day;
2. Time beginning/ending of each meal period;
3. Absence from work with appropriate pay codes; AND
4. Total number of hours per day and week.

It is the employee's responsibility to sign his/her timesheet to verify accuracy and provide to his/her manager. The manager shall review and sign the timesheet and submit to payroll for processing. In the event of an error in reporting time, the employee should immediately report the problem to their Department Head and Finance Division.

g. Responsibilities

1. Employee Responsibilities

All employees, when completing their timesheets, shall adhere to the following procedures:

- a). Record correct pay codes and benefit codes on a daily basis.
- b). Maintain an honest and accurate daily record of hours worked and the correct time codes recorded on the time sheet. All absences from work schedules should be appropriately recorded and coded. Entries should be made daily.
- c). Entries for absences from work shall be used in fifteen (15) minute increments. Hours worked shall be used in fifteen (15) minute increments.
- d). Obtain prior approval for any overtime or compensatory time earned in the pay period.
- e). Clearly mark approved overtime and compensatory time on your timesheets.
- f). Sign and submit the completed time sheet to the Department Head in the time period required for approval.

h. Department Head/Manager Responsibilities

Each Department Head is responsible for the following procedures:

1. Ensuring that employees reporting to him/her have the correct codes.
2. Ensuring employees are accurately recording their payroll on a daily basis.
3. Ensuring that all employees maintain accurate timesheets.
4. Providing clear and timely approval for overtime or compensatory time.
5. Approval and submission of payroll by the dates specified in this policy.

i. Payroll Submission Deadlines

Department payrolls shall be submitted electronically on the Monday following the end of the pay period. Departments shall be required to follow all payroll submission procedures provided by the Finance Division.

Employees failing to submit timesheets timely will not be guaranteed receipt of their payroll check on the established payroll date as the County does not process separate payroll checks as a result of untimely timesheet submission. It is the responsibility of each department to establish written departmental procedures to allow ample time for management review prior to the submission deadline and to make arrangements if scheduled to be off work and as a result shall miss the established deadline.

j. Corrections

If a payroll error occurs, it is the employee's responsibility to immediately notify his/her Department Head and the Finance Division. Corrections shall be submitted to the Finance Division for adjustment on the next payroll within fourteen (14) calendar days from the pay date. Exceptions to the fourteen (14) calendar day requirement would occur if the error was due to the Department of Administration error or when the correction is required by law or regulation.

k. Penalties

Altering, falsifying the time record, tampering with time records, recording time on another employee's time record (authorized personnel excluded) or any other infraction of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

l. Deductions

It is the Employer's policy to comply with applicable wage and hour laws and regulations. If you have any questions or concerns about your status or you believe that any deduction has been made from your pay that is inconsistent with your status, you should immediately raise the matter with the Human Resources Division who can assist you in understanding the information that is required in order to investigate the matter. Chippewa County is committed to investigating and resolving all complaints as promptly, but also as accurately, as possible. Consistent with the U.S. Department of Labor's policy, any complaint shall be resolved within a reasonable time given all the facts and circumstances. If an investigation reveals that you were subjected to an improper deduction from pay, you shall be reimbursed and the County shall take whatever action it deems necessary to ensure compliance in the future.

(Section 26 amended by the County Board 05/14/13 and 03/11/14; 12/09/14, 03/13/18, 11/6/18; 09/13/2022)

27. Direct Deposit

a. Purpose

To provide Chippewa County Employees information regarding the Direct Deposit of payroll checks.

b. Overview

All Chippewa County employees and elected officials shall have payroll wage payments and reimbursements disbursed through direct deposit to one financial institution of the employee's choice. This convenience provides the employee with funds available in their bank account each payday. Employees have electronic access on the Chippewa County Website under ESS (Employee Self Service) to their Payroll Earnings Statements on payday that details the pay and deduction information.

c. Procedures

All Chippewa County employees shall adhere to the following:

1. Each employee shall complete a Direct Deposit Authorization Agreement with a voided check attached upon hire and submit to the Human Resources Division by timeframes specified by the Human Resources Division.
2. It is the employee's responsibility to immediately notify the Human Resources Division if the employee's bank account changes by completing and submitting the new Direct Deposit Authorization Agreement available on the Employee Portal.
3. For new employees who fail to complete and submit the Direct Deposit Authorization Agreement within the timeframe communicated to them, the pay shall be added to the following payroll.
4. Any direct deposit file rejected due to closed accounts, mergers, and any other reason shall be re-processed in accounts payable (AP). This check shall be processed on the next possible AP check run and available in the Treasurer's Office and disbursed upon receipt of a completed Direct Deposit Authorization Agreement available on the Employee Portal.
5. Any overpayments, underpayments or failure to timely submit timesheets shall be adjusted on the following payroll.

d. Disclaimer

Each bank shall post deposits at different times. Chippewa County cannot take the responsibility for your bank's policies. Please contact your bank if you have any questions on the policies.

(Section 27 was adopted 12/05/07 and amended: 06/17/18, 09/18/12; 12/08/15, 03/13/18; 09/13/2022)

28. Personal Data Changes

a. Purpose

To ensure accurate and up-to-date personal information is on file with the Human Resources Division for all employees.

b. Policy

Each employee shall promptly notify the Human Resources Division of any changes in personal data by completing the Employee Change form located on the Employee Portal. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, number of tax exemptions, individuals to be contacted in the event of emergency, educational accomplishments, marital status, certification achievements, and other such status reports shall be accurate and current at all times.

This information is necessary as it may affect your compensation, dependents' eligibility for benefit coverage, and other important matters.

c. Changes in Name, Marital Status, Mailing Address, Phone Number, and Emergency Contact

From the Employee Portal, download and complete the Employee Change form and submit the completed document to the Human Resources Division within 30 days of the change. Employees may also call the Human Resources Division for the appropriate forms. Once the form is submitted, the employee shall schedule an appointment with a Human Resources representative to complete other documents related to the personal changes.

d. Change in Educational Accomplishments

Submit certificates received from trainings, transcripts from continuing education coursework, diplomas, or other educational materials obtained while employed by Chippewa County to the Human Resources Division for placement in the personnel file.

Employees in positions that require renewal of licenses or certifications shall provide updated copies to Human Resources upon expiration of the license or certification.

e. Change in Number of Dependents

Changes in the number of dependents and the names of such dependents shall be reported to the Human Resources Division within 30 days of the change by completing the Employee Change form available on the Employee Portal. Notification of dependent changes may have an impact on benefit coverage, so it is the employee's responsibility to immediately notify the Human Resources Division. The employee shall schedule an appointment with a Human Resources representative to complete related documents needed for a change in dependents.

(Section 28 amended by the County Board 03/13/18)

29. Training and Development

a. Purpose

To provide organized training programs for the purpose of increasing the knowledge, proficiency, ability and skills of Chippewa County employees.

b. Definitions

1. Required training: Training that employees are required to complete.
2. Optional training: Training that is offered through Chippewa County, that is relevant and beneficial to the department and position, but is not required by law or any other Chippewa County policy.

c. Training Day

These days consist of organized training programs that are conducted on-site, off-site, or on the Internet, regardless of duration.

d. Scheduling

Department Heads have the sole discretion to approve/deny all training days. Work schedules shall be determined in advance of the training day.

e. County Training and Professional Development Day

The Courthouse will be closed on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in January to provide an opportunity for required and optional training and other in-service programs.

The Highway Department will be closed for two (2) days each year, as determined by the Highway Commissioner, for required and optional training and other in-service programs.

The Sheriff's Department has required training in-service days throughout the year, as determined by the Sheriff. The Sheriff Department will not close the Department for training, but will establish multiple training days to meet the scheduling needs of the Department.

Unless prior approval is secured by the Department Head, all employees shall be required to attend.

f. Training Records

All training certificates/proof of completion shall be maintained in the employee's department in which the training occurred.

g. Travel

When travel is required, travel time shall be compensated in accordance with the Travel Time Policy.

h. Lunches/Breaks

Employees shall take an unpaid lunch period and paid break periods as outlined in County Policy Meal and Break Periods during trainings. Work shall not be done during these periods unless approved in advance by management.

Trainings reflecting working lunch periods may be discussed and approved in advance on a case by case basis with management. The employee shall provide management with a copy of the agenda showing the working lunch hour.

(Section 29 adopted by the County Board 11/13/12; 09/13/2022)

30. Licensing/Certification

a. Purpose

To establish a uniform system for determining county and employee responsibility for required licenses and certifications.

b. Responsibility

Employees are responsible to acquire and maintain any license or certification that is required by Federal, State or County regulations and County job descriptions to perform his/her job duties. At least annually, typically during the performance review process, the Department Head is responsible for tracking and ensuring such license or certification is current.

c. Renewals

Employees are responsible for submitting renewed license or certifications to the Department Head and the Human Resources Division for placement in the department and/or personnel file at the time of renewal. The Department Head is responsible for tracking and ensuring proper employee licensing and certification renewals.

d. Notification

If an employee loses a required license or certification, he/she shall inform the Department Head and Human Resources Division immediately. Failure to notify the Department Head and Human Resources Division of the loss of a required license or certification may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

The loss of a license or certification (for any reason) includes but is not limited to suspension, revocation, cancellation, nonrenewal, failure by the employee to renew the license or certification in a timely manner, or never having been issued the required license or certification.

Loss of a license or certification may result in termination from employment.

e. Associated Costs

Chippewa County may pay for required licensure/certifications fees if budgeted in the department budget.

(Section 30 amended by the County Board 03/13/18)

31. Bonding Requirements

a. Purpose

The County purchases blanket fidelity bond coverage for all of its employees and elected officials to protect itself against any dishonest or criminal act committed by an employee or elected official or in collusion with other persons with the intent to cause the employer to sustain loss and obtain an improper financial benefit for the employee, elected official or any person or organization intended by the employee to receive that benefit.

b. Employee Bondability

1. In order to remain bondable, an employee shall refrain from engaging in a dishonest or criminal act as described in subsection a, above.
2. It is the responsibility of the employee to maintain bondable status.

c. Loss of Bondability

An employee who loses the ability to be bonded shall be required to secure his or her own personal bond naming the County as the secured party to maintain employment with Chippewa County.

(Section 31 amended by the County Board 12/08/15)

32. Travel Time

a. Purpose

To establish a uniform system for determining compensable time while traveling for county business.

b. Travel Time

Any work which an employee is required to perform while traveling shall be counted as hours worked.

c. Home to Work Travel

An employee who travels from home before the regular workday and returns to his/her home at the end of the workday is engaged in ordinary home to work travel, which is not time worked, even if the work site is different each day.

Travel time as a result of being on call and reporting onsite shall be considered time work.

d. Home to Work on a Special One Day Assignment in Another City

An employee who regularly works at a fixed location in one city is given a special one day assignment in another city and returns home the same day. The time spent in traveling to and returning from the other city is work time, except that the County shall deduct/not count that time the employee would normally spend commuting to the regular work site.

e. Travel That is All in a Day's Work

Time spent by an employee in travel as part of their principal activity, such as travel from job site to job site during the workday, is considered time worked. However, ordinary home to the first work site and the final work site of the day to home is not considered time worked.

f. Travel Away from Home Community

Travel that keeps an employee away from home overnight is travel away from home. Travel away from home is time worked. The time is not only hours worked on regular working days during normal working hours but also during corresponding hours on nonworking days. For example, if the employee takes a flight, the time spent traveling to the airport, waiting in the airport, on the plane and traveling from the airport to the hotel or travel destination is time worked.

g. Approval

Department Heads shall be responsible for ensuring that employees plan their travel with the principles of fiscal austerity and energy conservation in mind. All travel plans are subject to approval by the Department Head. Carpooling should be a consideration whenever more than one staff person is attending the same training/meeting. If employees request to drive separate, there should be a business reason to do so.

h. Flexible Scheduling

Whenever possible, Department Heads should consider the use of flex time during the workweek for employees who must travel to reduce additional hours worked in the same workweek. The Department Head may alter an employee's work schedule for travel time purposes considering staffing needs and the best interests of the department.

(Section 32 amended by the County Board 03/13/18)

33. Travel, Meal and Lodging Expense Reimbursements

a. Purpose

To establish a uniform system for determining county and employee responsibilities for expenses incurred by employees while performing official county business.

b. Definitions

Authorizing party: The County Administrator with respect to Department Heads and Elected Officials, Department Heads with respect to subordinate employees, and the Chair of the County Board with respect to County Administrator and County Board Supervisors.

c. General Policy

Each person shall be reimbursed for reasonable, necessary and actual travel and lodging expenses incurred in the performance of authorized official duties subject to limitations expressed in this Policy.

1. Department Heads and Elected Officials are responsible to ensure that all travel expenses shall be budgeted in a department budget in advance of authorization for use.

2. Out-of-state travel at the County's expense by Department Heads, Elected Officials and employees to and from destinations that are located 250 or more miles from Chippewa County shall be approved in advance by the County Administrator. Department Heads and Elected Officials shall submit a request for out-of-state travel to the County Administrator as far in advance of the time of travel as possible.
3. Prior approval to the authorizing party for all expenses is required. Only conventions, seminars, and like meetings which have been approved by the County Administrator and justified in the budget process, shall be allowed.
4. Receipts are required. All expense claims \$2.00 and over shall be supported by written receipts.
5. Use of public transportation is encouraged.
6. Each authorizing party shall be responsible for ensuring that employees plan their travel with the principles of fiscal austerity and energy conservation in mind.

d. Transportation

1. Air Travel
 - a). The maximum allowed for air travel shall be limited to the lesser of the most economical fare available or the standard county mileage allowance. The County Administrator shall have the authority to determine the most economical method after consideration of all per diem costs. The making of a reservation well in advance is recommended so as to ensure the lowest possible air fare is obtained.
 - b). Unless circumstances do not permit, payment of airfare shall be made upon arrangements with the County Administrator.
 - c). Flight insurance shall not be reimbursed.
 - d). Passenger's copy of the airline ticket shall be attached to the voucher.
 - e). When a favorable price differential exists, round trip tickets shall be provided.
 - f). Any frequent flyer award, discount or rebate becomes the property of the County.

2. Use of Personal Vehicles for County Business

- a). Personal Automobile Insurance

All county employees who drive their personal vehicles on county business shall be required to maintain, at a minimum, personal automobile insurance in the amount specified in the Chippewa County Fleet Vehicle Policy.

- b). Not Authorized

Reimbursement or use of a privately owned motorcycle, moped or bicycle on County business is not authorized.

c). Reimbursement

1. Rates of Reimbursement. Employees shall be reimbursed for the use of their personal vehicles at the following rates (to be set each year by the County Administrator):
 - a) a "standard" rate when a county fleet vehicle is not available, and
 - b) at a lower "turn down" rate if a fleet vehicle is available, but the employee makes a decision to use their personal vehicle.
2. Reimbursement Approval. Management may approve reimbursement at the standard rate only after they have viewed a printout of the Outlook schedule that shows no vehicles are available. Each manager shall be required to keep a "fleet vehicle reimbursement log" of reimbursed personal trips that shall include the date and time of the trip with a copy of the computer printout.
3. Telecommuting. If an employee has an on-going telecommuting agreement, as defined in the Telecommuting policy, follow the Telecommuting policy for mileage reimbursement.
4. Remote Work Sites. If an employee's job assignment includes providing services in outlying areas of the county where the employee also resides, either the employee's department head or manager can approve standard mileage reimbursement for those service visits if they determine a cost advantage to the County by doing so. An analysis of that cost advantage shall accompany any proposed reimbursement at the standard rate. Here are additional requirements for mileage reimbursement when traveling to or from a remote worksite:
 - a) The first one-way trip of the day from home to a remote location for the purpose of paid employment is not reimbursable for mileage or considered work time.
 - b) The last trip of the day from remote location for the purpose of paid employment to the home is not reimbursable for mileage or considered work time.
 - c) In the event the first trip and/or the last trip of the day is further than the mileage between the employee's onsite work location and the employee's home, the employee shall be reimbursed for the difference in work time and mileage reimbursement. If the first trip of the day is shorter than the normal distance from the onsite work location to the employee's home, the mileage and work time shall not be reimbursable.
 - d) Trips between the Chippewa County Courthouse to single or multiple remote worksites shall be paid based upon actual mileage traveled.
5. Traffic violation expenses are not reimbursable.

6. Vehicle parking and storage costs while on authorized county activities shall be allowed in addition to the mileage allowance.

e. Meals

1. Reimbursement

Employees shall be reimbursed for meals if the employee is attending an approved meeting, convention, seminar or work-related transport. The claim for meals shall represent actual, reasonable and necessary costs expended for meals, not to exceed State of Wisconsin reimbursement rates.

- a). If an employee is required to eat more than one meal, the employee shall be allowed the total of the meals with the total being split among the meals at the employees' option.
- b). Meal expense claims may only be made for meals purchased outside the county, except in the case of county sanctioned meetings/events.
- c). Any amount to be claimed in excess of the maximum shall be accompanied by a full explanation of such expenses and may be allowed by the County Administrator.
- d). Detailed receipts for all meals are required.
- e). There shall be no reimbursement for alcoholic beverages.
- f). Departure and returning time shall be recorded on the travel voucher when submitted.

2. Meal Taxability

Chippewa County may reimburse employees for expenses while traveling away from home overnight or outside of Chippewa County for meetings. The taxability of these reimbursements depends on whether there is a valid business reason for the travel and whether the expense is substantiated. Reimbursements shall meet IRS accountable plan rules in order to be tax-free. An IRS accountable plan needs to prove a Business Connection. The plan pays reimbursements only for otherwise deductible business expenses (such as travel, lodging or meal expenses incurred while away overnight on business). The reimbursements shall be clearly identified as such when the employee is paid.

Only allowable business/county related meal expenses paid for by Chippewa County which are incurred while away overnight on business are tax-free to the employee. All other employer-paid business meal expenses shall be reported as additional income to the employee and are taxable.

3. Maximum Meal Reimbursement Rates

Maximum meal expenses shall be set by the County Administrator.

To be allowed reimbursement for breakfast, employees must leave home before 6:00 a.m.; lunch, departure must be before 10:30 a.m. and return after 2:30 p.m.; dinner, return must be after 7:00 p.m.

f. Lodging

1. Hotel/Motel Registration

When registering in hotels or motels or signing for any official purposes, employees shall use their business address. The choice of lodging shall be based primarily on cost with consideration given to accessibility in conducting business.

- a). Lodging expenses, including taxes, shall not exceed state standards except with documentation that the rate of the host hotel or motel is greater. The County Administrator may allow higher lodging limits depending on specific circumstances when authorization is granted prior to incurring the expense.
- b). Employees traveling together shall, whenever feasible, share lodging accommodations.
 1. All lodging expenses shall be supported by written receipt.
 2. Expenses for lodging at homes of relatives are not reimbursable.
 3. When traveling alone, an employee shall make use of a single room rate.

2. One-Day Authorized Business Travel

An overnight stay for the night before may be allowed when the travel requires the employee to leave the worksite prior to 6:00 am and is in excess of 120 miles one way.

3. Multiple-Day Authorized Business Travel

Overnight stays require Department Head approval and may be allowed if travel time exceeds 2 hours and is in excess of 120 miles one way. Overnight stays shall not be allowed for the last day of travel unless prior approval is granted by the Department Head.

4. Exception to Lodging

An employee shall, with the Department Head approval, be allowed an overnight stay, outside of the policies time and mileage requirement, when the employee serves as a coordinator, host, or speaker at a conference, seminar or convention held outside the County.

An employee shall, with the Department Head approval, be allowed an overnight stay on the last day of travel, outside of the policies time and mileage requirement, due to unsafe driving conditions.

An employee shall, with the Department Head approval, be allowed an overnight stay, outside of the policies time and mileage requirement, when a hotel stay is more cost effective.

g. Reimbursements

1. State or third-party reimbursements

Employees being reimbursed for travel expenses from a third party shall not be reimbursed by the County.

2. Claiming Reimbursement of Authorized Expenditures

Reimbursement requests should be limited to mileage, meals, lodging and the occasional registration. Claims for reimbursement shall be made on the Meals, Mileage, Lodging and Registration Reimbursement Form located on the Employee Portal.

- a). All requests for reimbursement shall be accompanied by an itemized receipt, including tips. Credit card reimbursement requests shall have the itemized slip attached. Room service charges on a hotel bill shall be accompanied by an itemized receipt and shall be treated as a meal expense.
- b). When requesting mileage reimbursement, the reimbursement form shall be fully completed, including the total number of miles and the location to which the employee traveled.
- c). When requesting meal reimbursement, the date and time leaving and returning shall be fully completed on the reimbursement form.
- d). All requests for reimbursement shall be submitted monthly, and should be turned in by the fifth (5th) day of the following month.
- e). All requests shall be submitted to the Finance Division by 4:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each pay period to be included in that payroll. Any late requests shall be paid on the following payroll.
- f). The Authorizing party shall sign the request and verify/record the account number to be charged.
- g). All prior year reimbursement requests shall be submitted by the first Wednesday of January of each year. This is necessary to make sure the expense gets charged to the correct year.

3. Miscellaneous Reimbursements

Miscellaneous county/business-associated expenses shall be reimbursed at cost per receipts. Requested reimbursement shall document the date(s), place, time and business purpose subject to the approval of the Authorizing party.

Any employee who intentionally seeks reimbursement for expenses not actually incurred or expenses not allowed under this policy shall be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge.

(Section 33 amended by the County Board 12/09/14; 12/08/15, 03/13/18, 11/6/18; 09/10/19; 11/10/2020; 09/13/2022; 09/12/2023; 01/14/2025)

34. Vehicle Fleet

a. Administration

1. General

The Chippewa County Vehicle Fleet Policy addresses the procurement/disposal, maintenance, reservation, and operation of county vehicles. The fleet is comprised of shared vehicles for use through a reservation system by all employees, elected officials, Housing Authority employees and UW-Extension employees. The fleet is also comprised of specialty vehicles that are specific to a department (i.e. squad cars) or group shared specialty vehicles that several departments may share. The fleet program is administered through various county departments as outlined below under the general supervision of the County Administrator.

- a). The Highway Department is responsible for the daily administration and management of the non-Highway fleet fund, and for the day to day operation of the non-highway County Vehicle Fleet.
- b). The County Clerk's office is responsible for the coordination of vehicle reservations, and for checking vehicles in and out.

2. Vehicle Marking/Identification

All county vehicles shall be marked with "County of Chippewa" and either the name of the department or "County Fleet Vehicle," the words "For Official Use Only," and a fleet vehicle identification number.

"For Official Use Only" and a vehicle fleet number is not required for Sheriff Department vehicles. Marking requirements do not apply to Sheriff Department vehicles which have non-municipal plates and are used for investigative purposes.

3. Purchasing/Disposal

Vehicles purchased shall be determined by fleet needs, usage and availability of non-Highway fleet funds. Annually, the County Highway Department shall provide a recommended list of vehicles for replacement to the County Administrator. All vehicle purchases shall be approved by the Highway Commissioner and purchased by the Highway Department.

Time of vehicle disposal shall be approved by the Highway Commissioner. The Highway Department shall collaborate with the County Clerk and the Finance Director to determine the most cost-effective method of disposal with the sale proceeds going to the Highway Department's non-Highway fleet fund.

4. Maintenance

All maintenance is coordinated and directed by the County Highway Department, who shall track the maintenance needs and mileage of vehicles. The Highway Department shall maintain an annual report of fleet usage and maintenance needs to be available upon request. The Highway Department has the authority to remove a vehicle from

service at any time deemed necessary, and shall coordinate the removal through the Outlook reservation system. If a reserved vehicle has been removed from service, the County Clerk's office as the reservation coordinator shall attempt to find any affected party alternative means of transportation.

5. Vehicle Titles, Registration and Licensing

The Highway Department shall apply for all necessary titles, registration and licensing. All fleet vehicles shall be titled in the name of Chippewa County. The Highway Department shall retain copies of all titles upon receipt by the state, and send all originals to the County Clerk's office who shall hold all vehicle fleet titles in the name of the county.

6. Insurance

- a). **Insurance Coverage.** The county provides liability and physical damage coverage for all county vehicles. Individuals who are paid mileage for personal use of their own vehicle are required to maintain liability insurance on their vehicles with a minimum limit of \$100,000/\$300,000/\$100,000. The individual employee's insurance is primary for personal vehicles.
- b). **Repairs.** The Corporation Counsel Division shall work with the Highway Department to coordinate repairs.

7. Charge out/Financials

On the first of the month, the Fleet Vehicle Logs shall be forwarded to the Highway Department Fiscal Manager who is responsible for determining if a department should be charged, and if necessary, charging the cost of each trip to the department that used the vehicle. Upon receipt of an invoice, each department shall evaluate the purpose of the trip, note the appropriate account(s) to be charged on the invoice, and forward the invoice to the Finance Division for payment.

8. Accidents or Vehicle Breakdown

In the event of an accident employees are to contact their immediate supervisor, the appropriate law enforcement agency, the Corporation Counsel Division and the Highway Department (715-738-2615). Accident kits are located in the glove compartment of the vehicle, and contain an insurance identification card, and step-by-step instructions on what to do in the event of an accident.

In the event of a vehicle breakdown, employees are to contact the Highway Department (715-738-2615). If the Highway Department is unavailable, an employee should ensure the vehicle is properly secured and out of any traffic lanes prior to proceeding with their task. Inform the Highway Office (715-726-7914) of the vehicle's location at the earliest opportunity.

b. Use of Fleet Vehicles

1. Operator Requirements

- a). Only authorized county employees, elected officials, Housing Authority and UW-Extension employees are allowed to operate county vehicles. Independent

contractors and volunteers are specifically prohibited from operating county vehicles.

- b). No county employee shall be permitted to operate a county vehicle without a valid driver's license applicable to the class of vehicle to be operated. Any operation of a county vehicle with a suspended driver's license shall subject the operator to disciplinary action. If an employee is involved in an accident with a county vehicle and has a suspended license, the employee shall be subject to discharge.
- c). All operators of county vehicles shall abide by all traffic laws to include use of seat belts.
- d). Payment of parking tickets and/or other traffic violations is the responsibility of the employee and shall not be reimbursed by the county.
- e). Smoking shall not be allowed in county fleet vehicles. Smoking in fleet vehicles can impact both the resale value of the fleet vehicle and the comfort of those who check the vehicle out after it has been used by a smoking operator.
- f). Pets or animals of any kind are not allowed in county fleet vehicles, with the exception of law enforcement in carrying out their official duties.
- g). Operators shall manage their driving environment to minimize distractions that could have an impact on their ability to safely operate the vehicle (i.e. consuming food or beverages, talking to passengers, using cell phones, etc.).
- h). Employees transporting children as part of their job responsibilities as authorized by their supervisor shall comply with state regulations regarding the use of child safety restraint systems. (DOT Chapter Trans 310 Child Restraint Standards and Exemptions)
- i). When business cargo, materials or tools are being transported, operators are responsible for ensuring that all items are properly secured to prevent spillage or shifting per WI State Statute 346.94(7).

2. Personal Use Prohibited

- a). **Personal use of County vehicles is prohibited.** Personal use is defined as any use which is for the benefit or enjoyment of the employee or not in the pursuit of the business or interest of the county. County employees on distant trips may use county vehicles to attain lodging or food without violating this policy.
- b). **Essential Personnel.** Certain non-law enforcement, essential personnel are provided the use of county vehicles in order to respond to emergency situations on a 24 hour a day, 7 days a week basis. These essential personnel may use their assigned county vehicle to commute to and from work in the performance of his/her job responsibilities. Personal use, other than commuting, is restricted to incidental stops falling within minimal deviations of normal commuting routes.

- c). **Law Enforcement Vehicles.** Sheriff's Department Vehicles are governed by internal policies. However, such policies should reflect the spirit of this policy, including those regarding vehicle use by essential personnel.
- d). **Commuting Use and Fringe Benefit Valuation.** If an employee is authorized by the Department Head or Elected Official to commute to and from work using a county vehicle as defined in section b). and c). above, the following shall apply:
 - 1. Each authorized employee operating a county vehicle for the purpose of commuting shall have \$1.50 each way included in their taxable income as set forth in IRS Publication 15-B in the section titled "Commuting Rule".
 - 2. Each employee authorized to operate county vehicles to commute to and from work shall maintain a log showing all commuting trips by the vehicle. The log shall be maintained on a daily basis and a copy shall be given to the Central Finance Division on or before the fifth day of the ensuing month.
 - 3. The commuting use amount recorded shall be used to calculate the taxable income in the ensuing month and added to the employee's taxable income.
 - 4. Fringe benefit valuation does not apply to law enforcement vehicles authorized by the Sheriff.

3. **Transportation of Non-County Employees**

When using fleet vehicles, passengers shall be limited to county employees or travelers engaged in official county business.

4. **Use of Personal Vehicles for County Business.**

- a). **Rates of Reimbursement.** Employees shall be reimbursed for the use of their personal vehicles at the following rates (to be set by the County Administrator generally based on the established State of Wisconsin vehicle mileage reimbursement rates):
 - 1. a "standard" rate when a county fleet vehicle is not available, and
 - 2. at a lower "turn down" rate if a fleet vehicle is available, but the employee makes a decision to use their personal vehicle. (The "turn down" rate is the state approximate cost per mile of operating a vehicle, including maintenance, fuel, insurance, and depreciation expenses.)
- b). **Reimbursement Approval.** Supervisors can approve reimbursement at the standard rate only after they have viewed a printout of the Outlook schedule before the date of vehicle use that shows no vehicles are available. Each supervisor shall be required to keep a "fleet vehicle reimbursement log" of reimbursed personal trips that shall include the date and time of the trip with a copy of the computer printout.
- c). **Remote Work Sites.** If an employee's job assignment includes providing services in outlying areas of the county where the employee also resides, either the

employee's Department Head or supervisor can approve standard mileage reimbursement for those service visits if they determine a cost advantage to the County by doing so. An analysis of that cost advantage shall accompany any proposed reimbursement at the standard rate.

c. Fleet Vehicle Reservation System

1. County-wide Computer Reservation Program

Utilizing the calendar option on Microsoft Outlook, county employees, elected officials or non-uniformed state or federal employees with office space located within the County facility can make a reservation for one of the vehicles in the fleet pool. Employees may make and cancel reservations for others if authorized by their Department Head. All information entered into the system (including date, time, employee name and destination) should be verified to ensure completeness and accuracy in order to ensure the registration system functions correctly. Individuals without access to the calendar option on Microsoft Outlook shall contact the County Clerk's Office for assistance.

If an employee has multiple trips to make in a short period of time (defined as not more than 30 minutes between trips), they may schedule a vehicle for the entire period if all trips are annotated during the registration process. Any employee found willfully abusing the system in order to create a situation necessitating use of a personal vehicle will be subject to disciplinary action.

2. Reservation Process

Reservation procedures using Microsoft Outlook are located on the Employee Portal.

3. Priority Use

Reservations may be bumped by a higher priority and/or vehicle need. Factors to be considered in determining priority include trip length, client transport or emergency use. Respective Department Heads or managers should come to a mutual agreement as to which need is of a higher priority. In the event such agreement is not possible, the County Administrator will make the final determination.

d. Fleet Vehicle Check Out/In

1. Check Out

Employees should pick up vehicle keys and vehicle clipboards (with trip information and vehicle damage forms) in the County Clerk's office (Courthouse room #109). Gas cards are available in the glove box of the vehicle. All employees shall take the vehicle specific clipboard on each trip, and ensure all required information is properly annotated. If an employee needs a vehicle for an early morning commute that will occur before the Clerk's Office is open, it is the responsibility of that employee to ensure they have made arrangements to secure the keys prior to needing the vehicle.

2. Check In

Upon returning from a trip, vehicles are to be parked in the back, northernmost row of Parking Lot A. Vehicle keys and clipboards are to be returned immediately to the County

Clerk's office and checked in. If the County Clerk's office is closed for the day, leave the vehicle key and clipboard in the County Clerk's After Hours box. Vehicles, however, have to remain parked in County Parking Lot A, and cannot be used for any other purpose.

3. Maintenance Issues

In the event maintenance is required, employees need to make all necessary notations on the trip information form and then shall inform County Clerk personnel of the issue. This is necessary because the vehicle may need to be removed from service until the issues/problems/concerns can be assessed by the Highway Department.

4. Reservation Cancellations

In the event that a planned trip is canceled, the vehicle reservation is to be immediately canceled in order to ensure vehicles are available for use. Extenuating circumstances that may prevent a cancellation shall be approved by supervisors.

e. Fueling Fleet Vehicles

At the end of the workday, users need to ensure that each vehicle is returned with at least a $\frac{3}{4}$ full tank of gas. Drivers shall fuel vehicles at the Highway Shop. The lone exception is when refueling during a longer trip is necessary to prevent running out of fuel. In these cases only purchase enough fuel to return to the Highway Shop for complete re-fueling.

1. Policy

- a). Use only the fuel card assigned to the vehicle that is being fueled.
- b). Do not share your employee and personal identification number with others.
- c). Input correct and accurate odometer readings.
- d). Ensure the vehicle has at least a $\frac{3}{4}$ full tank of gas after use, and be sure vehicle is full before leaving the County. Try to minimize refueling while outside the county. The fuel is purchased in bulk and the road tax is removed so there are substantial cost savings to fuel using the county system.

2. Fueling Procedure

- a). Each vehicle has a fuel card assigned to it. Use only assigned card for the vehicle.
- b). Swipe fuel card at fuel island terminal.
- c). When prompted for 2nd card, input your employee number then press enter.
- d). When prompt for personal identification number (P.I.N.), input the last 4 digits of your social security number then, enter.
- e). When prompt for odometer reading, input the exact odometer reading then, enter.

f). When prompt for pump number, input pump number of correct product then, enter and use pump. Highway shops with fueling stations allow for three (3) attempts before shutting off the fuel access. Contact the Highway Department if the card is locked.

3. Lost and Damaged fuel cards

- a). Report lost cards immediately.
- b). Lost cards and damaged cards can be reissued by contacting the Highway Office (726-7914) or the Highway Department at 738-2615.

4. Highway Shops with fueling stations are located at the following addresses:

- a). Chippewa Falls – 801 East Grand Ave, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
- b). Bloomer – 8837 200th Ave, Bloomer, WI, 54724
- c). Boyd – 510 CTH X, Boyd, WI 54726
- d). Cornell – 20250 CTH K, Cornell, WI 54732

f. Miscellaneous

1. Cleaning

The interior and exterior of the vehicles will be cleaned periodically through arrangements made by the County Clerk. Drivers have the option of taking a vehicle through a car wash as a part of their trip. Car wash directions are located on the back of each vehicle clipboard. Drivers are responsible to ensure that all personal items and trash are removed from the vehicle at the end of the trip.

2. Basic Vehicle Equipment

Each vehicle should be equipped with maps of Chippewa County and Wisconsin, a first aid kit, an ice/snow scraper, Accident Reporting Kits, vehicle registration and an extension cord to plug the vehicle in during cold weather. If any of these items are missing, the Highway Department is to be notified so that the item can be replaced. The Highway Department will periodically check the inventory for serviceability and completeness.

3. Cold Weather Procedure

Vehicles are to be plugged in by the drivers when the temperature is expected to be below zero degrees.

In cold weather, employees are responsible for checking and unplugging electrical cords from vehicles in cold weather before starting them.

4. Rental Vehicles

Rental vehicles are authorized to be used in situations where it is the most cost-efficient means of transportation or the efficient conduct of county business precludes the use of other means of transportation. Department Heads are authorized to determine if rental vehicles should be used.

5. Non-Reimbursable Items

Whenever possible, vehicles are to be refueled at a Highway Shop. Costs for re-fueling at a commercial filling station are only reimbursable in situations when trip length necessitates refueling before the trip is completed. In these cases, the refueling is only to be to the amount that assures return of the vehicle to the Highway Shop without running out of fuel.

Maintenance items such as floor mats, trailer hitches, air fresheners, car wash soap and other vehicle accessories are not reimbursable without prior approval from the Highway Department.

(Section 34 was adopted 03/11/08 and amended 12/8/09, 12/08/15, 03/13/18, 11/6/18, 01/08/19; 09/10/19; 01/14/2025)

35. Cell Phone

a. Purpose

This policy governs the use of mobile cellular telephones (cell phones). The guidelines, prohibitions and information established in this policy are meant to provide departments and employees with specific information regarding the intended use of cell phones as well as procedures related to their procurement and use.

To provide efficiency through the use of technology, the County shall provide a county issued cell phone or a personal cell phone allowance to authorized individuals. The use of a cellular device allows the employee to remain available for work related communication while away from their office land line and enables them to complete the essential functions of their job.

Job descriptions shall state if the availability of a personal cell phone is a requirement of the job.

b. Policy

The respective Department Heads are responsible for identifying the needs of their departments and requesting needed equipment and services.

All requests for a cellular phone allowance require authorization by the Department Head and shall meet the following justification guidelines.

1. Employee has management responsibility which requires a cellular phone for operational tasks; or
2. Task driven functions that require a cell phone
 - a). An identifiable and articulable need,
 - b). For a specific task or function,
 - c). The use of which shall enhance efficiency or effectiveness of county operations.

c. Allowances

Once a Department Head has determined a specific need for an employee to possess a cell phone for the efficiency of county operations, and that employee either currently has a personal cell phone, or agrees to obtain a cell phone at their own expense, that employee shall receive a monthly allowance for the proposed use of that phone for county business.

1. Proposed Allowance:

- a). \$10 per month for employee designated for continuous availability during work and/or non-work hours with only occasional calls expected
- b). \$20 per month for employee designated for continuous availability during work and/or non-work hours with frequent calls expected.
- c). \$35 per month for employee designated for continuous availability during work and/or non-work hours with heavy volume of calls expected and/or the need to receive critical alerts, on-call access, etc.

The allowance is for monthly phone use only. Allowances shall be paid on the first payroll of the month for the preceding month. To be eligible for the monthly allowance, an employee must have worked the majority of the month.

New enrollments – Eligibility date is based on receipt of the Cell Phone Allowance Initiation Form (HR-610-B), found on the Employee Portal, and hire date shall meet the majority of the month criteria.

Terminations/Retirements – If the employee terminates employment the 1st – 15th of the month, they are not eligible for the month's allowance. If the employee terminates employment the 16th – EOM, they are eligible for the month's allowance.

Department Heads shall send a completed Cell Phone Allowance Initiation Form, found on the Employee Portal, to the Human Resources Director for approval. This shall include the employee's name, cell phone number and general ledger account code.

d. County Owned Cell Phone

County owned cell phones are for work purposes only. No personal use of a County owned cell phone is allowed except for "di minimus" use, defined as limited incidental calls of two (2) minutes or less per call and not to exceed five (5) times a month.

Employees in possession of County equipment such as cell phones are expected to protect the equipment from loss, damage or theft. Upon resignation or termination of employment or at any time upon request, the employee may be asked to produce the phone to return for inspection, upgrade or changes. Like all county equipment, it is the employee's responsibility to maintain and protect the equipment. In the event of damage or loss, this should be reported immediately to the employee's supervisor and the Information Technology Division Employees shall not be reimbursed for the cost of any lost, stolen or damaged personal cell phones.

e. Procurement

Department Heads are responsible to identify the needs of their departments, to request needed equipment and services, and to authorize the use of cell phones by designated employees.

The Information Technology Division is assigned the responsibility to manage and administer cellular phone contracts with vendors and place all orders for County provided equipment. County provided cell phones shall be billed on one single County account and then separated to departments based on cell phone usage and/or county issued cell phone number designation.

f. Phone Usage

While at work, employees are to exercise the same discretion in using cell phones as they do for County phones. Excessive personal use during the workday, regardless of the phone used, can interfere with employee productivity and can be distracting to others. Employees must limit personal use while on-duty or at work so that they do not interfere with the performance of their duties. Employees are asked to make any personal calls on non-work time when possible and to ensure that friends and family members are aware of the County's policy.

Employees are not required to carry a cell phone, unless they have been authorized and approved to receive an allowance or a county owned cell phone.

g. Camera Phones

Use of Camera phones to take photographs may violate the privacy rights of co-workers, vendors and customers and may also be used to convey confidential information or undermine the County's operations.

Wisconsin State Statute 175.22 protects the privacy interests of individuals who use locker rooms and specifies that no person may use a cell phone to capture, record, or transfer a representation of a nude or partially nude person in a locker room.

Use of the camera on camera phones or any other camera or device in Chippewa County facilities that may capture visual images is prohibited unless it is being used directly for work purposes and the employee received prior written permission of their supervisor.

h. Safety Issues for Cell Phone Use

Using a cell phone while operating a vehicle is prohibited. It is the employee's responsibility to remain completely attentive to the task of driving while operating a vehicle.

Employees shall be responsible for payment of any traffic violations resulting from the use of a cell phone while driving.

An employee's failure to follow the provisions of this policy, or any subordinate departmental policy, may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

(Section 35 was adopted 06/10/08 and amended 12/08/15, 03/13/18)

36. Safety Equipment/Uniforms

a. Purpose

To ensure that employees wear safety equipment that shall provide the necessary support and protection required of the job they are assigned.

b. Departments with Uniform Requirements

1. Highway Department

All Chippewa County highway employees (management staff and support staff excluded) shall be required to wear uniforms provided by the County while working. Each regular status employee shall be provided seven (7) uniform shirts, seven (7) uniform pants, and five (5) t-shirts. Each Seasonal employee shall be provided five (5) t-shirts. Uniforms may be replaced due to damage or normal wear by turning in the worn out uniform in accordance with Highway Department procedures.

2. Facilities and Parks

All Chippewa County Facilities and Parks Division employees (Department Head and support staff excluded) shall be required to wear uniforms provided by the County while working. Uniforms provided are determined based on the position held. Uniforms may be replaced due to damage or normal wear by turning in the worn out uniform to the Department Head for replacement.

Type and quantity of the uniforms shall be provided as defined in each position's job description as determined by the Department Head.

3. Sheriff's Department

All Chippewa County Jailers shall be required to wear uniforms, identification, and safety and security equipment supplied by the County at all times while working in accordance with the Sheriff's Department Dress Code Policy. Each employee shall be provided two (2) uniform shirts and two (2) uniform pants. Uniforms may be replaced due to damage or normal wear by turning in the worn out uniform to the Jail Lieutenant for replacement.

All Chippewa County Sheriff's Management shall be provided with standard uniforms, casual uniforms and related equipment as determined by the Sheriff's Department Dress Code Policy. Uniforms may be replaced due to damage or normal wear by turning in the worn out uniforms in accordance with Sheriff's Department procedures.

c. Protective Footwear

The County is committed to providing a safe work environment for its employees. Several employee job descriptions require employees to wear protective footwear. Protective footwear for all required positions, except Parks employees, shall be a minimum 6" boot height and meet the requirements of OSHA CFR 1910.136. For Parks employees, 3" to 6" boot height is permitted. The decision whether to include the wearing of protective footwear as a requirement of a particular position's job description shall be determined by the Department Head and approved by the Human Resources Director.

The County shall provide those employees who are required by their job descriptions to wear protective footwear an annual stipend of \$125 to be used towards the purchase of protective footwear. Footwear costs in excess of \$125 shall be paid by the employee. The County Administrator has authority to change/update the stipend amount as necessary. The stipend shall be issued annually in April to all employees who have this requirement in their job description.

Authorized Seasonal LTES who work a minimum of 60 days during the season may receive a stipend and subject to approval by the Department Head. If approved, the \$125 stipend shall be paid on the last paycheck of the season.

Protective footwear purchased using the stipend shall be the property of the employee and may be used outside of the workplace, but shall be available by the employee and in suitable condition to be worn during working hours when required.

d. Safety Glasses

Chippewa County shall supply safety glasses/goggles where required for the work performed. The cost of prescription safety glasses is the responsibility of the employee. The County shall pay for replacement of prescription safety glasses that were broken in the course of work by following the department's procedures.

e. Other Safety Devices

Other required safety devices not specified in this Policy shall be provided by each respective Department.

(Section 36 was amended by the County Board 12/08/15, 03/13/18, 11/6/18; 09/13/2022)

CHAPTER 4 – RECRUITMENT, HIRING, AND SEPARATION

37. Recruitment and Selection

a. Policy

To provide a recruitment and selection process for all appointed county positions. The County observes all equal employment opportunity laws and regulations in all of its recruitment and selection efforts. The selection process shall include an evaluation of the applicant's education, relative abilities, skills, knowledge, and experience.

b. Responsibility

The Human Resources Director shall develop and conduct an active recruitment program designed to meet current and projected county employment needs. Recruitment shall be tailored to the position to be filled as determined by the Human Resources Director or designee.

It is the responsibility of the Department Heads and Managers and other hiring officials to adhere to all recruitment and onboarding procedures outlined on the Employee Portal.

c. New Full Time and Part Time Positions

Any Department Head or Elected Official requesting the creation of a new full time or part time position shall review the request with the County Administrator. The County Administrator shall make an initial determination whether to forward the request for further consideration.

Upon approval by the County Administrator, the request for a new position shall require a resolution containing a statement that includes the total fiscal impact of the new position and a recommended start date. New position requests shall be reviewed by the department's policy

committee. Then, a resolution shall be approved by the Executive Committee and forwarded to the full County Board for its consideration and approval.

d. Vacancies and Other Position Changes

The County Administrator shall have the discretionary authority to approve or deny all of the following:

1. Department Head or Elected Official requests to fill a vacancy for a full time or part time.
2. Department Head or Elected Official requests to change an existing position's status from full time to part time.
3. Department Head or Elected Official requests to change an existing position's title or job responsibilities that may result in a fiscal impact.
4. Department Head or Elected Official requests to fill a new or vacant LTE position.

When the County determines that a vacancy or new position shall be filled, the County may display a position announcement of such vacancy or new position on the county website, on the bulletin board outside the County Clerk's office and bulletin board in the Human Resources Division.

Position announcements may be publicly displayed for the period of time that applications are accepted. The position announcement information may include (but is not limited to) minimum qualifications required, the date the position is to be filled, rate of pay, benefit package, application process, and the current position description or position summary. The County may advertise publicly as needed to yield the most qualified candidates.

A Chippewa County application is required of all applicants, regardless of current employment status with Chippewa County, unless an exception is approved by the Human Resources Director. Applications are only accepted through the online application process at www.co.chippewa.wi.us.

e. Interview

Meeting the minimum qualifications does not automatically guarantee an interview. The selection process shall include an evaluation of the applicant's education, relative abilities, skills, knowledge, and experience based on that information obtained on the County Application. All applicants shall be notified via e-mail of the outcome once the position has been filled.

1. Interview panels may consist of any of the following combinations and shall be determined by the Department Head:
 - a. Department Head;
 - b. Department Supervisor(s);
 - c. Policy committee member(s);
 - d. Human Resources Director;
 - e. Internal or External stakeholder that may work regularly with the new employee.
2. Department Head vacancy interview panels shall consist of a minimum of one policy committee members (typically the Chair), the County Administrator and the Human Resources Director.

f. Skills Testing /Pre-Employment Testing

The Human Resources Director shall determine the structure of the skills testing and pre-employment tests. The Human Resources Division shall administer, or make the decision to delegate, the testing process. If testing is a required part of the application process, it shall be noted in the position job description.

g. Background Screening

The Human Resources Director shall determine the structure of the background screens for each position. The Human Resources Division shall administer, or make the decision to delegate, the background screening process.

h. Hiring

With the exception of Department Head and County Administrator positions, all recommendations for hire are subject to review and approval of the Department Head or Elected Official.

The appointment of Department Head positions shall be made by the County Administrator pending confirmation by the County Board in compliance with County ordinance and Wis. Stats. § 59.18.

It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to provide oversight of the County Administrator. The Executive Committee is responsible for recommending a candidate for the County Administrator position and an employment agreement pending County Board confirmation.

(Section 37 amended by the County Board 12/08/15, 03/13/18, 11/6/18; 09/13/2022)

38. Employee Referral Reward

a. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for an Employee Referral Reward. The County would like to encourage employees to seek out and refer people they know to apply for open positions with Chippewa County. Open positions are posted on the County website's Career Opportunities page and the Human Resources Division Facebook page.

Current employees are well equipped to know who will connect with County government and our mission to serve the public. We trust that employees know who may fit our culture best and for this reason, the County will offer a Referral Reward (less taxes) via direct deposit to employees who refer a candidate who is subsequently hired for a posted position.

b. Eligibility

This policy shall apply to all active Chippewa County employees.

c. Referral Process

1. The referring employee shall complete an Employee Referral Form located on the Employee Portal and submit it to the Human Resources Division.

2. The Employee Referral Form shall be submitted no later than the last day of the close of the recruitment/advertisement on the County website. Open positions are typically advertised for a two-week period. In rare cases, if a position is not advertised on the County website, the Employee Referral Form is due at least two days before the interview by the applicant and supervisor.
3. If two or more employees refer the same applicant, only the first referring employee to submit the Referral Form to the Human Resources Division will receive the Referral Reward.

d. Referral Reward Amount

To thank employees for recommending and referring Chippewa County as an employer to people you know, we will pay a Referral Reward in two payment installments once the applicant / referred employee completes two (2) months of employment and then twelve (12) months of employment with Chippewa County.

1. Total: The County employee making the referral is eligible for up to a \$1,000 Referral Reward (less taxes).
 - a. Payment 1: After the referred employee successfully completes two (2) months of employment, \$250 (less taxes) will be paid to the County employee who made the referral on the next pay period following eligibility.
 - b. Payment 2: After the referred employee successfully completes twelve (12) months of employment, \$750 (less taxes) will be paid to the County employee who made the referral on the next pay period following eligibility.

e. Other Requirements:

1. Department Heads, managers, supervisors or employees directly or indirectly involved in the hiring decision are not eligible for an Employee Referral Reward.
2. Referring employee must be an active Chippewa County employee at the time the Referral Reward is paid.
3. Existing employees cannot be referred or qualify an employee for an Employee Referral Reward.
4. The applicant shall not have applied previously for any County position within the last 12 months.
5. Applicant shall not have been a previous employee, intern or independent contractor of Chippewa County in the previous 24 months.
6. A Referral Reward shall not be paid to an employee for referring applicants accepting LTE or Reserve positions that are scheduled and/or work less than 975 hours per year/season or do not complete the entire season they were hired for.
7. The Department or Division receiving the new employee will be charged the Employee Referral Reward. A Referral Reward shall not result in the Department going over budget. It is recommended to adjust the start date accordingly if needed for budgetary reasons.

8. All individuals referred by employees will receive the same employment consideration as applicants from other sources.
9. All information regarding the hiring decision will remain strictly confidential. The referring employee will be notified by the Human Resources Division once eligibility for the reward has been determined.
10. Chippewa County reserves the right to deny Referral Reward payments to any employee who improperly makes promises or assurances of employment to prospective or actual applicants, or otherwise engages in improper or inappropriate conduct related to this policy.

(Section 38 adopted by the County Board 09/13/2022)

39. Separation from Employment

a. Purpose

To establish uniform practices for the separation from employment with Chippewa County.

b. Definitions

1. Separation is defined as follows: resignation, retirement, layoff, failure to return from approved leave, position elimination, or discharge from employment. Such employment separations may be voluntary or involuntary.
2. Qualified Separation is defined as follows:
 - a. Resignation or retirement from employment with Chippewa County with advanced written notice as defined in Employee Notice of this Policy.
 - b. Permanent layoff from employment
 - c. Discharge from employment when the employee has 3 or more years of continuous years of service with the County based on most recent date of hire unless the employee is discharged for misconduct.
3. Misconduct is defined as intentional and substantial disregard of or intentional and unreasonable interference with the employer's interests.
4. Discharge is defined as dismissal from employment for involuntary reasons.

c. Employee Notice

For the purposes of employee notice, the following definitions apply:

1. Retirement occurs when an employee voluntarily terminates employment with Chippewa County and is eligible for WRS annuity benefits. Eligibility is age 50 for Protective Status employees (Chief Deputy, Field Services Lieutenant, Field Services Sergeants, Patrol Officers and Investigators) and age 55 for all other employees.

2. Resignation occurs when an employee voluntarily terminates employment with Chippewa County and is not eligible for WRS annuity benefits.
3. Working Notice is when the employee shall work their normally scheduled shift the entire required notice period as defined below. If time off is planned and approved during the notice period, the employee's last day of employment shall be extended to provide a working notice equal to the full amount of the notice (2 weeks or 30 days). If an employee takes unscheduled PTO during the notice period and is able to extend their last day to provide a proper qualified separation notice (2 weeks or 30 days), the employee shall not be paid the unscheduled PTO until the working notice is paid on the final paycheck.

When an employee decides to resign from employment with the County, Chippewa County requires at least two (2) weeks working advance notice. If an employee decides to retire from employment with the County, Chippewa County requires a thirty (30) days advance notice. No more than 40 hours (full time employee) or 20 hours (part time employee) of PTO may be used by someone retiring during the notice.

Department Heads and managers who resign from employment with the County, shall provide at least thirty (30) days working advance notice, and shall be effective upon receipt by the appointing authority. Department Heads and managers who retire from employment with the County, shall provide at least sixty (60) days advance notice, and shall be effective upon receipt by the appointing authority. No more than 40 hours (full time employee) or 20 hours (part time employee) of PTO may be used by someone retiring during the required part of the notice period.

When an employee separates employment, a written notice shall be provided to their Department Head indicating a resignation or retirement and estimated last day. The separation notice shall then be forwarded to the Human Resources Division within one (1) business day.

If an employee fails to give the required notice, the employee's resignation or retirement shall not be considered a Qualified Separation, unless the Human Resources Director determines that acceptable reasons for a shorter notice period exist.

d. Layoffs

Chippewa County retains the right to lay off employees, in whole or in part, and to retain those employees who are most qualified to perform the available work regardless of their previous length of employment.

1. Notice of layoff

Employees to be laid off shall be given as much notice as practical prior to the effective date of the layoff.

2. Procedure

The needs of the County shall be the primary consideration used in the employer's determination of which employees shall be laid off.

e. Separation Procedures

Upon separation from employment, employees should make an appointment with the Human Resources Division to cover payout provisions, benefit termination and continuation options, and an exit interview.

f. County Property

Prior to separation from employment, County equipment that was assigned to the employee shall be returned to the County. Such equipment includes, but is not limited to, ID card, electronic access device, keys, tape recorders, laptop, computers, iPads and other electronics, calculators, radios, and cell phones.

g. Last Day of Employment

In most cases, the last day worked shall be considered the last day of employment. The County reserves the right to determine the last day of employment.

h. Restrictions

The employee is prohibited from extending their last day of employment with available paid time.

i. Death of an Employee

Upon the death of an employee, the County shall pay to the estate of the deceased employee all accumulated and unused PTO and Compensatory time for which the deceased employee may have otherwise been eligible to use at the time of his/her death.

j. Separation Conversion/Payouts

1. PTO and Holiday Conversion

The accumulated PTO of an employee leaving Chippewa County employment due to a qualified separation shall be converted into the County's Conversion Plan, (herein referred to as the "Plan").

The conversion of PTO is mandatory upon a qualified separation and all separating employees with unused PTO on the date of their separation shall participate in the Plan. The employee shall have all PTO converted to a dollar value calculated by taking the number of total PTO hours multiplied by the regular straight time hourly rate of pay at the time of separation (hereinafter "Benefit").

An employee whose separation is non-qualified shall not be eligible for the PTO payout.

2. Compensatory Time Conversion

The accumulated compensatory time of a non-exempt employee leaving Chippewa County employment due to any separation shall be paid on the employee's last paycheck.

The accumulated compensatory time of an exempt employee leaving Chippewa County employment due to any separation shall be converted into the County's Conversion Plan, (herein referred to as the "Plan"). The conversion of compensatory time for an exempt employee is mandatory upon a separation and all separating exempt employees with unused compensatory time on the date of their separation shall participate in the Plan.

The exempt employee shall have all compensatory time converted to a dollar value calculated by taking the number of total compensatory time multiplied by the regular straight time hourly rate of pay at the time of separation (hereinafter "Benefit").

3. Benefit

Within thirty (30) days of receiving written notice of an employee's separation, the County shall elect the form in which the separating employee shall receive the Benefit upon completion of a benefit exit interview with a member of the Human Resources Division. The Benefit paid to the separating employee shall be limited to one of the following forms:

- a). The County shall make a contribution to a Medical Expense Trust for the benefit of the separating employee to be applied toward health insurance premiums and un-reimbursed medical expenses specified under IRS Code Section 213. This benefit shall continue until fully exhausted by the separating employee or their qualified dependent beneficiaries.
- b). The County shall make a contribution to a 401(a) qualified deferred compensation plan (as selected by the County in its sole discretion) in the amount of the Benefit, which shall be paid to the separating employee according to the terms of the selected plan.

(Section 39 amended by the County Board 12/08/15, 03/13/18, 11/6/18; 09/13/2022; 01/14/2025)

40. Nepotism

a. Policy

It is the policy of the County to restrict employment of immediate family members within the same department, division, shift and/or work unit. Compliance with this policy is intended to prevent potential or perceived favoritism; or perceived or actual conflict of interest among employees, and to promote a harassment-free working environment.

No two (2) members of an immediate family shall be employed in, or promoted or transferred to, any department, division, shift and/or work unit when as a result they would be in a superior-subordinate relationship, unless prior written approval is received from the Human Resources Director. This provision shall not apply in departments where the superior is an elected official of the County and the immediate family member was employed by the County prior to the election of the superior. Any conflict or employment action that arises in cases where the superior is an elected official of the County shall be handled jointly by said superior and the Human Resources Director.

b. Definitions

1. Immediate family member. For purposes of this policy, "immediate family member" shall include, but is not limited to an employee's wife, husband, mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, and the various combinations of half, step, in-law, and adopted relationships that can be derived from the family members named herein.

2. Promotion. For purposes of this policy, “promotion” shall mean the assignment of an employee from one class to another class with a higher pay range.
3. Transfer. For purposes of this policy, “transfer” shall mean the assignment of an employee from one position to another in the same class or to a class with the same pay range.
4. Employee. For purposes of this policy, “employee” shall mean all regular full time or part time employees, as well as all employees used throughout the county in an on-call, seasonal, reserve, or limited term, casual, or temporary capacity.
5. Superior-subordinate relationship. For purposes of this policy, “superior-subordinate relationship” shall mean direct command or supervisory authority, or the capability to influence personnel or disciplinary actions, assignments or other benefits or privileges of employment.

c. Other Relationships

While the definition of Nepotism identifies relationships that are likely to be perceived as a conflict of interest in an immediate superior-subordinate relationship, employees should also guard against other superior-subordinate relationships that could be perceived as creating a conflict of interest. In order to safeguard the interests of both employees and the County, the Department Head/Manager and the Human Resources Director should be alerted to any employee relationships that pose, or potentially pose, a conflict of interest.

(Section 40 adopted by the County Board 11/13/12; 09/13/2022)

41. Academic Internship

a. Purpose

An academic internship is a worksite experience during which a student – with guidance and supervision at the workplace – completes a planned series of activities and set of learning objectives or project(s) designed to give a broad understanding of a business or occupational area. By integrating the internship activities or project(s) at the workplace with school-based learning, the student develops both job and academic skills. Academic internships should be designed to give the student a better idea of what it is like to work within a government entity. It is an opportunity to develop a foundation of general workplace skills and to acquire information about a wide variety of careers.

b. Civil Rights

Paid and unpaid interns fall under the same guidelines as regular employees when it comes to civil rights and nondiscrimination. Employers are not allowed to select interns based on race, ethnicity, age, gender, etc., nor can they discriminate against interns with disabilities. Interns with disabilities shall be provided reasonable accommodations to perform their essential job functions as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Interns are protected by harassment laws in the same scope and manner as employees.

c. Paid Internships

Students must either be currently enrolled, or have completed a degreed program in the last academic year, in a higher education institution to be considered for a paid academic internship. The internship shall be academically related to the student’s major field of study or career focus.

Paid interns shall be considered employees and shall have the same rights and benefits as other limited term and non-bargaining employees employed with Chippewa County.

Departments shall request to hire an intern by following the Department of Administration's Position Justification Procedure (Appendix HR-606-A). Length of internship and maximum hours shall be predetermined and specified on said request.

Requests for paid internships should only be submitted when 100% non-levy funding is secured.

Paid interns may be hired through a competitive hiring process, as arranged by the Human Resources Division. The hiring department shall comply with all current recruitment procedures. Paid interns, once hired, shall be oriented to the County as an employee of the County and comply with all County and department specific policies and procedures.

1. Academic component

Because paid internships sometimes do not result in academic credit, the hiring department shall ensure the internship is academically related to the student's major field of study or career focus. The intern should request approval from the educational institution and work with a faculty advisor to complete work assigned through an independent study course if required.

2. Unemployment

State unemployment allows for certain student exemptions for unemployment compensation. As a result, paid interns may qualify for unemployment benefits after leaving the County. This benefit, if claimed by a previous intern, shall be charged to the hiring department.

d. Unpaid Internships

1. Unpaid internships shall be related to a student's major field of study or career focus. They are predefined in length by the County, often lasting only one semester or for the summer. Students shall be currently enrolled in a higher education institution, and should receive college credit for their internships. Current employees in the same or similar position or department shall not be permitted to participate in an "unpaid" internship in the same or similar position.

The Department of Labor has six criteria to determine if a student is a learner/trainee (i.e. Intern) and therefore does not have to be paid. The position should ultimately be more of a training experience than a job:

- a). The training, though it may include actual operation of the employer's facilities, is similar to training that would be given in a vocational school.
- b). The training is for the benefit of the student.
- c). The student does not displace regular employees, but works under close observation of a regular employee.

- d). The employer provides training and derives no immediate advantage from activities to the student.
- e). The student is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the training period.
- f). The employer and the student understand that the student is not entitled to wages for the time spent training.

2. Unpaid internships should be able to answer yes to at least half the following questions if an unpaid internship is being considered:

- a). Is the work that you are offering an integral part of the student's course of study?
- b). Will the student receive credit for the work or is the internship required for graduation?
- c). Does the student have to prepare a report of his/her experience and submit it to a faculty supervisor?
- d). Have you received a letter or some other form of written documentation from the school stating that the internship is approved or sponsored by the school as educationally relevant?
- e). Will the student perform work that other employees also perform; will the student be doing the work for the purpose of learning and not necessarily performing a task for the employer?
- f). Is the student working and providing benefit to you less than 50 percent of the time and/or is the student in a shadowing/learning mode?
- g). Will you provide an opportunity for the individual to learn a skill, process, or other business function, or operate equipment?
- h). Is there educational value to the work performed; that is, is it related to the courses the person is taking in school?
- i). Is the individual supervised by one of your staff members?
- j). Is it clear that a job is not guaranteed upon completion of the training or completion of the person's schooling?

3. Unpaid internships shall be requested following the Department of Administration's Position Justification Procedure (Appendix HR-606-A). Requests shall include an agreement as described below.

- a). Agreement

Unpaid internship programs shall have an agreement, letter, or some other form of written documentation from the school stating that the internship is approved or sponsored by the school as educationally relevant. This agreement shall include a statement indicating there shall be no pay and no guaranteed job following

completion of the internship. This agreement shall outline the expectations of the County, the student, and the education institution.

Some agreements may include confidentiality and HIPPA agreements, and background checks due to the nature of the scope of the internship.

b). Responsibility

The department supervisor shall assume responsibility for the intern's placement, and shall orient and advise the student of all applicable department policies.

c). Academic component

Students may be eligible to receive college credit for unpaid internships. Students work with a faculty advisor in their area of study who assists in developing learning objectives, assigning and grading projects related to the work experience, and awards credit. The department supervisor shall be responsible to complete other educational institutional requirements such as student evaluations for the student to ensure academic credits are earned.

d). Liability

Potential liability exposures go hand in hand with interns. Proactive risk management efforts can help control and minimize liability exposures to help ensure the internship program is a positive experience for the intern and the County. The legal relationships that exist between the intern and the County result in two primary areas of potential liability: (1) the liability of the County for harm caused by the intern or harm to the intern, (2) the personal liability for injuries caused by the intern. All departments shall coordinate with the Human Resources Division prior to starting an intern to familiarize themselves with concepts of liability, responsibility and risk management.

The County shall provide the same protection to interns for any claims arising from acts done within the scope of their responsibilities as is provided by law for County employees.

e). Use of County Vehicles

The use of county vehicles by an unpaid intern is prohibited in accordance with Chippewa County's Vehicle Fleet Policy.

(Section 41 was adopted 09/09/09 and amended by the County Board 03/13/18, 11/6/18)

CHAPTER 5 – BENEFITS

The information provided is a summary only and is not intended to be a substitution for the plan certificate provided by the respective insurance carrier.

The County shall determine the design and selection of all benefits. The County retains the right to change these benefits. Employees shall be notified of any changes.

The benefits provided under this Chapter shall be administered by the Human Resources Division.

42. Health, Dental and Vision Insurance, Cobra, and Retiree Continuation

a. Purpose

To offer health, dental and vision insurance to those employees who qualify for coverage.

b. Coverage

The design and selection, including all level of benefits provided to County sponsored health, dental and vision insurance plans and insurance carriers are determined by the County.

Participation for employee groups is also determined by the County and applicable state and federal regulations; and is governed by the contract of insurance in place between the County and the chosen insurance provider. Employees shall receive notification of any health, dental and vision plan or carrier changes, as adopted by the County. Refer to the Certificate of Insurance for complete details, including limitations and exclusions.

c. Employee Premium Contribution

1. Health Insurance

Employee health insurance premium contributions are established by Chippewa County. Any employee required to pay any portion of the health insurance premium shall make such payment by payroll deduction on a pre-tax basis. All benefit payroll deduction schedules are at the discretion of the County and shall be determined by the County Administrator after consulting with the Human Resources and Finance Director (or designee). Some benefit deductions will be deducted one month in advance of the coverage, and others will occur during the month of coverage. Refer to the Employee Portal for details.

If an employee is on an approved leave and a payroll deduction is not possible, unless other arrangements have been approved by the Human Resources Division, an employee shall be responsible to pay any missed premium to Chippewa County within five (5) business days following the scheduled payroll deduction date. Failure to make premium payments may result in termination of coverage.

2. Dental and Vision Insurance

Employee dental and vision insurance premium contributions are established by Chippewa County. Employees are required to pay the full cost of the dental and vision insurance premium. Employees shall make such payment by payroll deduction on a pre-

tax basis. All benefit payroll deduction schedules are at the discretion of the County and shall be determined by the County Administrator after consulting with the Human Resources and Finance Director (or designee). Some benefit deductions will be deducted one month in advance of the coverage, and others will occur during the month of coverage. Refer to the Employee Portal for details.

If an employee is on an approved leave and a payroll deduction is not possible, unless other arrangements have been approved by the Human Resources Division, an employee shall be responsible to pay any missed premium to Chippewa County within five (5) business days following the scheduled payroll deduction date. Failure to make premium payments may result in termination of coverage.

d. Eligibility

1. Health Insurance

All full-time status employees are eligible for the County sponsored Health Insurance.

2. Dental and Vision Insurance

All full-time and part-time status employees who work 1,040 hours or greater each year are eligible for the County sponsored dental and vision plans.

e. Enrollment

Those employees who do not enroll in the health, dental or vision plans during their initial new employee eligibility period (typically occurs during the first week of employment or first week of the status change during the employee orientation meeting with the Human Resources Division) shall not be eligible again to enroll until one of the following two events occur:

1. Open Enrollment Event

The County holds an open enrollment period annually in the fourth quarter. Employees are eligible to make any change(s) to, cancel or add insurance coverage during the open enrollment period. All elections during open enrollment shall be effective on January 1st of the following year.

2. Section 125 Qualifying Event

IRS Section 125 defines the circumstances under which a plan may permit an employee to change his or her plan elections with respect to health, dental or vision coverage. A qualifying event occurs when an employee or dependent that is covered becomes (or ceases to be) eligible under the plan. A qualifying event allows employees to adjust health, dental or vision insurance coverage without waiting until the open enrollment period. The qualifying event shall be reported within 30 days of the event to the Human Resources Division along with written proof of the event. The qualifying event shall correspond with the change to the plan elections and shall be subject to the approval of the Human Resources Division. The effective date of the change shall be determined by the Human Resources Division, but shall be no later than the first day of the month following the qualifying event date. Common qualifying events include, but are not limited to:

a). Marriage

- b). Divorce or legal separation
- c). Birth, adoption or placement for adoption of a child
- d). Spouse's loss of employment
- e). Death
- f). Reduction in hours to less than full time status
- g). Dependent turns 26 (effective date of the change for this event only is the last day of the month that the dependent turns 26)

f. Effective Date

If health, dental or vision insurance is elected, insurance becomes effective on the first day of the month following thirty (30) days of employment with the County. The effective date applies to new hires and employees with a status change (as defined in Chapter 2, Section 1j) resulting in new eligibility.

If an employee is covered under a collective bargaining agreement and has a status change which results in the employee not being covered by the bargaining agreement, the effective date of the change in insurance shall be the first day of the month that follows the change in status.

If an employee is not covered under a collective bargaining agreement and has a status change which results in the employee being covered by a collective bargaining agreement, the effective date of the change in insurance shall be the first day of the month that follows the change in status.

g. Spousal Coverage Requirement

To maintain fairness and manage the overall expense of the health insurance plan, employees who are legally married to one another and both employed by Chippewa County are required to be covered under one health insurance plan.

1. Single Plan Enrollment

Married employees working for Chippewa County may not elect separate single coverage plans. They must be enrolled together on one plan option (e.g., Employee + Spouse or Full Family).

2. Plan Selection

Eligible employee spouses may choose which employee will be designated as the "primary subscriber" for the plan. The other spouse and any eligible dependent(s) must be covered under the same plan.

3. Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy will be considered only in limited circumstances, such as:

- o When one spouse becomes ineligible for health coverage under Chippewa County's plan (e.g., due to part-time status, waiting period, or loss of eligibility).
- o When compliance with this policy would result in a loss of coverage under applicable law (e.g., continuation rights under COBRA).

4. Coordination of Benefits

If one spouse has other insurance coverage available outside of Chippewa County, coordination of benefits rules will apply in accordance with plan provisions.

h. Health, Dental and Vision Insurance Coverage During FMLA or Other Leave

Refer to *Continuation of Insurance* section as identified under FMLA, Non-Medical Leave, Personal Leave, Military Leave, and Workers' Compensation Leave policies.

i. Waiver or Cancellation of Coverage

If an employee declines, waives or cancels any insurance coverage, the employee shall complete an insurance waiver form provided by the Human Resources Division unless it is during an open enrollment period. In this case, the employee will complete an electronic open enrollment form to decline, waive or cancel coverage.

The effective date of any change due to waiver shall be dependent on the reason and timing of the waiver and shall be determined by the Human Resources Division consistent with the reason or timing of the waiver and any regulatory requirements (such as COBRA or Section 125 qualifying event changes).

j. Coverage upon Separation

Health, dental and vision insurance coverage shall cease on the last day of the month in which the employee's separation from employment (last day of work) with the County occurs.

k. Insurance Continuation

Under state law and the Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) and subsequent amendments to the Act, employees covered under an employer's group insurance plan are eligible for continuation of any insurance coverage under the group plan. COBRA contains provisions giving certain employees, former employees, retirees, spouses, former spouses, and dependent children the right to temporary continuation of insurance coverage at group rates plus a 2% administration fee. This coverage, however, is only available when coverage is lost due to COBRA qualifying events.

COBRA qualifying events are events that would cause an individual to lose insurance coverage. The type of COBRA qualifying event shall determine who the qualified beneficiaries are and the amount of time that a plan shall offer the insurance coverage to them under COBRA. COBRA qualifying events include:

1. Employee or spouse's voluntary or involuntary separation of employment for reasons other than gross misconduct
2. Employee or spouse's reduction in the number of hours of employment
3. Spouse becomes eligible for Medicare
4. Divorce or legal separation
5. Death
6. Dependent child loss of dependent child status under the plan rules

The employee shall report the COBRA qualifying event within 30 days of the event to the Human Resources Division and provide written proof of the event. The effective date of the change shall be the qualifying event date.

All employees, as well as their qualified dependents, shall receive notice of mandated insurance continuation benefits when the plan coverage for the employee begins.

Should an employee in the Jail or law enforcement officer (as defined Wis. Stat. § 66.0137) die in the line of duty, coverage continues until the surviving spouse remarries or attains age 65 or until the dependent child(ren) reaches age 26.

I. Retiree Coverage

Retiree health insurance coverage is not available for employees who retire from Chippewa County on or after January 1, 2023. For employees eligible through 2022, retiree coverage is for health insurance only. Dental and vision are not offered as a retiree benefit. Retiree coverage in 2022 may be elected by the retiree when all of the following criteria are met:

1. The employee shall be enrolled at the time of retirement and have a minimum of one (1) year of enrollment in the Health Plan immediately prior to retirement; and
2. The employee shall be employed by the County for at least ten (10) consecutive years as a full-time status employee; and
3. The employee shall be age 55 or older (age 50 for employees classified as Protective Status).

If retiree health insurance coverage was elected before January 1, 2023, the retiree *and* eligible dependents may continue in the County sponsored retiree health plan until the retiree is eligible for Medicare. Retiree coverage is solely at the participant's expense.

(Section 42 adopted by the County Board 09/11/18; 09/10/19; 11/10/2020; 09/13/2022; 01/14/2025; 11/12/2025)

43. Care Navigation or Preferred Provider Incentive

a. Purpose

Chippewa County may offer the use of a care navigation service provider that gives insight into health care costs in an effort to empower health plan members to become better consumers. In addition, Chippewa County may also offer an additional provider network that includes high value (low cost high quality) providers in and outside of the Chippewa Valley. In some cases, the County may establish a financial incentive for the employee if a health plan member uses a specific high value, high quality medical provider. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines on the incentive, if the employee uses an approved medical provider.

b. Eligibility

All Chippewa County health plan members are eligible.

If an incentive is available for a procedure at an approved medical provider, the employee is eligible to be paid if the employee is enrolled in the County's healthcare benefit plan and they are active in Chippewa County's payroll system at the time of payment according to our normal incentive process as defined below. If an employee is terminated from Chippewa County's payroll system, which typically occurs the week of the last pay check, the employee is not eligible for the incentive.

For example, if someone has a qualifying procedure in July and the care navigation service provider or provider network gives Chippewa County written validation of the service on September 2nd, the incentive payment would be scheduled no later than the last paycheck in the month of September. If the employee is no longer active in the payroll system by the last paycheck in September, the employee is not eligible for the incentive.

c. Incentive Amounts

Incentive amounts shall be established by the County Administrator, after consultation with the care navigation service provider or provider network and the County's benefits consultant and Human Resources Director. Not all care navigation medical provider or provider network recommendations are incentivized. Services may be incentivized if there is a substantial difference in the cost of care from one provider to another and the provider is a high value, high quality medical provider as determined by the care navigation provider, provider network and/or benefits consultant. In some cases, the provider to be incentivized may not be the lowest cost provider in the area, but the one that has the best value (evaluating both quality and cost).

Incentive amounts may be changed at any time by the County Administrator, after consultation with the care navigation service provider, provider network, benefits consultant and Human Resources Director.

Incentive amounts shall be provided in a list and available on the Employee Portal under the Benefits tab. If the incentive amounts change, an updated list will be provided on the Employee Portal and an email shall be sent to all employees including the effective date of the change. It is the employee's responsibility to share the incentive amounts with their dependents.

Employees are not required to use the incentive eligible providers offered by the care navigation provider or provider network. However, employees will only receive an incentive if an incentive eligible provider is used and the employee completes the Incentive Request procedure outlined and provided on the Employee Portal.

d. Payment

The Human Resources Division will validate the information received by the care navigation service provider and submit the incentive amount to the Finance Division to be paid no later than the last paycheck of the month the report is received by the care navigation provider. For example, if an employee has an MRI in April and Human Resources receives written confirmation from the care navigation service provider of that service on the June 2nd monthly report, the employee shall receive the incentive payment (less payroll taxes) no later than the last paycheck in June.

(Section 43 adopted by the County Board 09/12/2023; 09/09/2025)

44. Accident Insurance

a. Purpose

To offer accident insurance to those employees who qualify for coverage.

b. Coverage

The design and selection, level of benefits, and carrier under and carrier of the County sponsored accident insurance plan shall be determined solely by the County. Refer to the Certificate of Insurance for complete details, including limitations and exclusions.

c. Employee Premium Contribution

Employee accident insurance premium contributions are established by Chippewa County. Employees are required to pay the full cost of the accident insurance premium. Employees shall make such payment by payroll deduction on an after-tax basis. All benefit payroll deduction schedules are at the discretion of the County and shall be determined by the County Administrator after consulting with the Human Resources and Finance Director (or designee). Some benefit deductions will be deducted one month in advance of the coverage, and others will occur during the month of coverage. Refer to the Employee Portal for details.

If an employee is on an approved leave and a payroll deduction is not possible, unless other arrangements have been approved by the Human Resources Division, an employee shall be responsible to pay any missed premium to Chippewa County within five (5) business days following the scheduled payroll deduction date. Failure to make premium payments may result in termination of coverage.

d. Eligibility

All full-time and part-time status employees who work 1,040 hours or greater each year are eligible for the County sponsored accident insurance plan.

e. Enrollment

Those employees who do not enroll in the accident insurance plan during their initial new employee eligibility period (typically occurs during the first week of employment or first week of the status change during the employee orientation meeting with the Human Resources Division) shall not be eligible again to enroll until one of the following two events occur:

1. Open Enrollment Event

The County holds an open enrollment period annually in the fourth quarter. Employees are eligible to add insurance coverage during the open enrollment period. All elections during open enrollment shall be effective on January 1st of the following year.

2. Qualifying Event

A qualifying event occurs when an employee or dependent that is covered becomes eligible under the plan. A qualifying event allows employees to enroll in the accident insurance plan without waiting until the open enrollment period. The qualifying event shall be reported within 30 days of the event to the Human Resources Division along with written proof of the event. The effective date of the change shall be determined by the Human Resources Division but shall be no later than the first day of the month following the qualifying event date. Common qualifying events include, but are not limited to:

- a). Marriage
- b). Divorce or legal separation
- c). Birth, adoption or placement for adoption of a child

f. Effective Date

If accident insurance is elected, insurance becomes effective on the first day of the month following thirty (30) days of employment with the County. The effective date applies to new hires and employees with a status change (as defined in Chapter 2, Section 1j) resulting in new eligibility.

If accident insurance is elected due to a qualifying event, insurance becomes effective the first day of the month following the qualifying event date.

g. Coverage during FMLA or other Leave

Refer to *Continuation of Other Benefits* section as identified under FMLA, Non-Medical Leave, Personal Leave, Military Leave, and Workers' Compensation Leave policies.

h. Waiver or Cancellation of Coverage

If an employee declines, waives or cancels any insurance coverage, the employee shall complete an insurance waiver form provided by the Human Resources Division.

The effective date of the cancellation of coverage will be the first of the year following the Open Enrollment event in which the cancellation was elected or the first of the month following a qualifying event applicable to the cancellation of coverage.

i. Coverage upon Separation

Accident Insurance coverage with the County shall cease on the last day of the month in which the employee's separation from employment (last day of work) with the County occurs.

j. Insurance Continuation

Opportunity for the continuation of coverage will be provided post separation by the insurance carrier.

(Section 44 approved by the CB 09/10/19; 11/10/2020; 11/12/2025)

45. Critical Illness Insurance

a. Purpose

To offer critical illness insurance to those employees who qualify for coverage.

b. Coverage

The design and selection, level of benefits, and carrier under and carrier of the County sponsored critical illness insurance plan shall be determined solely by the County. Refer to the Certificate of Insurance for complete details, including limitations and exclusions.

c. Employee Premium Contribution

Employee critical illness insurance premium contributions are established by Chippewa County. Employees are required to pay the full cost of the critical illness insurance premium. Employees shall make such payment by payroll deduction on an after-tax basis. All benefit payroll deduction

schedules are at the discretion of the County and shall be determined by the County Administrator after consulting with the Human Resources and Finance Director (or designee). Some benefit deductions will be deducted one month in advance of the coverage, and others will occur during the month of coverage. Refer to the Employee Portal for details.

If an employee is on an approved leave and a payroll deduction is not possible, unless other arrangements have been approved by the Human Resources Division, an employee shall be responsible to pay any missed premium to Chippewa County within five (5) business days following the scheduled payroll deduction date. Failure to make premium payments may result in termination of coverage.

d. Eligibility

All full-time and part-time status employees who work 1,040 hours or greater each year are eligible for the County sponsored critical illness insurance plan.

e. Enrollment

Those employees who do not enroll in the critical illness insurance plan during their initial new employee eligibility period (typically occurs during the first week of employment or first week of the status change during the employee orientation meeting with the Human Resources Division) shall not be eligible again to enroll until one of the following two events occur:

1. Open Enrollment Event

The County holds an open enrollment period annually in the fourth quarter. Employees are eligible to add insurance coverage during the open enrollment period. All elections during open enrollment shall be effective on January 1st of the following year.

2. Qualifying Event

A qualifying event occurs when an employee or dependent that is covered becomes eligible under the plan. A qualifying event allows employees to enroll in the critical illness insurance plan without waiting until the open enrollment period. The qualifying event shall be reported within 30 days of the event to the Human Resources Division along with written proof of the event. The effective date of the change shall be determined by the Human Resources Division but shall be no later than the first day of the month following the qualifying event date. Common qualifying events include, but are not limited to:

- a). Marriage
- b). Divorce or legal separation
- c). Birth, adoption or placement for adoption of a child

f. Effective Date

If critical illness insurance is elected, insurance becomes effective on the first day of the month following thirty (30) days of employment with the County. The effective date applies to new hires and employees with a status change (as defined in Chapter 2, Section 1j) resulting in new eligibility.

If critical illness insurance is elected due to a qualifying event, insurance becomes effective the first day of the month following the qualifying event date.

g. Coverage during FMLA or other Leave

Refer to *Continuation of Other Benefits* section as identified under FMLA, Non-Medical Leave, Personal Leave, Military Leave, and Workers' Compensation Leave policies.

h. Waiver or Cancellation of Coverage

If an employee declines, waives or cancels any insurance coverage, the employee shall complete an insurance waiver form provided by the Human Resources Division.

The effective date of the cancellation of coverage will be the first of the year following the Open Enrollment event in which the cancellation was elected or the first of the month following a qualifying event applicable to the cancellation of coverage.

i. Coverage upon Separation

Critical illness Insurance coverage with the County shall cease on the last day of the month in which the employee's separation from employment (last day of work) with the County occurs.

j. Insurance Continuation

Opportunity for the continuation of coverage will be provided post separation by the insurance carrier.

(Section 45 adopted by the County Board 11/10/2020; 11/12/2025)

46. Long-Term Disability

a. Purpose

To provide Long-Term supplemental income protection plan for employees who are unable to work due to qualified injury or illness.

b. Coverage

The design and selection, including all level of benefits provided to the County sponsored Long-Term Disability Plan and insurance carrier shall be determined solely by the County. Refer to the Certificate of Insurance for complete details, including limitations and exclusions.

c. Employee Premium Contribution

Premium payments for general municipal employees are made by the County.

d. Eligibility

All full time and part time status County employees who work 1,040 hours or greater each year are automatically enrolled into the Long-Term Disability Plan (income protection).

e. Enrollment

Enrollment into the Long-Term Disability Plan, for new employees or newly eligible employees due to status change, typically occurs during the first week of employment or first week of the status change during the employee orientation meeting with the Human Resources Division.

f. Effective Date

The effective date of coverage under the Long-Term Disability Plan shall be on the first day of the month following thirty (30) days of employment with the County. The effective date applies to new hires and employees with a status change (as defined in Chapter 2, Section 1j) resulting in new eligibility.

g. Coverage during FMLA or other Leave

Refer to *Continuation of Other Benefits* section as identified under FMLA, Non-Medical Leave, Personal Leave, Military Leave, and Workers' Compensation Leave policies.

h. Separation

Long-Term Disability coverage with the County shall cease on the day of the employee's separation from employment (last day of work) with the County. However, if the employee's income is actively supplemented by Long-Term disability at the time of separation, payment by the carrier shall continue as defined in the Summary Plan Document.

(Section 46 adopted by the County Board 09/11/18)

47. Short-Term Disability

a. Purpose

To provide a short-term income protection plan for employees who are unable to work due to a qualified injury or illness.

b. Coverage

The design and selection, including all level of benefits provided to participants under the County-sponsored Short-Term Disability Plan and insurance carrier shall be determined solely by the County. Refer to the Certificate of Insurance for complete details, including limitations and exclusions.

c. Employee Premium Contribution

All Short-Term Disability Plan premium contributions are paid by the employee through payroll deduction on an after-tax basis. All benefit payroll deduction schedules are at the discretion of the County and shall be determined by the County Administrator after consulting with the Human Resources and Finance Director (or designee). Some benefit deductions will be deducted one month in advance of the coverage, and others will occur during the month of coverage. Refer to the Employee Portal for details.

If an employee is on an approved leave and a payroll deduction is not possible, unless other arrangements have been approved by the Human Resources Division, an employee shall be responsible to pay any missed premium to Chippewa County within five (5) business days following the scheduled payroll deduction date. Failure to make premium payments may result in termination of coverage.

d. Eligibility

All full-time and part-time status county employees who work 1,040 hours or greater each year are eligible for enrollment in the Short-Term Disability Plan (income protection). Participation is voluntary for general municipal employees.

e. Enrollment

Enrollment into the Short-Term Disability Plan, for new employees or newly eligible employees due to status change, typically occurs during the first week of employment or first week of the status change during the employee orientation meeting with the Human Resources Division.

If an employee waives coverage during the initial eligibility period, the employee shall be eligible to enroll in coverage at any time thereafter. If an employee enrolls after the initial eligibility period, the employee shall be subject to evidence of insurability. Upon review by the Short-Term Disability insurance carrier, coverage may be denied.

f. Effective Date

The effective date of coverage under the Short-Term Disability Plan shall be on the first day of the month following thirty (30) days of employment with the County or the first of the month following approval of evidence of insurability. The effective date applies to new hires and employees with a status change (as defined in Chapter 2, Section 1j) resulting in new eligibility.

g. Coverage during FMLA or other Leave

Refer to *Continuation of Other Benefits* section as identified under FMLA, Non-Medical Leave, Personal Leave, Military Leave, and Workers' Compensation Leave policies.

h. Waiver or Cancellation of Coverage

Any employee may elect to decline or cancel Short-Term disability coverage by signing a waiver form provided by the Human Resources Division.

A waiver shall be effective upon receipt by the Human Resources Division or, in the case of cancellation, the first day of the month following the date that premiums are paid through.

i. Separation

Short-Term Disability Coverage with the County shall cease on the day of the employee's separation from employment (last day of work) with the County. However, if the employee's income is actively supplemented by Short-Term disability at the time of separation, payment by the carrier shall continue as defined in the Summary Plan Document.

(Section 47 adopted by the County Board 09/11/18; 09/13/2022; 11/12/2025)

48. Life Insurance

a. Purpose

To provide Life Insurance coverage to eligible employees in accordance with Chapter 40 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

b. Coverage

The County participates in the Wisconsin Public Employers Group Life Insurance Program as provided in Chapter 40 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

The Wisconsin Public Employers Group Life Insurance Program offers basic, supplemental, and additional coverage as well as spouse and dependent coverage for eligible employees through Minnesota Life Insurance.

c. Employee Premium Contribution

Premium contributions are paid by both the County and the employee. The County's contribution is governed by Wis. Stat. § 40.05(6)(e) requiring a contribution toward the total cost of active employees until they reach age 70. All life insurance premium contributions of the employee are paid through payroll deduction on an after-tax basis. All benefit payroll deduction schedules are at the discretion of the County and shall be determined by the County Administrator after consulting with the Human Resources and Finance Director (or designee). Some benefit deductions will be deducted one month in advance of the coverage, and others will occur during the month of coverage. Refer to the Employee Portal for details.

d. Eligibility

All employees who are eligible and participate in the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) administered by Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) shall be eligible to participate in the Wisconsin Public Employers Group Life Insurance, except those employees who have elected to waive said insurance.

e. Enrollment

Enrollment into the Wisconsin Public Employers Group Life Insurance, for new employees or newly eligible employees due to status change, typically occurs during the first week of employment or first week of the status change during the employee orientation meeting with the Human Resources Division. Eligibility and enrollment is subject to the provisions outlined by WRS. Enrollment at any time other than during initial eligibility shall be subject to evidence of insurability.

f. Effective Date

The life insurance policy offered in connection with the WRS becomes effective on the first day of the month following thirty (30) days of employment with the County. All effective dates are subject to verification by the WRS.

g. Waiver or Cancellation

Any employee may elect to decline or cancel life insurance coverage by signing a waiver form provided by the Human Resources Division.

Waiver or cancellation shall be effective as defined in the ETF Insurance Manual.

h. Status Changes

It shall be the employee's responsibility to notify the Human Resources Division of any change in status that may result in a Life Insurance change through Minnesota Life Insurance. This shall include, but not be limited to, adding or deleting dependents. Such notification shall be provided by the employee to the Human Resources Division within thirty (30) days of the event. Failure to timely notify the Human Resources Division of a status change and complete necessary documents may result in loss of eligibility for coverage. The Employee Change form is located on the Employee Portal. Evidence of insurability may be required.

i. Coverage during FMLA or other Leave

Refer to *Continuation of Other Benefits* section as identified under FMLA, Non-Medical Leave, Personal Leave, Military Leave, and Workers' Compensation Leave policies.

j. Separation

Upon separation from employment with the County, a continuation or conversion privilege option may be available. If the employee chooses not to continue or convert the policy, then coverage with the County shall cease on the last day of the month in which the employee's separation from employment (last day of work) with the County occurs.

(Section 48 adopted by the County Board 09/11/18; 11/12/2025)

49. Supplemental Life Insurance

a. Purpose

To provide Supplemental Life Insurance coverage to eligible employees.

b. Coverage

The design and selection, including all level of benefits provided to participants under the County-sponsored Supplemental Life Insurance Plan and insurance carrier shall be determined solely by the County.

The Supplemental Life Insurance Program offers supplemental coverage for eligible general municipal employees. Refer to the Certificate of Insurance for complete details, including limitations and exclusions.

c. Employee Premium Contribution

All premium contributions are paid by the employee. All employee Supplemental Life Insurance premiums are paid through payroll deduction on an after-tax basis. All benefit payroll deduction schedules are at the discretion of the County and shall be determined by the County Administrator after consulting with the Human Resources and Finance Director (or designee). Some benefit deductions will be deducted one month in advance of the coverage, and others will occur during the month of coverage. Refer to the Employee Portal for details.

d. Eligibility

All full time and part time status county general municipal employees who work 1,040 hours or greater each year shall be eligible to participate in the Supplemental Life Insurance Program.

d. Enrollment

Enrollment into the Supplemental Life Insurance for new employees or newly eligible employees due to status change, typically occurs during the first week of employment or first week of the status change during the employee orientation meeting with the Human Resources Division. Enrollment at any other time, other than during initial eligibility, shall be subject to evidence of insurability.

f. Effective Date

The effective date of coverage under the Supplemental Life Insurance policy shall be on the first day of the month following thirty (30) days of employment with the County or the first of the month following approval of evidence of insurability. The effective date applies to new hires and employees with a status change (as defined in Chapter 2, Section 1j) resulting in new eligibility.

g. Waiver or Cancellation

Any employee may elect to decline or cancel Supplemental Life Insurance coverage by signing a waiver form provided by the Human Resources Division.

A waiver shall be effective upon receipt by the Human Resources Division or, in the case of cancellation, on the first day of the month the date that premiums are paid through.

h. Benefit Reduction Due to Age

Reductions to the life insurance benefit could change due to age, starting at age 65.

i. Coverage during FMLA or other Leave

Refer to *Continuation of Other Benefits* section as identified under FMLA, Non-Medical Leave, Personal Leave, Military Leave, and Workers' Compensation Leave policies.

j. Separation

Upon separation from employment, a conversion privilege option may be available. If the employee chooses not to convert the policy then coverage with the County shall cease on the day of the employee's separation from employment (last day of work) with the County.

(Section 49 adopted by the County Board 09/11/18; 09/13/2022; 11/12/2025)

50. Wisconsin Retirement System

a. Purpose

To provide retirement contributions to eligible employees in accordance with Chapter 40 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

b. Employee Contribution

Once eligible for coverage under WRS, coverage is mandatory and an employee may not “opt out” of WRS. Employers and general municipal employees are required to pay “one-half of the actuarially required contributions determined by the Department of Employee Trust Funds.” Employee contributions are made through payroll deduction and are deducted on a pre-tax basis.

c. Eligibility

Chippewa County is required to cover employees under the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) administered by Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) if the employee meets WRS participation standards:

1. If the employee was employed by a WRS employer before July 1, 2011, to qualify for WRS coverage the employee shall be expected to work for at least one full year and at least one-third of full time (600 hours).
2. If the employee began employment with a WRS-employer on or after July 1, 2011, to qualify for WRS coverage the employee shall be expected to work for at least one full year and at least two-thirds of full time (1200 hours).
3. If neither criterion is expected to be met upon hire, the employee shall only be enrolled if he/she subsequently works at least 12 months, and in any 12-month period meets the hour requirement.

d. Enrollment

Enrollment shall occur on the date on which eligibility is met as described in this section.

d. Coverage during FMLA or other Leave

Refer to *Continuation of Other Benefits* section as identified under FMLA, Non-Medical Leave, Personal Leave, Military Leave, and Workers’ Compensation Leave policies.

f. Waiver/Rehired Annuitants

In some circumstances, a previous participant of the WRS who had a valid termination and is actively receiving an annuity may waive WRS participation by completing a Rehired Annuitant Form. All waivers are subject to reversal by the WRS.

(Section 50 adopted by the County Board 09/11/18)

51. Deferred Compensation

a. Purpose

To provide a supplemental retirement savings plan regulated by Section 457 of the Internal Revenue Code.

b. Employee Contributions

The County does not make an employer contribution to any of the Deferred Compensation Plans that it offers. All contributions to a Deferred Compensation Plan offered by the County are made by the employee. Employee contributions (salary deferral) shall be made through payroll deduction on a pre-tax basis or after-tax basis (Roth) up to federal and state limits imposed by the Internal Revenue Service and Department of Revenue.

Employee contributions shall commence the first pay period of the month following enrollment. Contribution amounts (initial or changes) deducted through payroll may be adjusted by the employee once per quarter and will be coordinated by the Human Resources Division. Contribution amounts (initial or changes) shall be effective the first pay period in January, April, July and October. A form authorizing the initial contribution or change in contribution is due to the Human Resources Division by Friday, two weeks in advance of the effective date.

c. Eligibility

All full time and part time status county employees who work 1,040 hours or greater each year may voluntarily participate in one of the deferred compensation plans offered by the County, pursuant to the rules, terms and conditions outlined in the plan.

d. Enrollment

Eligible employees may enroll in any Deferred Compensation plan offered by the County once per quarter.

e. Cancellation

Employees are permitted to cancel their payroll deduction(s) into the Deferred Compensation Plan at any time and shall complete a form provided by the Human Resources Division. The cancellation shall be processed the first pay period following the date the form was received by the Human Resources Division.

f. Coverage during FMLA or other Leave

Refer to *Continuation of Other Benefits* section as identified under FMLA, Non-Medical Leave, Personal Leave, Military Leave, and Workers' Compensation Leave policies.

(Section 51 adopted by the County Board 09/11/18; 11/10/2020)

52. Flexible Spending Account

a. Purpose

To provide a Section 125/129 Flexible Spending Reimbursement Plan for dependent care expenses, and/or unreimbursed medical expenses.

b. Coverage

The Section 125/129 Flexible Spending Reimbursement Plan allows the employee to set aside pretax dollars each pay period to pay for uninsured medical expenses, and/or dependent care.

c. Employee Contribution

The County does not make an employer contribution to the Section 125/129 Flexible Spending Reimbursement Plan that it offers. All contributions to the Section 125/129 Flexible Spending Reimbursement Plan offered by the County are made by the employee. An employee may defer up to the maximum allowable amount regulated by law each year for medical expenses and/or dependent care expenses. There is no payback or carryover of unspent contributions from the previous calendar year.

d. Eligibility

All full-time status employees are eligible to participate in the Chapter 125/129 Flexible Spending Reimbursement Plan offered by the County.

e. Enrollment

Enrollment into the Chapter 125/129 Flexible Spending Reimbursement Plan offered by the County for new employees or newly eligible employees due to status change, typically occurs during the first week of employment or first week of the status change during the employee orientation meeting with the Human Resources Division.

Those employees who do not enroll in the Flexible Spending Reimbursement Plan during the initial new employee eligibility period are not eligible for enrollment again until one of two events occur:

1. Open Enrollment Event

The County holds an open enrollment period annually in the fourth quarter. Employees are eligible to make a change, cancel or add flexible spending deductions during the open enrollment period. All elections during the open enrollment period shall be effective on January 1st of the following year.

2. Section 125 Qualifying Event

IRS Section 125 defines the circumstances under which a Chapter 125/129 Flexible Spending Reimbursement Plan may permit an employee to change his or her plan elections with respect to flexible spending accounts. A qualifying event occurs when an employee or dependent that is covered becomes (or ceases to be) eligible under the Chapter 125/129 Flexible Spending Reimbursement Plan. A qualifying event allows employees to adjust flexible spending account deductions without waiting until the Open Enrollment Event. The qualifying event shall be reported within 30 days of the event to the Human Resources Division along with written proof of the event. The qualifying event shall correspond with the change to the plan elections and is subject to approval by the Human Resources Division. The effective date of the change shall be the date that the qualifying event occurred. Common qualifying events include, but are not limited to:

- a). Marriage
- b). Divorce or legal separation
- c). Birth, adoption or placement for adoption of a child
- d). Spouse's loss of employment.
- e). Death
- f). Reduction in hours to less than full time status

g. Dependent turns 26 (effective date of the change for this event only is the last day of the month that the dependent turns 26)

f. Effective Date

If elected, the flexible spending account becomes effective on the first of the month following thirty (30) days of employment with the County. The effective date applies to new hires and employees with a status change (as defined in Chapter 2, Section 1j) resulting in new eligibility.

g. Coverage during FMLA or other Leave

Refer to *Continuation of Other Benefits* section as identified under FMLA, Non-Medical Leave, Personal Leave, Military Leave, and Workers' Compensation Leave policies.

h. Waiver or Cancellation of Coverage

An employee may elect to decline Chapter 125/129 Flexible Spending Reimbursement Plan participation by signing a waiver form provided by the Human Resources Division. Any waiver may be withdrawn prior to its effective date. Employees waiving during Open Enrollment shall sign a waiver annually. A waiver shall be effective upon receipt by the Human Resources Division.

i. Separation

Upon separation from employment, deductions will continue through the paycheck on or immediately following the employee's separation from employment (last day of work) with the County. Unless the employee elects COBRA, reimbursements shall have a Date of Service on or before the last day of work, as outlined in the Summary Plan Document.

(Section 52 adopted by the County Board 09/11/18)

53. Employee Assistance/Achievement Program (EAP)

The County's Employee Assistance/Achievement Program (EAP) is a voluntary, no cost and confidential service provided to all County employees and their immediately family members. EAP provides both ancillary and direct services to help employees achieve their best and also help identify or overcome personal problems and difficult situations.

Ancillary services may include wellness focused materials such as newsletters, posters, presentations, magazines, informational e-blasts and brochures.

Direct services may include a counselor for face-to-face or telephonic services, professional coaching, legal and financial consultation, management consultations and group services, including crisis support services.

All time off from work for coaching or counseling appointments are considered non-work time and the employee shall use PTO, Compensatory Time or schedule the appointment before or after work hours. If the EAP appointment, meeting or service is mandated and approved by the Department Head and Human Resources Director in writing prior to attending the appointment, the time off from work for the meeting shall be considered paid work time. In addition, if training or a critical incident debrief is required, the time to attend shall be considered paid work time.

Please contact the Human Resources Division or refer to the Employee Portal for EAP contact information.

(Section 53 adopted by the County Board 09/11/18; 09/12/2023)

54. Wellness Programs

Chippewa County offers a variety of wellness programs and activities to all employees. All employees are encouraged to participate in such programs as annual Health Risk Assessments, exercise classes, wellness challenges, flu shots, blood drives, lunch and learns, etc. Please contact the Human Resources Division if interested in serving on the Wellness Workgroup.

(Section 54 adopted by the County Board 09/11/18)

55. Other Benefits

a. Discount Savings

Chippewa County offers a variety of discount saving options to all employees from a variety of vendors. Current discounts for employees are available on the Employee Portal or by contacting the Human Resources Division. Any discount programs offered shall be subject to modification or terminated by the County with or without notice to employees.

(Section 55 adopted by the County Board 09/11/18)

CHAPTER 6 – STANDARDS OF EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

56. Political Activities

a. Purpose

Chippewa County recognizes that, as a governmental entity, its operations occasionally include items or issues that are political in nature. To that end, the County respects the right of its employees, as individuals, to become involved in the political process. Employees are free to engage in political activity, at their own expense, outside of work hours and to the extent that it does not adversely affect the performance of job duties, working relationships or County operations, subject to the following guidelines. When engaging in political activity or engaging in discussion of issues of public importance, employees are expected to ensure that their actions and positions are not attributed to the County. County resources may not be used for promoting a particular candidate, political party, community organization, or for advocating a particular position on an issue that has become identified as the viewpoint of a particular candidate or party.

This section does not prohibit an employee or elected official from seeking elective office. This section does not prohibit any County employee or elected official seeking elective office from making reference to their County employment or service in their campaign for office.

b. Definition of County Resources

County resources include, but are not limited to, office supplies, electronic resources and equipment including email, official Chippewa County social media pages, facsimile and photocopying machines, bulletin boards (use of bulletin boards requires authorization in accordance with the Bulletin Board Policy) and other public spaces.

c. Prohibited Conduct

Employees shall conduct “political” activities independent of their role as an employee. The following guidelines are not exhaustive but are intended to help in differentiating between those activities that may be viewed as harmful to workplace functioning and those activities that generally fall outside the “political” activities subject to employer restrictions and intervention. The following principles shall be followed:

1. No employee may use the workplace, working hours, or County resources to solicit money or signatures, make political contributions or otherwise engage in political activities.
2. No employee may use non-work hours to solicit contributions, signatures or services from other employees who are on work time.
3. Posting of political materials in areas open to the public shall be in compliance with other County Facility Use and Bulletin Board Policies.
5. No employee may include his or her County title in an endorsement for any candidate for political office.

6. No employee may use the County's mailing address as the return address for political solicitations.
7. No employee may provide County mailing lists to any individual or organization except to the extent authorized under Wis. Stat. §19.35.
8. No employee may demonstrate political advocacy in the form of clothing items, armbands and buttons that cause a disruption in operations and/or violate the rights of others including the right to be free from discrimination, harassment and intimidation in the workplace.
9. No candidate for elected County office, employee or County Board Supervisor may require any employee or official to endorse, assist, finance or support a candidate for political office, or retaliate against any employee or official in any manner because of that employee's or official's personal political activity.
10. No employee or elected official shall directly or indirectly use or seek to use his or her authority or the influence of his or her position to control or modify the political action of another person.

(Section 56 adopted by the County Board 12/11/18)

57. Hatch Act

Employees whose principal employment is in a federally grant-aided program are subject to prohibitions in the Federal Hatch Political Activities Act as amended, 5 U.S.C. §§. 1501-1508. The Act may prohibit an employee in such a program from becoming a candidate for an elective office, unless the employee is an incumbent elected official. Any employee who is contemplating running for elective office may consult with the Human Resources Director before doing so to assure there is no prohibition under the Hatch Act.

(Section 57 adopted by the County Board 12/11/18)

58. Employee Conduct and Working Environment

a. Purpose

It is Chippewa County's policy that employees maintain a working environment that encourages mutual respect, promotes civil and congenial relationships among employees, and is free from all forms of harassment and violence.

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, Chippewa County expects employees to follow rules of conduct that shall protect the interests and safety of all employees and the County.

b. General Conduct

Employees shall conduct themselves at all times in such a manner as to reflect favorably upon themselves, the county, and their department. Whether working or not, employees shall avoid any conduct which brings the county into disrepute. The respective employee shall immediately notify their department head of the occurrence should inappropriate conduct occur.

c. Conduct Towards the Public

The County exists to serve the citizens of Chippewa County. Accordingly, it is the fundamental policy of the County that employees treat all persons with courtesy and respect. Employees shall perform their duties attentively and courteously, avoiding rude, threatening, harsh, insulting, profane, insolent or demeaning language, and they shall maintain a professional bearing regardless of provocation to do otherwise. Employees should also refer to and shall comply with the Mutual Respect and Protection Policy.

d. Conduct Towards County or Employees

1. Employees shall treat supervisors, subordinates, and peers with respect. They shall be courteous and civil at all times in their working relationships with one another and in the presence of others.
2. Employees have a right to conduct their work without disorderly or undue interference from other employees. The County prohibits employees from violating this right of their co-workers. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to acts such as:
 - a). Unprovoked rude or disrespectful behavior on the part of an employee toward fellow employees, County Board Supervisors, visitors, or other members of the public.
 - b). Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace or actions that adversely and substantially affect morale, production, or efficiency.
 - c). Sexual or other unlawful unwelcome harassment.
 - d). Engaging in lurid, inappropriate or sexual behavior on County property.
 - e). Fighting with or provoking a disturbance among fellow employees that threatens violence in the workplace.
 - f). Discrimination against others because of race, color, creed, national origin, political preference, sexual preference, age, sex, disability or any other protected classification.
 - g). Making malicious, false, and harmful statements about others.
 - h). Publicly disclosing another's private information when not authorized to do so.

e. Unsatisfactory Performance

Unsatisfactory work performance is work-related performance that fails to satisfactorily meet job requirements specified in the employee's job description, work plan or as directed by the supervisor. Employees shall maintain sufficient competency to perform their duties effectively and assume responsibility of their position. Employees shall perform their duties in a manner which maintains efficiency in carrying out the functions and the objectives of the department in a positive and professional manner. Unsatisfactory performance may be demonstrated by a lack of knowledge, an unwillingness or inability to perform assigned tasks, a failure to conform to work standards established for the position, or a failure to take appropriate action when required.

f. Compliance with Policies, Laws and Regulations

Employees shall observe and obey all County policies, ordinances, departmental policies, procedures and rules and state and federal laws, regulations and administrative rules. Violation or disregard of any County Ordinance, County policy, departmental policy, departmental procedure, state or federal Laws, or administrative rules or regulations is prohibited.

g. Unlawful Orders

No Supervisor shall knowingly issue any order that is in violation of any law, ordinance, policy or departmental rule.

h. Compliance with Unlawful Orders

Compliance with an unlawful order is never a defense for an unlawful action; therefore, no employee is required to follow any order that is in violation of federal or state law, or county ordinance. Employees who believe they have received an unlawful order shall promptly bring the matter to the attention of the supervisor, the person issuing the order or the Department Head.

i. Confidential Materials

Employees are responsible for assuring the security of confidential material in their possession and similarly maintaining the security of County-provided equipment. Employees concerned for the security of any work area or equipment shall inform their supervisor of such concerns.

j. Loitering

Chippewa County prohibits loitering, sleeping or engaging in unauthorized personal business on County premises.

k. Use of County Postal Address

Employees are prohibited from using the County Postal Address for any personal or non-work-related circumstances, including use as a primary mailing address for the purposes of mail, benefits, deliveries, etc. Use of the County Address shall be for work-related activities only.

l. Use of County Property

Employees are prohibited from using County equipment or property for any personal or non-work-related events and such equipment or property shall not be removed from the County premises. This provision is not intended to interfere with any other Policy or Ordinance (such as use of county vehicles, IT Policy). Unauthorized, improper, willful or negligent misuse of County equipment or property including facilities, supplies, telephone, mail service, etc., that may or may not lead to damage is prohibited.

m. Unacceptable Conduct

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace and therefore the list of examples below is not all-inclusive.

1. Insubordination, which is defined as an unwillingness, refusal or disregard to carry out a directive from a supervisor. Insubordination is also defined as disrespectful behavior toward a supervisor.
2. Falsification of timekeeping, reports or any other County records.
3. Falsification of information to secure employment with Chippewa County.
4. Leaving the job without permission, or job abandonment.
5. Excessive tardiness, absenteeism or absence without notice.
6. Frequent absences from an employee's work area due to personal conversations, personal visitors or long breaks.
7. Poor management of an employee's Paid Time Off (PTO) bank balance that results in an employee being unpaid without approval by the Department Head and the Human Resources Director.
8. Falsifying or refusing to give testimony when accidents are being investigated.
9. Dishonesty in the performance of duties.
10. Making false or malicious statements with the intent to harm or destroy the reputation, authority or official standing of an individual or organization.
11. Theft or destruction of County equipment or property.
12. Unauthorized possession or removal of the County's or another employee's private property.
13. Unauthorized use of County-owned or leased equipment or property.
14. Dissemination or disclosure of confidential material or information, except to persons specifically authorized by law or policy to receive the same.
15. Unauthorized release or disclosure of information required to be kept confidential by Federal Law, Wisconsin Statutes, Administrative Rules or Regulations or by County Policy.
16. Except as provided in Chippewa County Ordinance §2-462(b)(2), no person shall possess, carry, or bear a weapon, whether concealed or unconcealed, or contraband, or any other prohibited item within any county building. County building means the entire building housing the Circuit Court of Chippewa County, located at 711 N. Bridge Street, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, or some other temporary location that may be authorized by the court, the buildings housing the Chippewa County Jail and Chippewa County Sheriff's Office, all Chippewa County Highway Department buildings, the building located at 21 E. Spruce Street, and the maintenance shop located at 109 E. Spruce Street.
17. Disregard or repeated violations of safety rules and regulations.
18. Negligence in observing fire prevention or safety regulations.

19. Failure to follow safety requirements, including required protective footwear or safety equipment.
20. Failure to report injuries or unsafe conditions.
21. Illegal, immoral, disruptive or otherwise improper conduct that adversely and substantially injures or brings the County into disrepute.
22. Being arrested or convicted of a crime that is substantially related to the circumstances of the job or licensed activity that the person was hired to perform, or unavailability for work due to incarceration.
23. Performing an act that the employee knows is in excess of his/her lawful authority or that he/she knows is forbidden by law to perform in his/her official capacity.
24. Engaging in unauthorized personal business such as excessive personal telephone calls and/or email/internet use during regularly scheduled work hours.
25. Soliciting, accepting or offering bribes.
26. Failure to obtain and maintain a current license or certification as required by law or the County.
27. Unauthorized use, lending, borrowing, or duplicating of County keys, fobs or ID cards.
28. Unauthorized access to records, file cabinets, desks, offices, facilities, or computers.
29. Engaging in work stoppages or work slow-downs.
30. Inappropriate dress, grooming and/or appearance inconsistent with the Personal Appearance Policy located in Chapter 8 of the Human Resources Policy Manual or other department procedures.
31. Smoking in prohibited areas.
32. Manufacturing, possession, distribution, dispensing, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol, a controlled substance or other illegal drugs, while in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating County-owned vehicles or equipment. This does not prohibit an employee from ingesting a legally obtained prescription drug that was legally issued to the employee.
33. Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs by an employee while on a paid or unpaid lunch period or while recording the time as time worked as defined in Chapter 3 Section 24 of the HR Policy Manual. Time worked includes time in training, at conferences or other County-sponsored events for which an employee is recording time as time worked.
34. Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs when using a County vehicle, either on or off duty.
35. Reporting to work or remaining on duty when the employee is under the influence or using alcohol, illegal drugs, or any controlled substance, including prescription medications, except when the use is pursuant to the instructions of a licensed health care provider who

has advised the employee that the substance does not adversely affect the employee's ability to safely and competently perform his/her job.

n. Right to Search

The County reserves the right to search unlocked and/or publicly used County property at any time without consent. The County may request a search of personal property at the worksite or locked County property assigned to an individual if there is reasonable suspicion that evidence of illegal or prohibited activities resides therein.

o. Off Duty Conduct

An employee may be disciplined for off-duty conduct when there is a connection between the off-duty conduct and the employee's position. Employees are expected to display appropriate behavior and conduct off duty. Inappropriate off-duty behavior/conduct can reflect poorly on the County.

(Section 58 adopted by the County Board 12/11/18; 09/09/2025)

59. Employee Concerns or Complaints

a. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a procedure to address employee concerns outside of the Harassment Policy, County Grievance Policy or the Mutual Respect and Protection Policy (typically used to report issues with citizens). Concerns or complaints involving another employee may involve internal conflicts, disagreements or misunderstandings that are unresolved. It is the desire of the County, when practicable, to address concerns informally, and both supervisors and employees are expected to make every effort to resolve problems as they arise.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a quick, effective and consistently applied method for employees to present concerns and have those concerns resolved.

The County does not tolerate retaliation or harassment of an employee who shares a concern or complaint. All complaints shall be truthful and made in good faith.

All timelines in the aforementioned procedure may be waived by the Human Resources Director for good cause or extenuating circumstances at the request of either the complainant, the Supervisor or the Department Head.

b. Procedure

1. Step 1: Discuss with your Supervisor

Initially, employees shall bring their concerns or complaints to their immediate supervisor, even if the complaint involves the employee's immediate supervisor. The employee shall schedule an appointment with their supervisor to discuss the problem that gave rise to the complaint within five (5) working days of the date the incident occurred.

The immediate supervisor shall respond in writing and orally to the complaint within five (5) working days of the meeting held with the complainant employee.

2. Step 2: Submit Written Complaint

If the discussion with the immediate supervisor does not resolve the problem to the mutual satisfaction of the employee and the supervisor, or if the supervisor does not respond to the complaint, the employee may submit a written complaint to the employee's Department Head. Employees may request the assistance of the Human Resources Division in preparing a complaint.

The submission of the written complaint is due within five (5) working days of the response from the immediate supervisor. The complaint should include:

- a). A description of the incident(s) or concern(s).
- b). Date(s) when the incident(s) or concerns(s) occurred.
- c). Suggestions on ways to resolve the matter.
- d). The date when the employee met with the immediate supervisor.
- e). A copy of the immediate supervisor's written response or a summary of his or her verbal response.
- e). If the supervisor provided no response, this shall be stated this in the written complaint.

The Department Head shall schedule a meeting with the employee within five (5) working days to discuss the complaint. The employee's Department Head shall forward a copy of the complaint to the Human Resources Division upon receipt. Within five (5) working days after the discussion, the Department Head shall issue a decision both in writing and orally to the employee filing the complaint. A copy of the written decision shall be forwarded to the Human Resources Division.

3. Step 3: Appeal of the Decision

If the employee is dissatisfied with the decision of the Department Head, the employee may, within five (5) working days of the receipt of the decision of the Department Head, appeal the decision of the Department Head in writing to the Human Resources Division. The Human Resources Director shall meet with the employee, Department Head and all interested parties within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of the written appeal of the Department Head's decision and attempt to reach a solution to the problem. The Human Resources Director may also gather further information from involved parties and discuss complaints with Corporation Counsel and/or the County Administrator to assist with a proper resolution.

The Human Resources Director shall issue a decision or resolution within twenty (20) working days, both in writing and orally to the employee that filed the complaint and appeal, the immediate supervisor and the Department Head. The decision of the Human Resources Director shall be final.

4. Additional Guidance

All involved individuals shall not discuss the situation with any other employees or with the complaining employee during the complaint review process. Information concerning a complaint shall be shared on a “need to know” basis. While efforts shall be made to maintain the confidentiality of each complaint, no guarantee of confidentiality can be assured by the Human Resources Division.

If an employee fails to appeal from one level to the next level of this procedure within the time limits set forth above, the problem or complaint shall be considered settled on the basis of the last decision, and the problem shall not be subject to further consideration, unless a new event occurs. All complaints must be made in good faith and all complaints must be made by an individual employee, not groups of employees.

(Section 59 adopted by the County Board 12/11/18)

60. Performance Reviews

a. Purpose

The overall purpose of performance reviews is to assist managers in providing feedback to employees of their performance, to acknowledge employee achievements, to address areas that need to be strengthened, and to periodically record essential information about an employee’s work performance and conduct. Performance reviews summarize past performance and plans for future performance.

Performance reviews shall be considered in decisions affecting placement, employment, promotions, transfers, corrective action or discipline, reemployment and training.

b. Policy

Performance reviews and face to face meetings to discuss the review shall be completed by the employee’s direct supervisor or designee no later than March 1 each year, for the previous calendar year. The employee’s job description shall be reviewed during the annual meeting, and if necessary, updated as part of the performance review process by submitting recommendations to the Human Resources Director, or designee, for approval.

Performance reviews shall be conducted at least annually for all full-time, part-time and annual limited term (LTEs) employees. Performance reviews are optional for seasonal limited term (LTEs) employees and shall be determined by the Department Head. If an employee starts on November 1 of the review year or later, a review is not required.

Performance review comments by the direct supervisor shall be approved by the Department Head. The Human Resources Director, or designee, shall monitor to ensure completion of the review and may provide feedback on the review comments if necessary.

The performance review form and process to be used for the annual performance review shall be determined by the County Administrator and administered by the Human Resources Division.

(Section 60 adopted by the County Board 10/08/19; 09/13/2022)

61. Job Descriptions

a. Purpose

To establish a standardized process for documenting the roles and responsibilities of employment positions within the County.

Job descriptions are important and useful tools for recruitment, employee orientation and training, performance evaluation and compensation administration.

b. Job Description Content

Each employee at Chippewa County shall have a job description. Job description documents shall contain the following content:

- Title, FLSA status, salary grade, title the position reports to, department and date of last update
- Job summary
- Job duties and responsibilities including administration functions and/or supervisory functions
- Listing of the position's customers and team members
- Qualification requirements including education and experience required or preferred
- Knowledge, skills and abilities needed to succeed in the position
- Common equipment knowledge needed
- Language, mathematical and reasoning abilities required
- Physical requirements and work environment by position

Job descriptions should be clear and concise and include the essential functions of the position.

c. Review or Changes to Job Description

It is a best practice to review the job description when a substantial change occurs and prior to each recruitment to ensure accuracy or that changes aren't necessary for the position, division or department.

Department Heads or managers shall review the job description as part of the annual performance review process and update the description as the position details evolve and to ensure accuracy. The Department Head or manager shall use the annual performance review to document that the annual review of the description has been completed. This process gives both the employee and the supervisor the opportunity to address any questions or expectations.

All suggested changes to the job description shall be made by starting with the saved Microsoft Word document job descriptions located on the County's crossdept (K:) drive or by requesting the document from the Human Resources Division. Then use the Review/Track Change feature in Microsoft Word to track and illustrate the suggested changes and email it the Human Resources Director or designee for discussion, review and approval.

d. Approval

All new or updated job descriptions require approval by the Human Resources Director or designee and shall be maintained by the Human Resources Division.

62. Corrective and Disciplinary Action

Corrective and disciplinary action may be taken for violations of standards of employee conduct, violations of policies and procedures, or for unsatisfactory work performance. When formal disciplinary action is necessary, it shall be taken only after the supervisor or Department Head consults with the Human Resources Division. If no one is available in the Human Resources Division, then the supervisor or Department Head shall consult with the Corporation Counsel Division.

After consultation with the Human Resources Division, Department Heads and supervisors may issue formal disciplinary action to an employee for reasons that may include, but shall not be limited to, violation of the standards of employee conduct, County Code, County Policies and Procedures, Administrative Rules, department work rules, department policies and procedures, safety rules, or other reasonable work standards not specifically defined herein.

a. Definitions

1. Corrective Action

For purposes of this policy, “corrective action” means an employment measure initiated by the County to the employee prior to disciplinary action and may be presented to the employee in verbal or written form. Corrective action is a non-disciplinary action. Another term used for corrective action may be coaching, counseling or informal corrective action. These measures are not required to be used before disciplinary action occurs or in any specific order. The County may repeat corrective action. If the corrective action is presented in verbal form to the employee, the supervisor shall document the date and details of the verbal corrective action. Corrective Action documentation may be retained in the employee’s personnel file in the Human Resources Division at the discretion of the Department Head.

2. Disciplinary Action

For purposes of this policy, “disciplinary action” means an employment action initiated by the County to an employee that results in a formal oral disciplinary warning, written disciplinary warning, disciplinary suspension without pay, disciplinary demotion/reduction in rank, or involuntary discharge from employment. Failure by the employee to correct the behavior may result in further disciplinary action, up to and including discharge from employment. All disciplinary actions shall be created and retained in the employee’s personnel file in the Human Resources Division.

3. Oral Warning

A disciplinary oral warning is an oral statement made to an employee indicating the employee’s conduct or performance fails to meet an acceptable level or expected improvement. Written documentation of the oral warning shall be created and retained in the employee’s personnel file in the Human Resources Division.

4. Written Warning

A disciplinary written warning is a written statement made to an employee indicating the employee's conduct or the performance fails to meet an acceptable level or expected improvement. A written warning shall be retained in the employee's personnel file in the Human Resources Division.

5. Disciplinary Suspension

A disciplinary suspension is the temporary removal of an employee from his/her assignment without pay for disciplinary reasons. The number of days of the removal shall be determined by the Department Head, in consultation with the Human Resources Director, and shall be based on the circumstances of the violation. Written documentation of the suspension shall be created and retained in the employee's personnel file in the Human Resources Division.

6. Disciplinary Demotion

A disciplinary demotion is the permanent removal, for disciplinary reasons, of an employee from the employee's current assignment to an assignment in a lower classification resulting in reduced pay. Written documentation of the demotion shall be created and retained in the employee's personnel file in the Human Resources Division.

7. Involuntary Discharge

Involuntary discharge from County employment for disciplinary purposes may occur and shall be documented and retained in the employee's personnel file in the Human Resources Division. "Discharge" does not include paid administrative leave, layoff, reduction in workday, reduction in workforce, job transfer or reassignment, retirement, death or the end or completion of temporary employment as an LTE.

8. Progressive Discipline

Progressive discipline allows an employee the opportunity to improve job performance and comply with established rules of conduct in order to avoid further consequences. For minor rule infractions and minor performance deficiencies, discipline may be applied progressively. Where progressive disciplinary action does not result in satisfactory job performance or acceptable employee conduct, discharge of employment may be necessitated.

9. Level of Discipline

The level of discipline imposed is at the sole discretion of the County. The level of discipline imposed shall take into consideration the seriousness of the infraction, a review of the facts and circumstances of the infraction, the employee's performance record and history of prior disciplinary actions. Depending upon the severity of the offense, the level of discipline imposed by the County may involve immediate application of one or more progressive steps including immediate discharge, if warranted. Specific disciplinary measures are not required to be imposed before discharge from employment occurs, nor are disciplinary actions required to be imposed in any specific order. Repeated infractions of even minor offenses may result in discharge. The County may, at its discretion, repeat or skip disciplinary actions.

b. Standards of Employee Conduct

While it is impossible to list every type of behavior that may be deemed a serious infraction, subject to disciplinary action, the Standards of Employee Conduct Policy includes examples of behaviors that may result in disciplinary action. The areas of unacceptable conduct listed are not intended to be an all-inclusive list. Nothing in this policy is intended to create additional property or procedural rights for employees beyond those rights guaranteed by federal and state law, unless such a provision is clearly labeled as a right of the employee.

c. FLSA

In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, exempt employees who are disciplined, and given an unpaid suspension, shall serve a minimum of one full day unpaid suspension. Disciplinary deductions in pay cannot be in partial day increments.

d. Department Procedures

Each Department Head is responsible for developing any additional written department procedures unique to, and necessary for, the efficient and safe operation of the department, after consultation with the Human Resources Director. Department procedures shall not replace the guidelines in the HR Policy Manual but shall be used in addition. Department procedures shall be explained and made available to all affected employees, including notice that any violation of such rules shall be subject to disciplinary action.

e. Documentation

An employee shall receive a copy of all written disciplinary action documentation including oral warnings, written warnings, disciplinary suspensions, disciplinary demotions, and discharge. The Corrective or Disciplinary Action Form is located on the Employee Portal.

Written Corrective and all Disciplinary action documentation shall include the following:

1. Employee name, date and time of the discipline meeting
2. Type of action (corrective action, oral warning, written warning, suspension, demotion or discharge)
3. Length of corrective action (if suspension)
4. Number and/or section of the ordinance, policy or procedure violation (if relevant)
5. Date(s) and detail(s) of specific incident(s) leading up to the corrective or disciplinary action
6. Date(s) and detail(s) of any former corrective or disciplinary actions (if relevant)
7. Expectations going forward
8. The resulting action to be taken if employee fails to correct the deficiency

9. Signatures of the supervisor administering the Corrective or Disciplinary Action, Department Head (if not the supervisor) and any other witness in the meeting

Receipt of the Corrective or Disciplinary Action Form shall be acknowledged by the employee by signing the form. A copy of the Corrective or Disciplinary Action Form shall be furnished to the employee. The original Corrective or Disciplinary Action Form shall be forwarded to the Human Resources Division for inclusion in the employee's personnel file.

- f. Appeal

An employee may appeal the imposition of a disciplinary suspension, disciplinary demotion, or discharge through the grievance policy set forth in Grievance Policy.

(Section 62 adopted by the County Board 12/11/18)

63. Grievance Policy

- a. Purpose

This Grievance Policy provides an employee with the individual opportunity to address concerns regarding discipline, discharge or workplace safety matters, to have those matters reviewed by an impartial hearing officer and to appeal to the County Board, where appropriate, as required by Wis. Stat. § 66.0509. The County expects employees and management to exercise reasonable efforts to resolve any questions, problems, or misunderstandings prior to utilizing the grievance procedure.

If an employee is subject to a contractual grievance procedure, the contractual grievance procedure shall be followed as applicable. This Grievance Policy does not replace or supersede any statutory provision which may be applicable to an employee's employment with the County. This Grievance Policy supersedes any other grievance procedure in place for non-represented employees.

This Grievance Policy may be modified or eliminated by the County at any time, with or without prior notice. This Grievance Policy is not a guarantee of employment, a guarantee of any rights or benefits, does not create or grant employees with a property interest in their employment or tenure rights of any kind and does not constitute a contract of employment, express or implied.

- b. Definitions

1. Employee (for Discipline Purposes)

For purposes of this Grievance Policy and the procedure for grievances concerning employee discipline and employee discharges, the term "Employee" is defined as full-time and part-time status employees who have completed twelve (12) months of continuous employment with the County, beginning with their most recent date of hire.

The term "Employee" does not include elected officials; Limited Term Employees (LTE) status (including annual LTEs or Seasonal LTEs); independent contractors or their respective employees; unpaid interns, volunteers, employees within their first twelve (12) months of employment, beginning with their most recent date of hire; employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement that addresses discipline and discharge; and any employee, official or officer that serves at the pleasure of an appointing

authority as provided by Wisconsin Statutes. For purposes of this policy, the Employee may only initiate and file a Grievance for the employee's own discipline or discharge.

2. Employee (for Workplace Safety Purposes)

For purposes of this Grievance Policy and the procedure for grievances concerning workplace safety, the term "Employee" applies to full-time and part-time status employees, elected officials; Limited Term Employee (LTE) Status (including annual LTEs or Seasonal LTEs).

The term "Employee" does not include independent contractors or their respective employees, volunteers, unpaid interns, and any person working for another employer whose office is located within County Facilities. For purposes of this policy, the Employee may initiate and file a Grievance for workplace safety.

3. Discipline

The term "Discipline" for purposes of this Grievance Policy is defined as an adverse employment action initiated by the County that results in the following: disciplinary suspension without pay or disciplinary demotion.

The term "Discipline" in this Grievance Policy does not include any of the following actions: resignations, retirements, layoffs or workforce reduction activities, status changes, non-disciplinary wage, benefit or salary adjustments or reductions; non-disciplinary reductions in rank or demotions; corrective actions such as letters of guidance, coaching and counseling or performance improvement plans; performance evaluations or reviews; oral warnings or written warnings ; paid or unpaid administrative leave pending an investigation, or changes in assignment or assignment location.

4. Discharge

The term "Discharge" is defined as an involuntary discharge from County employment for disciplinary purposes. "Discharge" does not include layoff, reduction in workday, reduction in workforce, job transfers or reassignments, retirements, deaths, or the end or completion of temporary employment as an LTE.

5. Workplace Safety

The term "Workplace Safety" is defined as conditions of employment related to the health and safety of employees in the workplace, including the safety of the physical work environment, the safe operation of workplace equipment and tools, provision of personal protective equipment, and accident risks.

The term "Workplace Safety" does not include conditions of employment unrelated to workplace health and safety matters, including, but not limited to, hours, overtime, and work schedules.

6. Grievance

The term "Grievance" is defined as a written complaint filed under this Grievance Policy by an Employee involving discipline taken against the Employee, discharge of the Employee or an alleged workplace safety issue directly affecting the Employee.

7. Employer

The term “Employer” is defined as Chippewa County.

c. General Provisions

1. Forms

a. Employee Discipline and Discharge Grievance Form

A grievance may only be filed by the Employee who is the subject of the Discipline or Discharge.

The Employee shall initiate a Grievance relating to Discipline or Discharge by presenting a written Grievance by completing the Employee Discipline and Discharge Grievance Form located on the Employee Portal. The Employee shall sign and date the form. A Grievance shall not be considered filed until the Employee signs the form, provides all of the required information on the form, and delivers a completed form to the Department Head and a copy to the Human Resources Division.

b. Employee Workplace Safety Grievance Form

The Employee shall initiate a Grievance relating to Workplace Safety by presenting a written Grievance by completing the Employee Workplace Safety Grievance Form located on the Employee Portal. The Employee shall sign and date the form. A Grievance shall not be considered filed until the Employee signs the form, provides all of the required information on the form, and delivers a completed form to the Department Head and a copy to the Human Resources Division.

c. Request for Hearing Form

The Employee shall request a Hearing by an Impartial Hearing Officer for Discipline, Discharge, or Workplace Safety by presenting a completed Request for Hearing Form located on the Employee Portal. The employee shall sign and date the form. A request for a hearing shall not be considered filed until the employee signs the form, provides all of the required information on the form, and delivers a completed form to the County Administrator and a copy to the Department of Administration-Human Resources Division.

d. Request for Appeal Form

The employee or employer may request an appeal by the County Board for Discipline, Discharge, or Workplace Safety by presenting a completed Request for Appeal Form located on the Employee Portal. The requesting party shall sign and date the form. A request for an appeal shall not be considered filed until the Employee or Employer signs the form, provides all of the required information on the form, and delivers a completed form to the County Administrator.

By signing any of the forms listed above, the Employee is declaring under penalty of law that the statement contained in a Grievance relating to Discipline, Discharge, or Workplace Safety is true and correct to the best of the Employee's knowledge. Any Employee who files a Grievance that is false or misleading or for the purposes of intimidation, annoyance or harassment or who otherwise files a Grievance in bad faith shall be subject to disciplinary action.

2. Time Limits

The term "days" as used in this Grievance Policy means working days, which is defined as Monday-Friday, and excludes Saturday, Sunday, and observed holidays. Days taken with available paid time or unpaid time shall be considered as working days for purposes of this Grievance Policy.

A Grievance, a request for a hearing, or a request for appeal is considered timely if received by the specified department/division listed in the grievance procedure below between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. or if faxed, emailed or postmarked by 12:00 midnight on the due date.

The Employer and Employee may mutually agree, in writing, to waive any step to facilitate or expedite resolution of the Grievance.

In the event the Grievance is not answered by the Employer within the time limits set forth in this Grievance Policy, the Employee may proceed to the next available step.

The time limits set forth in this Grievance Policy for purpose of the Employee's request for a hearing, or request for appeal in this Grievance Policy shall start based on the date the Grievance is received by the Human Resources Division.

The time limits set forth in this Grievance Policy for purposes of the Employers written determination and reply shall start based on the stamped "received", date on the Employee's written Grievance or request for appeal.

Any issues involving the timeliness of a Grievance under this Grievance Policy shall be resolved by the County Administrator.

3. Communication

All correspondence from the Employer to the Employee shall be delivered via U.S. Postal Service to the Employee's most recent mailing address on file in the Human Resources Division.

4. Scheduling

The Employee shall be allowed time away from their work duties to meet with the Employer to discuss the matter that is subject of a potential Grievance. Once the formal written Grievance has been filed, the Employee shall use his or her available PTO for said meetings and shall receive prior approval from the manager or Department Head for the time off.

5. Representation

The Employee shall have the right to representation by a person of the Employee's choosing at the Employee's expense at all stages of the Grievance Procedure, except that the Employee's representative shall not be a material witness to the Grievance matter.

6. Costs

Each Party shall bear its own costs for witnesses and all other out of pocket expenses, including attorney fees, investigation, preparing, presenting, or defending a Grievance.

The professional fee and any mileage, hotel, or meal accommodations for the Impartial Hearing Officer shall be paid by the Employer.

Costs associated with transcription of a digital recording of a hearing are described under Hearings.

7. Role and Appointment of Impartial Hearing Officer

The Impartial Hearing Officer shall be selected by the County Administrator based upon the nature of the matter in dispute.

For the purposes of this Grievance Policy, the role of the Impartial Hearing Officer shall be to define the issues, identifying areas of agreement between the Parties and identifying the issues in dispute, to hear the Parties' respective arguments and to render a written decision.

8. Hearing

All hearings shall be closed to the public.

All hearings shall be digitally recorded. It shall be at the sole discretion of the Impartial Hearing Officer to determine whether the digital recording of the hearing shall be transcribed. The Hearing Officer shall make the determination on the issue of transcription in a pre-hearing meeting with the Parties or in a written order to the Employer. The determination for the Hearing Officer on the issue of transcription is final and non-appealable. In the event the Hearing officer determines that the digital recording of the hearing shall be transcribed, the Employer shall be responsible for the production and cost of the transcript and provide a copy of the transcript without charge to the other Party. In the event the Hearing Officer determines that the hearing shall not be transcribed, the Employee or Employer may have the digital recording of the hearing transcribed at its own expense, and shall provide a copy of the transcript without charge, to the other Party.

The Employer or the Employee may, at any time prior to the hearing, propose to settle the grievance. Any proposed settlement shall be approved by the County Administrator on behalf of the Employer before it shall be considered final and binding on the Employer. Any final settlement shall be binding on both Parties and shall not be grievable or appealable.

There shall be no pre-hearing discovery.

The Employee and the Employer shall exchange a list of witnesses each party intends to call at the hearing and any documents and exhibits each party intends to introduce at the hearing no less than ten (10) days before the hearing.

The Employee and the Employer shall each provide a copy of their respective witness list, documents and exhibits to the Impartial Hearing Officer. No witness, exhibit or document which was not identified or exchanged by a Party may be introduced absent a written finding by the Impartial Hearing Officer that there was excusable neglect for the failure of the party to identify a witness or document within the deadline for exchanging witness lists or documents.

Each Party may file a pre-hearing statement of no more than two (2) typed written single space pages outlining its position relative to any issues related to the Grievance. The Impartial Hearing Officer may not serve as a mediator nor make any attempt to mediate the dispute.

The Employee shall call witnesses and present testimony and exhibits that are relevant to the Grievance first. The Employee may call one or more Employer witnesses in the Employee's case and question the Employer witnesses with leading questions. At the close of the Employee's case, the Employer shall call its witnesses and present testimony and exhibits that are relevant to the Grievance. The Employer may call the Employee adversely during its case and question the Employee with leading questions. The Parties may cross-examine witnesses presented by the other Party. Cross examination shall be limited to ten (10) minutes per witness unless this time period is extended by the Impartial Hearing Officer.

The Impartial Hearing Officer is not bound by the rules of evidence and may admit all evidence that the Impartial Hearing Officer determines is relevant and may exclude immaterial, irrelevant or unduly repetitious testimony or evidence. The Impartial Hearing Officer shall recognize the rules of privilege. The Impartial Hearing Officer may not base any finding or conclusion based solely on hearsay evidence.

During the hearing, the Impartial Hearing Officer may ask questions as the Impartial Hearing Officer deems necessary.

After the Employee and the Employer have finished introducing evidence, the Impartial Hearing Officer shall close the record. The Parties shall have no right to file post-hearing briefs or position statements. However, the Impartial Hearing Officer may require the parties to file post-hearing briefs and replies.

9. Appeal

The appeal shall be considered by the County Board in closed session pursuant to 19.85 (1)(b) unless the Employee requests, in writing, for the appeal to be heard in open session.

Representatives of the Employee and Employer may attend the closed session, except for the deliberation of the County Board.

The Department of Administration shall send a copy of the agenda to the Employee, and the Employee's representative, if applicable, highlighting the appeal.

The County Board shall require a majority vote to uphold, modify, or reverse the decision of the Impartial Hearing Officer.

d. Grievance Procedure for Employee Discharge and Employee Discipline

1. Step 1 – Settle Matter Informally

An earnest effort shall be made to settle the matter informally between the aggrieved Employee and the Employee's immediate Supervisor and/or Department Head.

If the Grievance is not resolved informally, it shall be reduced to a Grievance in writing by the Employee on the Grievance Form. The Employee shall submit a completed Grievance Form to the Department Head with a copy to the Human Resources Division.

The Department Head shall either deny or sustain the Grievance in writing to the Employee. The Department Head shall promptly provide a copy of his or her written determination to the Human Resources Division.

Time Limit: If the Employee does not submit a written Grievance to the Department Head within ten (10) days of the event(s) giving rise to the Grievance or the date upon which the employee should have first known of said event(s), the Grievance shall be deemed waived. The Department Head shall either deny or sustain the Grievance in writing to the employee within ten (10) days of receipt of the written Grievance.

2. Step 2 – Request a Hearing before an Impartial Hearing Officer

If the grievance is not settled at Step 1, the Employee shall file a completed Request for Hearing Form to the County Administrator with a copy to the Human Resources Division requesting a hearing before an Impartial Hearing Officer.

Time Limit: If the Employee does not submit a completed form requesting a hearing before an Impartial Hearing Officer to the County Administrator within ten (10) days of the Department Head's Decision, the Grievance shall be deemed waived.

If timely requested, the hearing shall be scheduled as soon as possible following the Employer's receipt of the Employee's request for hearing.

The Impartial Hearing Officer shall determine whether the Departments Head's decision was arbitrary, capricious or not supported by the facts presented. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Impartial Hearing Officer shall render a written decision indicating the reasons for one of four decisions:

1. Sustaining the Discipline/Discharge,
2. Modifying the Discipline/Discharge,
3. Denying the Discipline/Discharge, or
4. Recommending additional investigation prior to final determination. In cases where the Hearing Officer recommends additional investigation, at the conclusion of the additional investigation, a second, follow-up hearing shall be scheduled. The Impartial Hearing Officer shall have the power to order a reasonable "make whole" remedy.

The Impartial Hearing Officer shall render a written decision to the Employer and Employee within fifteen (15) days from the date of the hearing. The decision of the Impartial Hearing Officer shall, at a minimum, contain a statement of issues, standard of review, findings and, if the Grievance is sustained, a reasonable "make whole" remedy for the Employee.

Burden of Proof: Except in a grievance involving Discharge of an Employee that is subject to Wis. Admin. Code Chap. DHS 5, the Employee bears the burden of proof by clear, convincing and satisfactory evidence that the County's decision to Discipline/Discharge the Employee was arbitrary and capricious. If the Employee does not satisfy this burden of proof, the Impartial Hearing Officer shall deny the Grievance.

3. Step 3 – Appeal the Decision of the Impartial Hearing Officer to the County Board

The Employer or Employee may appeal the decision of the Hearing Officer to the County Board. The decision of the County Board shall be final and binding upon the Parties.

The County Board shall not take testimony, accept additional evidence, accept briefing, accept oral argument or otherwise conduct a hearing of any sort in relation to an appeal.

Time Limit: The Employee or Employer may request a review by the County Board by filing a written request with the County Administrator within fourteen (14) days of the written decision of the Hearing Officer. The written request shall set forth in detail the reasons for the appeal. The non-appealing party shall have fourteen (14) days to submit a reply to the detailed request for review. Once the request for review and reply are received, the review shall be scheduled as an item on the agenda of the County Board's next regularly scheduled meeting. If not timely submitted, the request to appeal shall be dismissed.

Level of Review: The County Board shall review only the written decision of the Hearing Officer, the reasons for the appeal and the reply. The role of the County Board, in reviewing the decision of the Impartial Hearing Officer, is to address the following questions:

- a). Did the Impartial Hearing Officer follow a fair and impartial process?
- b). Is there evidence of corruption, fraud or misconduct by the Impartial Hearing Officer?
- c). Did the Impartial Hearing Officer make an error of law which makes his/her award invalid?
- d). Did the Impartial Hearing Officer make an error of fact which makes his/her award invalid?

After answering the above questions, the County Board may uphold, modify, or reverse the decision of the Impartial Hearing Officer.

The County Board shall deliver a written decision to the Employee and the Employer no later than seven (7) days from the date of the Chippewa County Board Meeting. The written decision shall contain:

- a). A statement of the issues,
- b). Findings, along with an explanation as to why any findings differ from the Impartial Hearing Officer; and
- c). A remedy along with an explanation as to why any remedy differs from the remedy granted by the Impartial Hearing Officer.

e. Grievance Procedure for Workplace Safety

1. Step 1 – Notify Supervisor/Department of Issue or Incident

Any employee who personally identifies, or is given information about, a workplace safety issue or incident shall notify his/her Supervisor/Department Head of the issue or incident as soon as reasonably practicable. All safety issues, no matter how insignificant the situation may appear to be, shall be reported.

An Employee shall not file a grievance relating to a condition that the Employee believes constitutes a Workplace Safety violation unless the Employee has first reported the condition to the immediate Supervisor/Department Head in writing on the Safety Concern Reporting Form located on the Employee Portal and promptly send a copy to the Human Resources Director. Any workplace safety incident or issue shall be reported by an Employee within twenty-four (24) hours after the incident or issue was raised in order to be addressed as part of the grievance procedure.

Time Limit: Upon receiving notice of an alleged Workplace Safety violation from an Employee, the Department Head shall have ten (10) days in which to investigate the condition and advise the Employee in writing that the County: (a) has determined that the condition does not constitute a Workplace Safety violation and no corrective action shall be taken; or (b) corrective action shall be taken in accordance with law to address the condition.

2. Step 2 – File a Grievance with the Human Resources Division

If the workplace safety issue is not resolved during Step 1, an employee may initiate a Grievance relating to workplace safety by completing an Employee Workplace Safety Grievance Form located on the Employee Portal. The Employee shall submit a completed Form to the Human Resources Division.

Time Limit: If the Employee does not submit a written Grievance to the Human Resources Division within ten (10) days of the Department Head's written determination, the Grievance shall be deemed waived. The Human Resources Division shall either deny or sustain the Grievance in writing to the Employee within ten (10) days of receipt of the written Grievance. The Human Resources Division shall retain a copy of the written determination.

3. Step 3 – Appeal the Decision and Request a Hearing before an Impartial Hearing Officer

The employee may appeal the findings and conclusions of the Human Resources Division and file a completed Request for Hearing Form to the County Administrator requesting a hearing before an Impartial Hearing Officer.

Time Limit: If the Employee does not submit a completed Request for a Hearing Form before an Impartial Hearing Officer to the County Administrator within ten (10) days of the Human Resources Division's written determination, the Grievance shall be deemed waived. If timely requested, the hearing shall be scheduled as soon as possible following receipt of the request for hearing.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the Hearing Officer shall record one of three outcomes:

- a). Sustaining the conclusions of the Human Resources Division,
- b). Denying the conclusions of the Human Resources Division and ordering additional or alternative remedial measures, or
- c). Recommending additional investigation prior to final determination. In the event the Hearing Officer recommends additional investigation, a second, follow-up hearing shall be scheduled at the conclusion of the additional investigation.

The Impartial Hearing Officer shall render a written decision to the Employer and Employee within fifteen (15) days from the date of the hearing. The decision of the Impartial Hearing Officer shall, at a minimum, contain a statement of issues, standard of review, findings and, if the Grievance is sustained, a reasonable remedy.

Burden of Proof: The Employee shall bear the burden of proof to persuade the Impartial Hearing Officer by clear, satisfactory, and convincing evidence that a workplace safety violation has been committed.

4. Step 4 – Appeal Decision of Hearing Officer to the County Board

The Employer or Employee may appeal the decision of the Hearing Officer to the County Board. The decision of the County Board shall be final and binding upon the Parties.

The County Board shall not take testimony, accept additional evidence, accept briefing, accept oral argument or otherwise conduct a hearing of any sort in relation to an appeal.

Time Limit: The Employee or Employer may request a review by the County Board by filing a completed Request for Appeal Form located on the Employee Portal with the County Administrator within fourteen (14) days of the written decision of the Hearing Officer. The request shall set forth in detail the reasons for the appeal. The non-appealing Party shall have fourteen (14) days to submit a reply to the detailed request. Once the request for review and reply are received, the review shall be scheduled as an item on the agenda of the County Board's next regularly scheduled meeting. If not timely submitted, the request to appeal shall be dismissed.

Level of Review: The County Board shall review only the written decision of the Hearing Officer, the reasons for the appeal and the reply. The role of the County Board, in reviewing the decision of the Impartial Hearing Officer, is to address the following questions:

- a). Did the Impartial Hearing Officer follow a fair and impartial process?
- b). Is there evidence of corruption, fraud or misconduct by the Impartial Hearing Officer?

- c). Did the Impartial Hearing Officer make an error of law which makes his/her award invalid?
- d). Did the Impartial Hearing Officer make an error of fact which makes his/her award invalid?

After answering the above questions, the County Board may uphold, modify, or reverse the decision of the Impartial Hearing Officer.

The County Board shall deliver a written decision to the Employee and the Employer no later than seven (7) days from the date of the Chippewa County Board Meeting. The written decision shall contain:

- a). A statement of the issues; and
- b). Findings, along with an explanation as to why any findings differ from the Impartial Hearing Officer; and
- c). A remedy along with an explanation as to why any remedy differs from the remedy granted by the Impartial Hearing Officer.

(Section 63 adopted by the County Board 12/11/18)

CHAPTER 7 – HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY

Chippewa County's Human Resources Division is responsible for the administration and management of the County Safety Program.

Chippewa County's responsibility is to provide and maintain a healthy, safe, secure, and prosperous environment in the workplace. We believe that all incidents are preventable and insist that all employees use safe work practices and procedures provided to them to prevent incidents from occurring. Employees are required to report unsafe or hazardous conditions in the workplace immediately.

Chippewa County shall abide by and be in compliance with all safety rules, regulations, and programs as prescribed by the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS). This includes but is not limited to safety policies, right to know, reporting requirements, emergency response and procedures, and other written safety programs. Chippewa County shall maintain current safety policies and procedures that are available to all employees and provide periodic and required training on safety programs and incident prevention.

Chippewa County and its employees are required to abide by local, state, and federal laws pertaining to workplace safety.

64. Right to Know and Hazardous Chemicals

a. Purpose

All employees, under the Wisconsin public employee Right-To-Know Law (Wis. Stats. §§ 101.58 – 101.59), have the right to information about any hazardous chemical or substance that is used in their workplace.

b. Information Available

1. The identity of any toxic substances and infectious agents an employee works with, is likely to come into contact with, or has been exposed to.
2. A description of the hazardous effects of the toxic substances.
3. Handling precautions for toxic substances.
4. Procedures for emergency treatment in the event of over-exposure

This information is contained in Safety Data Sheets (SDS), which the County collects on each chemical product used. SDS are made available to each department through an online SDS management system and a copy may be requested from the Human Resources Division.

c. Rights

The County may not refuse a request for information nor may an employee be discharged or discriminated against for exercising this right.

(Section 64 adopted by the County Board 1/8/19)

65. Tobacco Use

a. Purpose

To protect the environment, public health and comfort by prohibiting smoking and use of smokeless tobacco products in County facilities and vehicles. Numerous studies have found that tobacco smoke is a major contributor of indoor air pollution, and that breathing secondhand smoke is a cause of disease in healthy non-smokers, including heart disease, stroke, respiratory disease, and lung cancer.

b. Definitions

1. “Smoking” means to burn tobacco, to burn a tobacco substitute, to use or inhale smoke produced by a tobacco product, or to use or inhale any substance produced by a tobacco substitute, whether by means of a cigar, cigarette, electronic cigarette, vape, water pipe, or any other instrument.
2. Smokeless tobacco is used when someone places, maintains or chews, within their mouth, smokeless tobacco products.

c. Prohibited Conduct

1. There shall be no smoking in any enclosed County building, as provided in Wis. Stat. §101.123(2) (8r).
2. There shall be no smoking or use of smokeless tobacco products on County property, or in vehicles that are owned, leased or rented by Chippewa County. The County Parks are an exception; smoking is permitted on the County park property unless signs indicate otherwise, typically in a County park building.
3. It is unlawful to remove, deface or destroy any legally required “No Smoking” sign or to smoke in any place where such sign is posted.

(Section 65 adopted by the County Board 1/8/19)

66. Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace

a. Purpose

To maintain a workplace free from the effects of drugs and alcohol. The County declares any Chippewa County property, buildings or vehicles to be drug and alcohol free. Any employee violating this Policy is subject to discipline, up to and including discharge.

b. Alcohol Free Workplace

Alcoholic beverages are not allowed in any building, on County property or vehicle owned, leased or rented by Chippewa County at any time with the exception of the storage of alcohol as evidence in the Sheriff’s Department.

c. Drug Free Workplace

All employees are prohibited from unlawfully manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing, being under the influence of, or using a controlled substance in the workplace.

d. Use of Prescription Medication

This Policy does not prohibit an employee from using a legally obtained prescription drug that was legally issued to said employee. Because prescription medication can also affect an individual's demeanor, job performance and ability to safely perform all job duties, it is the employee's responsibility to notify his or her immediate supervisor if he or she is taking legal prescription drugs that may affect performance or ability to perform the position duties. Such prescription drugs shall be given under medical supervision and may not interfere with the safety and performance of job duties.

e. Drug-Related Convictions

Any employee convicted of violating a Wisconsin or Federal Criminal Drug Statute in the workplace shall inform the County of such conviction (including a plea of guilty and nolo contendere) within five (5) days of the conviction occurring. Failure to inform the County may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. When the federal government requires a County to notify the federal contracting office of an employee's drug conviction in a workplace, the County shall provide such notification to the federal contracting office within ten (10) days of receiving such notice of conviction from an employee or otherwise receiving notice of such conviction.

(Section 66 adopted by the County Board 1/8/19)

67. Drug and Alcohol Testing

a. Purpose

The County has a vital interest in maintaining a safe, healthy, and productive working environment for its employees. Chippewa County employees are prohibited from possessing, distributing, selling, or working under the influence of drugs or alcohol, which can be a serious safety risk to themselves, to other employees, or to the general public.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued Federal Regulations (49 CFR Parts 40 and 382) implementing provisions of the federal Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 which requires alcohol and controlled substance testing of drivers who are required to have a commercial driver's license (CDL) and details testing procedures for employees in safety-sensitive positions.

In order to further the County's goal of maintaining a drug and alcohol-free workplace, the County has implemented a drug and alcohol testing policy. County positions that require a CDL or are classified as a safety-sensitive position require specific forms of drug and alcohol testing. All County employees may be subject to testing based on a reasonable suspicion of use.

b. Testing Requirements Defined

To assist the County in preventing employees from using illegal drugs, alcohol and controlled substances at all County work sites, drug and alcohol testing shall be administered under the following conditions:

1. Pre-Employment

- a). The following position applicants are subject to Pre-Employment drug and alcohol testing as outlined in the job description:
 1. All positions that are required to hold and maintain a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL).
 2. All Sheriff Department positions that are in "safety-sensitive" positions as defined under DOT Rule 49 CFR Part 40.
- b). Applicants for employment subject to Pre-Employment testing shall be notified orally of the County's policy requiring Pre-Employment testing and the offer of employment shall be contingent upon the applicant submitting to a drug and alcohol test. The County shall deny employment to any applicant who tests positive for illegal drugs or a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) result of .02 BAC or higher.
- c). The County shall presume a positive test result if an applicant refuses to be tested.

2. Reasonable Suspicion

- a). All employees shall be required to undergo a drug and/or alcohol test if the County has reason to believe the employee is using drugs or is under the influence of or impaired by alcohol.
- b). If an employee suspects that another employee at work is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, the employee shall notify their supervisor or the Human Resources Division immediately.
- c). When possible, the reasonable suspicion circumstance should be witnessed by two (2) or more supervisors who have received training in the detection of probable drug or alcohol use through observations.
- d). The reasonable suspicion determination shall be documented by using the Reasonable Suspicion Check List Form located on the Employee Portal and submitted to the Human Resources Division immediately.
- e). Indicators that an employee may be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol include, but are not limited to:
 1. Direct observation of physical symptoms or use.
 2. The smell of drugs or alcohol on breath or person.
 3. Evident physical impairment such as slurred speech or lack of coordination.
 4. Information deemed reliable by the County from a source deemed credible by the County.
 5. Conviction for the use, possession, or purchase of illegal drugs.

- 6. An excessive number of unexplained absences or tardiness.
- 7. A sudden or uncharacteristic and unexplained decline in productivity or performance.
- f). If reasonable suspicion exists and a decision is made to require testing, the Human Resources Division shall notify the collection site that an employee is being escorted to the site for Reasonable Suspicion testing.
- g). The employee required to undergo a Reasonable Suspicion test shall be driven, or escorted to the collection site by the employee's direct supervisor and (if possible) another supervisor or manager. The employee shall not be allowed to return to work until the results of the drug and/or alcohol test are received. Upon completion of the drug and/or alcohol test, arrangements shall be made for a spouse, family member, or friend to safely drive or escort the employee home. If none are available, the supervisor shall arrange for a taxicab to transport the employee to his or her home at the employee's expense. If the employee rejects the alternatives, the supervisor shall take measures as deemed appropriate to prohibit the employee from driving his or herself home.
- h). An employee shall submit to testing when requested to do so by the County. The County shall presume a positive test result if an employee refuses to be tested upon reasonable suspicion.
- i). Chippewa County managers shall be trained on Reasonable Suspicion indicators/standards every two (2) years and training shall be coordinated by the Human Resources Division.

3. Post-Accident

Post-Accident drug and alcohol testing shall be required only for accidents involving commercial motor vehicles as defined in this section.

- a). CDL drivers and Sheriff's Department employees that are in "safety- sensitive" positions as defined under DOT Rule 49 CFR Part 40 shall be required to undergo Post-Accident drug and alcohol testing following an occurrence involving a commercial motor vehicle operating on a public road in commerce if any of the following occur, as defined in the Table below:

Table for §382.303(a) and (b)

Type of accident involved	Citation issued to the CMV driver	Test shall be performed by employer
i. Human fatality	YES NO	YES YES
ii. Bodily injury with immediate medical treatment away from the scene	YES NO	YES NO
iii. Disabling damage to any motor vehicle requiring tow away	YES NO	YES NO

- b). Post-Accident drug and alcohol testing after an accident involving a commercial motor vehicle which requires that a urine drug specimen shall be collected (as

defined above), shall be done so within thirty-two (32) hours of the accident. If a specimen cannot be collected in thirty-two (32) hours, the reasons and all attempts made shall be documented and submitted to the Human Resources Division.

- c). Post-Accident drug and alcohol testing after an accident involving a commercial motor vehicle which requires that a breath alcohol specimen shall be collected (as defined above), shall be done so within eight (8) hours of the accident. If the specimen cannot be collected within the first two (2) hours, the reasons and all attempts made shall be documented and submitted to the Human Resources Division. Attempts shall be made to collect the specimen within the proceeding six (6) hours. If the specimen cannot be collected within the proceeding six (6) hours, the reasons and all attempts made shall be documented and submitted to the Human Resources Division. No further attempts may be made to obtain the specimen.
- d). If the employee requires medical attention, necessary medical attention shall not be delayed in order to collect the required specimen(s).
- e). Employees required to undergo a Post-Accident test shall be allowed to return to work prior to the County receiving results, if the County is satisfied that the employee does not present an immediate danger to themselves or others. If the County is not satisfied that the employee does not pose an immediate danger to themselves or others, the employee shall not be allowed to return to work until test results are received by the County.
- f). An employee shall submit to testing when requested to do so by the County. The County shall presume a positive test result if an employee refuses to be tested as required under Post-Accident.

4. Random

- a). All employees that are required to hold and maintain a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) shall be subject to Random drug and/or alcohol testing. Quarterly, the County conducts unannounced drug and/or alcohol testing on a random selection of its CDL holders in compliance with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) guidelines.
- b). Upon notification of his or her selection for Random drug and/or alcohol testing, the employee shall proceed to the collection site immediately. The employee shall report back to their scheduled work area after completion of the drug and/or alcohol testing.
- c). All time spent driving to, during and from the Random test shall be recorded as work time.

c. Collection Procedures

- 1. A medical center designated by the County shall collect the sample(s) for testing utilizing the chain of custody procedures protecting the sample(s) identity. The County shall designate the laboratory that shall conduct testing. All testing shall be at the County's expense.

2. When an applicant or employee is required to submit to a drug and/or alcohol test, the individual shall be instructed when and where to report for the specimen to be collected. The applicant or employee shall be required to bring and present valid picture identification.
3. Urine samples shall be collected and used for drug testing. Urine samples shall be given in private, unless there is reason to believe that the individual has altered or substituted samples. In such circumstances, the individual may be required to give a second sample under direct supervision by a representative from the drug testing facility.
4. Breath samples may be used for alcohol testing.
5. Employees who are required to undergo a Reasonable Suspicion or Post-Accident test during their normally scheduled work hours shall use accrued Paid Time Off (PTO) for all time associated with the test if the results are positive. If the employee does not have PTO, the time shall be unpaid. If the test results are negative, all time associated with the testing that occurs during the normally scheduled work hours shall be considered work time and paid by the County.
6. If an employee refuses to submit to any required drug and/or alcohol test, the County shall presume a positive test result and the employee shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

d. Test Results and Employment Status

1. The results of the drug and/or alcohol testing shall be sent directly to the Human Resources Division.
2. The County shall deny employment to any applicant who tests positive for illegal drugs and/or a breath alcohol test result of .02 BAC or higher.
3. All employees with a confirmed positive illegal drug test shall be discharged from employment.
4. All employees with a confirmed breath alcohol tests where the Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) result is .02 BAC to .039999 BAC, may not return to work for 24 hours post results. The employee may also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.
5. All employees with a confirmed breath alcohol tests where the Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) result is .04 BAC or higher, shall be discharged from employment.
6. All employees testing positive for drugs or alcohol shall be advised of the available resources for evaluation and treatment including the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of Substance Abuse Programs, counseling and/or treatment programs. An employee who is discharged from employment due to a positive drug or alcohol test, may be reconsidered for employment, if there is a vacancy, upon successful completion of Substance Abuse Program, a mutually agreed upon number of negative drug and alcohol test results and a mutually agreed upon timeframe.

7. In the event any sample taken is found to be invalid or unreliable due to circumstances unrelated to the conduct of the employee or applicant, the employee or applicant may be required to provide a new sample for testing at the expense of the County.
8. In the event any sample taken is found to be invalid or unreliable due to circumstances related to the employee or applicant's conduct, the employee may be disciplined up to and including discharge or the applicant shall be denied employment.

e. Confidentiality

All test-related information, including the results of the drug and/or alcohol test, shall be treated as confidential information.

(Section 67 adopted by the County Board 1/8/19; 11/08/2022)

68. Conceal/Carry

Except as provided in Chippewa County Ordinance §2-462(b)(2), no person shall possess, carry, or bear a weapon, whether concealed or unconcealed, or contraband, or any other prohibited item within any county building.

(Section 68 adopted by the County Board 1/8/19; 09/09/2025)

69. Workplace Bullying

a. Purpose

The County is committed to providing a workplace that is free from bullying. All employees have a right to work in an environment free from bullying, and to be treated with dignity and respect. All managers and supervisors are responsible for actively intervening to prevent and stop bullying behavior that is occurring in their workplaces, whether or not a complaint is received.

b. Definition

1. "Bullying" means repeated, malicious, unwelcome, severe and pervasive mistreatment that harms, intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates an employee, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment.
2. Bullying includes conduct that a reasonable person would find hostile, offensive, and unrelated to the employer's legitimate business interests. The following list may be considered bullying behavior. This list is not intended to be exhaustive:
 - a). Staring, glaring or other nonverbal demonstrations of hostility;
 - b). Exclusion or social isolation in the workplace;
 - c). Excessive monitoring or micro-managing;
 - d). Work-related harassment (work-overload, unrealistic deadlines, meaningless tasks);
 - e). Being held to a different standard than the rest of an employee's work group;
 - f). Consistent ignoring or interrupting of an employee in front of co-workers;
 - g). Personal attacks (angry outbursts, excessive profanity, or name-calling);
 - h). Encouragement of others to turn against the targeted employee;
 - i). Sabotage of a co-worker's work product or undermining of an employee's work performance;

- j). Stalking;
- k). Invasion of another's person's personal space or personal property;
- l). Unreasonable interference with an employee's ability to do his or her work;
- m). Repeated infliction of verbal abuse, such as the use of derogatory remarks, insults and epithets;

3. The County does not consider the following behaviors bullying:

- a). Reasonable management practices, including performance management and disciplinary procedures;
- b). A direction to carry out reasonable duties and instructions; and
- c). A direction to comply with Chippewa County's policies, procedures, or department work rules.

c. Reporting

Employees who believe they have experienced conduct that violates this policy, or who have concerns about such matters, should report their complaints verbally or in writing to their supervisor, Department Head, or the Human Resources Division.

(Section 69 adopted by the County Board 1/8/19)

70. Workplace Violence

a. Purpose

Chippewa County is committed to providing a work environment that is free from violence. Any acts or threatened acts of violence shall not be tolerated. Anyone engaging in violent behavior shall be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge, and may also be personally subject to other civil or criminal liabilities.

Enforcement of this policy requires the combined efforts of all employees. Employees shall report any act of violence or any threat of violence to their supervisor. All such reports shall be fully investigated. Every effort shall be made to keep employees safe at work.

Supervisors, Managers and/or Department Heads shall take workplace violence concerns of employees seriously and trust the instincts of employees who are worried or fearful of another employee or customer. Bizarre, erratic, or aggressive employee/citizen behavior shall be brought to the attention of the Human Resources Director, except in the case of immediate/imminent danger when law enforcement shall immediately be notified. Swift corrective and/or disciplinary action shall be taken as necessary to stop aggressive behavior.

b. Workplace Violence Definition

Workplace violence is any act or threat (either verbal or implied) of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment, and/or coercion that involves or affects Chippewa County employees or occurs on Chippewa County property.

Acts or threats of violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. All threats or acts of violence that occur on Chippewa County property regardless of the relationship between Chippewa County and the parties involved in the incident.

2. All threats or acts of violence that occur off Chippewa County property and involves someone who is acting as a representative of Chippewa County.

Specific examples of conduct that may be considered threats, or acts of violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Hitting or shoving an individual.
2. Threatening an individual.
3. The intentional destruction or threat of destruction of County property.
4. Harassing or threatening phone calls.
5. Harassing surveillance or stalking.
6. The suggestion or intimation that violence is appropriate.
7. Possession or use of firearms or weapons.

All employees and non-employees, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay", or other conduct that may be dangerous to others.

Chippewa County's prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to all Chippewa County employees, customers and contractors of the County and anyone else on Chippewa County property. Employees who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, as well as arrest and prosecution.

c. Reporting

Employees shall notify their supervisor whenever they witness, experience or become aware of an act or threat of workplace violence. All suspicious individuals or activities shall be reported as soon as possible the employee's supervisor. As an alternative means of reporting threats or acts of violence, an employee may report such incidents to their Department Head, the Human Resources Division or the County Administrator. Employees who feel that they or their co-workers are in immediate or imminent danger should dial 911 to attain assistance from law enforcement.

A supervisor who receives an employee report of workplace violence, or who has knowledge of a situation that may affect the security of Chippewa County, employees or its assets shall report such information to their Department Head. The Department Head shall verbally inform the Human Resources Director, complete a confidential written memorandum, and submit the written memorandum to the Human Resources Director. The written memorandum should include:

1. A detailed description of what happened, where it happened, and when it happened.
2. Identity of persons reporting or witnessing the incident.
3. How the matter was resolved.
4. Suggestions for minimizing the reoccurrence of this incident.
5. While every effort shall be made to keep reports and records made pursuant to this policy confidential, such reports and records may be subject to public disclosure under the Open Records Law.

Retaliation and/or reprisal against an employee who genuinely reports threats of workplace violence in good faith are in violation of this policy. Anyone who engages in or assists in such retaliatory actions shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

d. Investigation of Reports

The Human Resources Director shall receive, evaluate, interview and respond to reports of workplace violence with the assistance of appropriate parties, which may include the County Administrator, Corporation Counsel and/or the local Law Enforcement Agency.

Employees are expected to cooperate with the investigation of any workplace violence incidents. Employees who fail to cooperate with an investigation or who give false information shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

It is the policy of Chippewa County to investigate reports of all acts of workplace violence that occur on County property or against an employee acting in their capacity as an employee. While every effort shall be made to keep the identities of individuals who report acts of workplace violence and records made pursuant to this policy confidential, such reports and records may be subject to public disclosure under the Open Records Law. To maintain workplace safety, the County may place an employee on administrative leave pending an investigation.

(Section 70 revised and approved by the County Board 1/8/19)

71. Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Free Workplace

a. Purpose

The County is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices, including harassment and retaliation. Therefore, the County expects that all relationships among persons in the workplace shall be business-like and free of bias, prejudice and harassment.

The County has developed this policy to ensure that all its employees can work in an environment free from unlawful harassment, discrimination and retaliation. The County shall make every reasonable effort to ensure that all employees are familiar with these policies and are aware that any discrimination, harassment or retaliation complaint shall be investigated and resolved appropriately.

These policies should not, and may not, be used as a basis for excluding or separating individuals of a particular gender, or any other protected status, from participating in business or work-related social activities or discussions. In other words, no one should make the mistake of engaging in discrimination or exclusion to avoid allegations of harassment. The law and the policies of the County prohibit disparate treatment on the basis of sex or any other protected status, with regard to terms, conditions, privileges and perquisites of employment.

b. Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of the County to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, marital or domestic status, citizenship, national origin, genetic

information, or any other characteristic protected by law. The County prohibits any such discrimination or harassment.

c. Retaliation

The County encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment. It is the policy of the County to promptly and thoroughly investigate such reports. The County prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports.

d. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, “sexual harassment” is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 recognizes two types of sexual harassment: a) quid pro quo and b) hostile work environment. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include:

1. Unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors
2. Sexual jokes and innuendo
3. Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
4. Commentary about an individual’s body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies
5. Leering, whistling or touching
6. Insulting or obscene comments or gestures
7. Display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures
8. Other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature

e. Harassment

Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is also strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment may be verbal, written or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her race, color, religion, sex, sexual

orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, marital or domestic status, citizenship, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law, or that of his or her relatives, friends or associates, and that: a) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, b) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or c) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the employer's premises or circulated in the workplace, on company time or using company equipment by e-mail, phone (including voice messages), text messages, social networking sites or other means.

f. Individuals and Conduct Covered

This policy applies to all applicants and employees, whether related to conduct engaged in by fellow employees or by someone not directly connected to the County (e.g., an outside vendor, consultant or customer).

Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during business trips, business meetings and business-related social events.

g. Reporting an Incident of Harassment, Discrimination or Retaliation

The County encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment or retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Individuals who believe that they have been the victim of such conduct should discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor, the Department Head, the Human Resources Director or any member of the Human Resources Division. See the complaint procedure described below.

In addition, the County encourages individuals who believe they are being subjected to such conduct to promptly advise the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome and to request that it be discontinued. Often this action alone will resolve the problem. The County recognizes, however, that an individual may prefer to pursue the matter through formal complaint procedures.

h. Complaint Procedure

Individuals who believe they have been the victims of conduct prohibited by this policy or believe they have witnessed such conduct should discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor, the Human Resources Director or any member of the Human Resources Division.

The County encourages the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so that rapid and constructive action can be taken before relationships become irreparably strained. Therefore, while no fixed reporting period has been established, early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of harassment.

Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination or retaliation shall be investigated promptly and typically by the Human Resources Director or designee. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge.

The County will maintain confidentiality throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action.

Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and shall be promptly investigated and addressed.

Misconduct constituting harassment, discrimination or retaliation shall be dealt with appropriately. Responsive action may include, for example, training, referral to EAP, referral to counseling or disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

False and malicious complaints of harassment, discrimination or retaliation (as opposed to complaints that, even if erroneous, are made in good faith) may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

(Section 71 revised and adopted by the County Board 1/8/19)

72. Safety and On-The-Job Accidents

a. Purpose

To provide safe working conditions and maintain continuity of employment.

b. Employee Responsibility

Since the employee on the job is frequently more aware of unsafe conditions than anyone else, employees are encouraged to make recommendations, suggestions, and criticisms of unsafe conditions to their immediate supervisor, Department Head or the Human Resources Division so that they may be corrected.

c. Department Head Responsibility

Department Heads are responsible for the working conditions within their department. A Department Head should remain alert at all times to dangerous and unsafe conditions, so that he/she may recommend corrective action, discipline employees who habitually create or participate in unsafe practices, assess new or changed situations for inherent dangers, and follow up on employee suggestions for corrective action so that unsafe conditions are not instituted or permitted to exist.

d. Safety Workgroup Meetings

Chippewa County encourages employee involvement in any of the department or location relevant County-wide safety workgroups. The workgroups shall recommend and/or review procedures and actions to be taken to prevent injuries, fires, security issues and other emergencies. Decisions and recommendations shall be communicated via the workgroup safety meetings.

e. Injuries

All employees are required to immediately report all occupational illnesses or injuries to the Trifecta First Report Hotline at (888) 589-6492 and their supervisor within 24-hours, no matter how minor. Refer to the policy on Leaves-Workers' Compensation for more information on the reporting requirements.

(Section 72 adopted by the County Board 1/8/19; 09/13/2022; 01/14/2025)

73. Fitness for Duty

a. Purpose

For employees, fitness for duty means being able to perform the essential duties of their job in a safe, appropriate, and effective manner. The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent means of evaluating employees in determining that the physical and mental health of an individual allows them to complete assigned duties in a safe and reliable manner.

b. Introduction

Primary responsibility for fitness for duty rests with the employee. Being fit for duty means reporting to work mentally and physically fit to work safely, responsibly, productively, and reliably.

Supervisors shall ensure that employees under their supervision are aware of and held responsible for FFD (fitness for duty). If an employee fails to take personal responsibility for FFD, the supervisor shall contact the Human Resources Division to discuss a FFD evaluation. A management request for FFD evaluation may be appropriate when:

1. The employee identifies a medical condition as a cause of a performance problem.
2. Unsafe behavior is observed that is not typical of the employee.
3. There is a documented concern about whether the employee can work in a safe and reliable manner.
4. There is reasonable suspicion of substance abuse.
5. There is a management concern about excessive use of absences that are medical in nature.
6. Return to work after surgery, illness, etc.
7. Pre-employment (new hire, transfer, etc.)

A FFD exam may also be required for an employee who is returning from a medical leave of absence or work related injury prior to their return to work.

NOTE: The FFD process is not a substitute for using performance guidance and counseling or, the disciplinary process. Supervisors shall address performance problems through the performance review process or by implementing corrective or disciplinary action despite the existence or possibility of medical issues. Managers should consult with the Human Resources Division for guidance in these situations.

c. Procedures

When a supervisor determines that a FFD evaluation may be necessary, they should contact the Human Resources Division for consultation. The supervisor shall submit a written FFD request to the Human Resources Division in a written memorandum format. The written memorandum shall include the following information:

1. Reason for requesting a FFD evaluation.
2. Background information, concerns, and a chronological sequence of events leading to the request for the FFD exam.
3. All documented observations, interactions, and concerns regarding fitness for duty. Documentation shall be accurate, timely, specific, and objective. Supervisors should include times, dates, locations, names of employees involved and specific statements and actions.
4. Factual information concerning conduct and performance and a record of all actions taken.
5. Avoid documenting assumptions, vague generalities and hearsay.
6. A list of the essential functions of the employee's job description
7. A description of how the essential functions are adversely affected by the worker's conduct.
8. Attach a copy of the employee's job description.

Upon review of the FFD request memorandum, the Human Resources Division shall make a determination as to whether the FFD request is appropriate, or if the concern of the Supervisor can be resolved without initiating a FFD evaluation. Follow up by the Human Resources Division could include, but is not limited to, any of the following: functional capacity evaluation, medical evaluation, referral to EAP, removal from job/alternate employment, return to previous duties, or request for further information from supervisor and/or medical providers.

In the event the Human Resources Division determines that the FFD assessment is appropriate, a member of the Human Resources Division, the Department Head, and the supervisor shall meet with the employee to inform them of the concern. Human Resources shall forward the FFD request memorandum to the appropriate medical provider and schedule an evaluation.

In urgent medical situations, a supervisor may make the decision to remove an employee from work for an immediate medical evaluation, (such as bringing them to Urgent Care or ER) or make arrangements to transport the employee home. In cases where there is reasonable suspicion of drug/alcohol abuse, the supervisor shall contact the Human Resources Division immediately for assistance and instruction.

During a FFD evaluation, the medical provider shall review the information provided in the memorandum and schedule an appointment for a FFD evaluation as determined by the medical provider. Following the review, the medical provider shall send their report of the FFD findings and an outline of any work restrictions, if applicable, to the Human Resources Division. A

member of the Human Resources Division, the Department Head and the supervisor shall review the report to determine if reasonable accommodations can be achieved if necessary. If appropriate, the Human Resources Division, Department Head and Supervisor shall be responsible for assisting the employee in devising reasonable work assignments, modifications, or other accommodations.

(Section 73 revised and approved by the County Board 1/8/19; 10/08/19)

74. Return to Work

a. Purpose

To promote and ensure the safe return of injured employees back into the work environment and enhance the mental and physical healing of the employee, thereby shortening the period of time an injured employee is off the job.

A Return to Work (RTW) program that modifies an employee's job duties within work recommendations of the treating health care provider(s) shall be administered by, and at the discretion of the Human Resources Division for any work or non-work injury/illness that affects the employee's ability to perform some or all of their normal work duties.

Modified or light duty tasks are those allowed by an employee's health care provider, with specific physical restrictions, and performed while an employee continues to heal from an illness or injury. Modified or light duty work can help to facilitate the County's mission by allowing departments to use physically injured staff to complete tasks that, in the absence of the employee, would not be accomplished. The RTW program places the employee in a "bridge job," with specific tasks and assigned duties within their medical restrictions. The modified job assignment is temporary, and the RTW program does not create positions to permanently accommodate a person with qualified disabilities.

b. Objectives

The goal and expectation of the RTW program is that the employee shall progressively return to work within full capacity and be able to perform their prior job at 100% without limitations.

The primary objectives of the RTW program are as follows:

1. Safely return employees to work as soon as possible.
2. Avoid deterioration in work skills due to prolonged absences from work.
3. Reduce the number of lost time incidents and total number of lost workdays.
4. Reduce disability and medical treatment costs.
5. Maintain productivity without hiring temporary employees.
6. Rapid and efficient return of employees to their original jobs.
7. Maintain a high level of communication with employees to help reinforce management's commitment.

Modified or light duty work, including transfer to another department or division, may be provided when:

1. The work is productive.
2. The work is within the employee's medical restrictions as provided by a physician.
3. The work is within the employee's skill level.
4. There is adequate capacity within the department or division to organize and supervise the work being performed.

Modified or light duty assignments are temporary, not to exceed 12 weeks, unless specifically approved by the Human Resources Division upon consultation with the affected department(s).

Temporary modified or light duty work shall be specific to the injured employee's limitations, and the availability of work within a department or division so as not to cause upheaval or restrict the day to day operation of the department or division.

Law enforcement officers participating in a temporary modified or light duty job shall be responsible to provide their own transportation and are not eligible to drive a squad car, whether marked or un-marked.

During periods of temporary modified or light duty work, the employee shall be compensated at the wage or regular rate of pay of the position they were in at the time of injury, regardless of the modified or light duty work performed.

Chippewa County specifically reserves all rights to administer this policy. This policy does not have permanent modified or light duty positions, nor shall it create positions to permanently accommodate a person with a disability.

c. Additional RTW Program Procedures:

1. In the event an employee refuses modified or light duty work and the work is within the employee's restrictions and the employee has the ability to perform the modified or light duty work available, Chippewa County is not obligated to provide an alternative assignment or work. The employee may be required to substitute PTO as determined by the Human Resources Division.
2. In the event an employee, who is recovering from a work-related injury, refuses modified or light duty work that the employee has the ability to perform and that is within the employee's restrictions, the workers' compensation benefit or payment may be affected as determined by the workers' compensation carrier. The employee may be required to substitute PTO as determined by the Human Resources Division.
3. If an employee reports to modified or light duty work, the employee has an obligation to work within the restrictions provided by the physician. If a supervisor or designee unknowingly asks the employee to do a task outside of the restrictions, the employee is responsible for informing the supervisor of the restrictions and shall decline the task. The employee shall notify the Human Resources Division immediately.
4. Employees who do not improve while participating in the RTW program may be removed from the program.

5. Employees who have reached "end of healing" as established by a physician shall be removed from the RTW program.
6. Employees authorized to utilize the RTW program for non-work related injuries may remain on the program from a maximum of 12 weeks but may be removed from the RTW program sooner at the discretion of the employee's Department Head or the Human Resources Division.

(Section 74 revised and approved the County Board 1/8/19)

75. ADA Accommodations

a. Purpose

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAA) are federal laws that require employers with 15 or more employees to not discriminate against applicants and individuals with disabilities and, when needed, to provide reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees who are qualified for a job, with or without reasonable accommodations, so that they may perform the essential job duties of the position.

It is the policy of Chippewa County to comply with all federal and state laws concerning the employment of persons with disabilities and to act in accordance with regulations and guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Furthermore, it is the County's policy not to discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

b. Procedure

When an individual with a disability requests accommodation and can be reasonably accommodated without creating an undue hardship or causing a direct threat to workplace safety, he or she shall be given the same consideration for employment as any other applicant. Applicants who pose a direct threat to the health, safety and well-being of themselves or others in the workplace when the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation shall not be hired.

Chippewa County shall reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation, or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to Chippewa County. Contact the Human Resources Division with any questions regarding accommodations. All accommodation requests shall be in writing and forms are available by contacting the Human Resources Division.

All employees are required to comply with the County's safety standards. Current employees who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of themselves or other individuals in the workplace shall be placed on leave until an organizational decision has been made in regard to the employee's immediate employment situation.

Individuals who are currently using illegal drugs are excluded from coverage under the County's ADA policy.

The Human Resources Division is responsible for implementing this policy, including the resolution of reasonable accommodation, safety/direct threat and undue hardship issues.

(Section 75 adopted by the County Board 1/8/19)

76. Reasonable Accommodation of Individuals' Known Limitations Related to, Affected by, or Arising Out of Pregnancy, Childbirth, or Related Medical Conditions (PWFA)

a. Purpose

As required by the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA), the County will provide reasonable accommodations to employees and applicants with limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, unless the accommodation will cause undue hardship to the Company's operations.

b. PWFA Request

An employee or applicant may request an accommodation due to pregnancy, childbirth or a related medical condition by submitting the request in writing to the Human Resources Division. The accommodation request should include an explanation of the pregnancy-related limitations, the accommodation needed and any alternative accommodation(s) that might be reasonable. Depending on the nature of the accommodation, the individual may be requested to submit a statement from a health care provider substantiating the need for the accommodation.

Upon receipt of a request for accommodation, Human Resources will contact the employee or applicant to discuss the request and determine if an accommodation is reasonable and can be provided without significant difficulty or expense, i.e., undue hardship.

An employee may request paid or unpaid leave as a reasonable accommodation under this policy; however, the County will not require an employee to take time off if another reasonable accommodation can be provided that will allow the employee to continue to work.

(Section 76 adopted by the County Board 01/14/2025)

77. Reasonable Accommodation of Individuals' Religious Beliefs and Practices

The County will attempt to reasonably accommodate an otherwise qualified applicant or employee with sincerely-held religious beliefs and practices who is able to perform the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship upon the County's business operations.

An applicant or employee who believes he or she needs a reasonable accommodation of a sincerely-held religious belief or practice should discuss the need for a possible accommodation with the Human Resources Division.

The County prohibits any form of retaliation for making a report in good faith about issues associated with reasonable accommodation of religious beliefs.

(Section 77 adopted by the County Board 01/14/2025)

78. Breastfeeding / Lactation

a. Policy

Chippewa County supports the decision for mothers to breastfeed and is committed to enabling employees to maintain the breast-feeding relationship. In keeping with this philosophy and in compliance with certain provisions of Section 7 of the Fair Labor Standards Act, Chippewa County shall take the following appropriate measures to facilitate breastfeeding and expression of milk by mothers of newborns less than one year of age:

1. Chippewa County shall provide reasonable break periods for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for one year after the child's birth each time such employee has a need to express milk.

Mothers may use their paid break periods and/or unpaid lunch periods for breastfeeding or expression of milk. If the designated break periods are not adequate, or the scheduled break periods do not meet the needs of the mother, she should discuss scheduling options with her manager. If the normal break period provided to the employee is not enough adequate time, the mother may use compensatory time or PTO, in the smallest increment of 15 minutes.

2. Chippewa County shall provide a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, which may be used by an employee to express breast milk.

When requested by the employee or department, the Human Resources Division shall work with the employee and department to determine individual space options, which may be the employee's office or another space temporarily created or converted into a space for expressing milk.

3. Employees shall be expected to provide their own equipment and storage.

(Section 78 adopted by the County Board 1/8/19)

79. Surveillance Camera

a. Purpose and Scope

Chippewa County operates a system of surveillance cameras for the purpose of creating a safer environment for all those who live, work and visit the county. This policy explains the purpose of the cameras and provides guidelines for their operation and for the storage of captured images.

b. Policy Statement

Cameras may be placed in strategic locations throughout the Government Center Campus and other County owned facilities. These cameras may be used for detecting and deterring crime, to safeguard against potential threats from the public, to manage emergency response situations, and to monitor the use of publicly owned buildings, facilities and operations.

c. Monitoring

Images from fixed cameras shall be streamed/recorded on a 24-hour basis every day of the week. Only authorized and trained employees are allowed to access recorded images. When activity warranting further investigation or review is reported or detected at any camera location, the authorized employee may selectively view the appropriate camera and relay any available information to law enforcement or other employees as necessary to appropriately respond to the situation.

Recorded images may be used for a variety of purposes, including but not limited to:

1. Assist in criminal investigations.
2. Monitor activity around high-value or high-threat areas.
3. Assist in identifying, apprehending and prosecuting offenders.
4. Assist in gathering evidence for criminal and civil court actions.
5. Help emergency services personnel maintain public order.
6. Monitor pedestrian and vehicle traffic activity.
7. Assist in providing effective public services.
8. Review suspicious behavior.

d. Training

Employees involved in monitoring cameras shall be appropriately trained by the Information Technology Division or designee prior to being provided access to the camera system.

e. Prohibited Activity

Surveillance monitoring shall be conducted in a professional, ethical and legal manner at all times. The surveillance system shall not be used to invade the privacy of individuals or look into private areas or areas where the reasonable expectation of privacy exists. All reasonable efforts shall be taken to protect these rights. Surveillance monitoring shall not be used to harass, intimidate or discriminate against any individual or group.

f. Review or Release of Recorded Images

Recorded images are classified as public records (Wis. Stat. § 19.32(2)). As such, all requests for the release of recorded images shall be processed as an open records request and follow the appropriate procedures. Requests to review or to release recorded images collected or maintained by Chippewa County (other than Law Enforcement) shall be done only with the authorization of the Human Resources Director or designee.

g. Management of the Camera System

The Human Resources Division shall approve all authorized users before access to the system is granted. The Human Resources Division shall maintain a list of all employees authorized to access the camera system and shall provide that information to the Information Technology Division.

The Information Technology Division shall maintain a record of the location of all active cameras in the system and all recorded images. All recorded images shall be retained per the records retention ordinances.

(Section 79 adopted by the County Board 04/11/2017)

CHAPTER 8 – WORKPLACE POLICIES

80. Ethics

a. Purpose

To ensure that the public can have complete confidence in the integrity of Chippewa County Government, each employee shall respect and adhere to the fundamental principles of ethical service. This policy is created as the proper operation of county government demands that:

1. Chippewa County employees be independent, impartial and responsible to the people;
2. Decisions be made in the proper channels of the county governmental structure;
3. County offices should not be used for personal gain;
4. County business should be conducted in such a way so as to re-enforce the public's confidence in its integrity.

The purpose of this policy is to establish ethical standards of conduct for all County employees by identifying those acts or actions that are not compatible with the best interest of the County. Because representatives of the County are drawn from society, they cannot and should not be without all personal and economic interest in the decisions and policies of government. Citizens who serve as employees retain their rights as citizens to personal and economic interests. Therefore, the standards of ethical conduct for County employees must distinguish between minor and inconsequential conflicts which are unavoidable and those conflicts which are substantial and material. The provisions of this policy, and such rules and regulations which may be established are to be interpreted in the context of the above principles and are deemed to be in the best interest of the public.

b. Coverage

This policy governs all County employees.

c. Exemptions

Political contributions which are reported under Chapter 11, Wis. Stats., are exempt from the provisions of this code.

d. Definitions

1. Person

Any individual, corporation, partnership, joint venture, association or organization.

2. Financial Interest

Any interest which yields, directly or indirectly, a monetary or other material benefit to the County employee or to any person employing or retaining services of the County employee.

3. Anything of Value

Any money or property, favor, service, payment, advance, forbearance, loan or promise of future employment, but does not include such things as compensation and expenses paid by the state or County, fees, expenses, unsolicited advertising or promotional material such as pens, pencils, notepads, calendars, informational or educational materials of unexceptional value, plaques, other advertising giveaways or any other thing which is not likely to influence the judgment of individuals covered by this policy.

4. **Privileged Information**

Any written or oral material related to County government which has not become part of the body of public information and which is designated by statute, court decision, lawful orders, ordinances, resolution or custom as privileged.

5. **County Employee**

All persons filling an allocated position of County employment, including the Clerk of Court, County Clerk, Sheriff, Register of Deeds and Treasurer.

6. **Immediate Family**

A County employee's spouse, children, stepchildren, parents, stepparents, or other legal relation who contributes more than one-half of the support of the employee or receives that level of support from the employee.

e. **Fair and Equal Treatment**

1. **Use of Public Property**

A County employee shall not use, or knowingly permit the use, of County services or County-owned vehicles, equipment, materials for unauthorized nongovernmental purposes or for unauthorized personal convenience or for profit, unless such services or uses are available to the public generally and consistent with practices and policies of the County.

2. **Obligations to Citizens**

A County employee shall not grant any special consideration, treatment or advantage to any citizen beyond that which is available to every other citizen.

f. **Conflicts of Interest**

1. No County employee may use his or her position to obtain financial gain or anything of substantial value for the private benefit of himself or herself or his or her immediate family, or for an organization with which he or she is associated.

2. No person may offer or give to a County employee, directly or indirectly, and no County employee may solicit or accept from any person, directly or indirectly, anything of value if it could reasonably be expected to influence the employee's vote, official action or judgment, or could reasonably be considered as a reward for any official action or inaction on the part of the employee.

3. No County employee may take any official action substantially affecting a matter in which the employee, a member of his or her immediate family, or an organization with which the County employee is associated, has a substantial financial interest.
4. No County employee may use his or her position in a way that produces or assists in the production of a substantial benefit, direct or indirect, for the employee, one or more members of the employee's immediate family either separately or together, or an organization with which the employee is associated.

g. Political Activities

A County employee has the right to freely express his or her views as a citizen and cast his or her vote, subject to the following:

1. No County employee shall directly or indirectly use or seek to use his or her authority or position to control or modify the political activity of another person.
2. No County employee shall at any time use any Chippewa County-owned or leased equipment for any political activity.
3. No County employee shall attempt to or influence an attempt to remove, discharge, demote, reduce pay, or otherwise discriminate against any employee because of the employee's political opinions or affiliations.

h. Disclosure of Privileged Information

A County employee shall not knowingly disclose or permit the disclosure of privileged information to any person not lawfully authorized to receive such privileged information. A County employee shall not use privileged information to advance his or her personal financial interest or that of his or her immediate family.

i. Gifts and Favors

A County employee shall not accept, from any person or organization directly or indirectly, anything of value without full payment, if it could reasonably be expected to influence his or her vote, governmental actions or judgments or is provided to such employee because of their position or office and could reasonably be considered as a reward for any governmental action or inaction.

h. State Statutes Incorporated

1. Statutes Incorporated by Reference

The following sections of the Wisconsin Statutes are hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of this policy:

- a). §19.01 (Oaths and Bonds)
- b). §19.21 (Custody and Delivery of Official Property and Records)
- c). §19.81-§19.89 (Open Meetings of Governmental Bodies)
- d). §19.59 (Codes of Ethics for Local Government Officials, Employees and Candidates).

2. Violation of Incorporated Statutes

County employees shall comply with the sections of the Wisconsin Statutes incorporated in this policy.

j. Investigations and Enforcement

Any ethics complaint or violation of this policy by an employee shall be reported by using the Employee Concerns or Complaints policy located in the HR Policy Manual. If the ethics complaint or violation involves the employee's immediate supervisor, the employee shall consult with the Human Resources Director to report the complaint or violation.

If the complaint is found to be true, the Human Resources Director shall work with the employee's immediate supervisor to determine appropriate action, which may include Corrective or Disciplinary Action.

(Section 80 revised and approved by the County Board 01/08/19)

81. Outside Employment

a. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure employees do not engage in outside employment that conflicts with or affects the employee's performance of county duties.

b. Definition

Outside employment is defined as any paid or unpaid activity such as, but not limited to, consulting, advising, testing, performing analysis or examinations, the practice of one's profession, or similar work performed in addition to the official responsibilities of an employee.

c. Policy

Employees may hold outside employment as long as they continue to meet performance standards of their County position, provided the outside employment does not create a conflict of interest or ethical violation with the County position or affect the employee's performance of County duties.

Employees shall be held to the same performance standards and work schedules, regardless of existing outside employment demands. Employees should also consider the impact that outside employment may have on their health and physical endurance. All employees shall be judged by the same performance standards and shall be subject to the employer's scheduling demands, regardless of existing outside work requirements.

Outside employment is prohibited when an employee is off work due to being on an approved, ongoing (not intermittent) FMLA, County Medical or Personal Leave or off work due to a work related injury.

Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest or ethical violation is expressly prohibited. Employees may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside the organization for materials produced or services rendered while performing their jobs as Chippewa County employees. Determining whether or not such outside employment constitutes

a conflict of interest is the sole discretion of the Department Head after consultation with the Human Resources Director or Corporation Counsel. Any conflict of interest found shall require the employee to immediately terminate the outside employment creating the conflict or the employee shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge from employment.

Department Heads may require employees to notify them of any outside employment by submitting a written request to the Department Head for approval. When required, the written request of the employee and approval or denial by the Department Head shall be submitted to the Human Resources Division to be retained in the employee's personnel file.

d. Prohibited Conduct

1. Receiving incoming or making outgoing telephone calls, emails, fax transmissions or text messages related to or for outside employment purposes from County assigned property including telephones, cell phones, fax machines/ multifunction machines, computers/iPads.
2. Using or advertising a County-assigned work number or email address for any outside employment purpose.
3. Storage of outside employment records on County computers or use of any County equipment or property in conducting outside employment.
4. During public presentations on behalf of the County, references made to one's own outside employment and/or solicitation for that employment. If questions arise at a public presentation, relating to an employee's outside employment, all conversations shall be redirected to a private conversation during non-work time.
5. Engaging in outside employment during regular working hours unless on advanced and approved time off.
6. Use of paid breaks from scheduled work hours for outside employment purposes.
7. Referring any work from their position with the County to their outside employment.
8. Use of any information available in the employee's position with the County for use with outside employment purpose.

(Section 81 adopted by the County Board 01/08/19)

82. Telecommuting

a. Purpose

Chippewa County is committed to creating a work environment and culture where the needs of our clients, employees, and organization are aligned. Therefore, Chippewa County strives to be flexible in its approach to work styles and location. Chippewa County offers employees the ability to perform certain job duties away from the central work site. The term telecommuting, in this policy, specifically refers to those employees who work an on-going, set schedule from a remote work area. A set schedule may be any variation including a full-time schedule at a remote work area or once a month at a remote area. Intermittent, unscheduled or occasional work off-site and work while traveling on County business do not constitute telecommuting for purposes of

this policy. Intermittent, unscheduled or occasional work off-site and work while traveling on County business may be approved by the Department Head.

b. Eligibility

The determination of whether an employee and/or position is appropriate for an on-going telecommuting arrangement is made on a case-by-case basis. All telecommuting arrangements shall require advance written approval of the County Administrator.

The Department Head shall evaluate whether an employee and the employee's position are suitable for telecommuting based on the nature of the work that is being performed. Requests to telecommute may be considered when:

1. The employee's duties can be fulfilled within the telecommuting structure.
2. Telecommuting fits with the needs of the department.
3. Telecommuting provides for space savings or increased productivity.
4. The employee has demonstrated acceptable performance and the manager believes the employee can maintain acceptable quantity and quality of work while telecommuting.
5. The department can maintain quality of service for clients, employees, and members of the public.

Generally, requests to telecommute should not be considered when:

1. The job requires the employee's physical presence or telecommuting would impair the department's efficiency.
2. The employee's current job duties require frequent supervision, direction or input from others who are onsite.
3. The employee's job duties require that the employee provide frequent supervision, direction or input to other employees who are onsite.
4. The employee has documented performance issues.
5. The employee has a documented attendance problem.
6. The employee has less than twelve (12) months of service in the Chippewa County department that the telecommuting schedule is being considered.

As defined in applicable position job descriptions, an employee may be required to telecommute as a condition of employment, regardless of the above circumstances.

c. Expectations

Telecommuting is not intended to permit staff to have time to work at other jobs, provide dependent care during work hours, or run their own businesses. If an employee has a need for time off related to the above or other non-work-related matters, employees shall use PTO, Compensatory Time or discuss alternatives with their direct supervisor.

Employees who telecommute shall comply with all Chippewa County policies and department procedures/work rules.

Meetings with clients and or visitors conducting business with Chippewa County shall not be held in the employee's telecommuting location.

Employees who telecommute are expected to maintain regularly scheduled work hours, to be fully accessible during those hours, and to attend necessary meetings and appointments in person as required by the Department Head.

Employees who enter into a telecommuting arrangement may be required to forfeit use of a personal office or workstation in favor of a shared arrangement to maximize organization office space needs. Termination of the telecommuting arrangement may be considered a voluntary discharge of employment if telecommuting is a condition of employment (as defined in the position job description) or if the opportunity to work on county property is not available.

d. Computers, Equipment and Office Supplies

Department Heads and/or Supervisors shall work with the Information Technology (IT) Division to determine the appropriate computer or equipment needs for each telecommuting arrangement on a case-by-case basis.

Employees who telecommute shall use County issued computers or laptops. Personal computers are prohibited for telecommuting employees.

Employees who telecommute shall use a County issued phone as determined by Chippewa County. If the employee is issued a software-based phone, the employee shall also provide a personal phone (cell phone or land line) for emergency use, at their own expense, in the event the software-based phone is unavailable.

Employees who telecommute shall provide broadband internet access at their own expense.

The County shall not be responsible for operating costs, office furniture such as desk, standing workstations or chairs, home maintenance, or any other incidental costs associated with the use of the employee's residence for a telecommuting location.

The IT Division shall not provide home or telecommuting site visits. When needed, the employee shall follow the standard IT helpdesk protocol. The IT Division shall trouble shoot remotely and the telecommuting employee may be required to bring their equipment into the County for service.

Department Head and/or Supervisor shall approve issuing of necessary office supplies such as pens, notepads, etc. The Human Resources Division shall approve issuing of necessary ergonomics equipment such as wrist rests, mouse pads and footrests.

All equipment and office supplies provided by Chippewa County shall remain the property of Chippewa County and shall be subject to the same business use restrictions as if located at the County's on-site work location.

The telecommuter shall sign a written inventory of all Chippewa County property and agrees to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft.

Upon termination of employment, all Chippewa County property shall be returned to the County.

e. Protected Health Information (PHI)

Employees who telecommute shall comply with all Chippewa County policies and procedures concerning the handling of PHI, as well as use of computers, internet and email.

Employees shall limit consumer specific information in their possession outside of County offices to information that is necessary to perform their duties.

Employees who work with PHI shall be required to submit a written strategy statement to their supervisor that details the strategies and actions the employee plans to take to safe guard PHI while telecommuting.

f. Mileage Reimbursement and Travel Time

Employees who telecommute are not generally entitled to mileage reimbursement; however, a Department Head may approve mileage reimbursement for specific positions. If mileage reimbursement is approved, it shall be reimbursed as defined below.

Mileage for an employee who telecommutes shall be processed in the following way:

1. Mileage shall be paid at the "turn down" rate, as defined in the Travel, Meal and Lodging Expense Reimbursements Policy.
2. The first one-way trip of the day from home or primary telecommuting location to a temporary secondary worksite for the purpose of paid employment, mileage shall be paid equal to the distance between the employee's home or primary telecommuting location and the temporary secondary worksite OR the distance between the Chippewa County Courthouse and the temporary secondary worksite, whichever is shorter.
3. The last trip of the day from a temporary secondary worksite to the employee's home or primary telecommuting location for the purpose of paid employment, mileage shall be paid equal to the distance between the temporary secondary work site and the employee's home or primary telecommuting location OR the distance between the temporary secondary worksite and the Chippewa County Courthouse, whichever is shorter.
4. Trips between multiple and consecutive temporary secondary worksites, mileage shall be paid based upon actual mileage.
5. If an employee starts or ends their workday at the Chippewa County Courthouse, mileage shall not be reimbursed to or from home for that starting or final trip.

g. Travel to or from the Telecommuting Location and the Courthouse or worksite

Mileage reimbursement is not permitted for any employee driving to or from the Courthouse and their telecommuting location. If an employee is requested and/or approved to travel to or from the Courthouse and their telecommuting location by their Department Head or designee for a work-related reason, the employee shall record their hours worked for their travel time but shall not be paid mileage. If an employee requests to travel to or from their telecommuting location after the workday has started for a personal reason or convenience, the employee shall not be paid hours worked for their travel time or mileage.

Ideally, employees who start their workday at their telecommuting location should work their entire shift at the telecommuting location. Likewise, an employee who starts their workday at the Courthouse, ideally should work their entire shift at the Courthouse. Employees who telecommute should be efficient with their work time and eliminate travel during the day to or from the Courthouse and their telecommuting location when possible.

g. Location

Employees who telecommute shall have a safe and ergonomically correct workspace in order to telecommute.

Employees shall work at a designated, secured location within their home. The space shall be free from noise, interruptions and distractions. The location and work area shall be detailed on the Telecommuting Request Form.

Employees shall conduct an ergonomic self-evaluation of their telecommuting location by using the Telecommuting Ergonomic Self-Evaluation Form found on the Employee Portal and submit the form to the employee's direct supervisor prior to the first day working in the telecommuting location.

If the employee is unable to perform their job in the telecommuting location due to an issue caused by the telecommuting location (i.e. power outage, internet outage, natural disaster, etc.) the employee shall contact their direct supervisor immediately to discuss alternatives. If Chippewa County office space is not available and no other arrangement can be made to continue working, the telecommuting employee shall be required to use accrued PTO, Compensatory Time or Personal Time.

h. Liability

The County shall not be liable for damages to the real or personal property of a telecommuting employee that is used by the employee in the performance of the employee's job duties.

A designated representative of Chippewa County may visit the employee's telecommuting worksite to conduct an ergonomic assessment and inspect for possible work hazards. Repeat inspections may occur on an as-needed basis.

Injuries sustained by the employee while at his or her telecommuting work location and in conjunction with his or her regular work duties are normally covered under Chippewa County's workers' compensation policy. Telecommuting employees are responsible for notifying the employer of such injuries.

The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to his or her work location. Employees shall not meet with clients and/or visitors conducting business with Chippewa County at the employee's telecommuting location.

By participating in the telecommuting arrangement, the employee agrees to hold the County harmless against any and all claims including injuries to others at the telecommuting location.

i. Request Process

Prior to approving an employee request to telecommute, the Department Head shall draft recommended telecommuting procedures or additional check lists for the department and submit to the Human Resources Director and County Administrator for consideration.

An employee requesting a telecommuting arrangement shall complete an electronic Telecommuting Request Form found on the Employee Portal. Additional department-specific forms may be required. All forms shall be submitted to the employee's direct supervisor.

The employee's direct supervisor and/or Department Head shall review, complete and provide a recommendation for telecommuting. The form shall be signed and submitted to the Human Resources Director for review.

The Human Resources Director and the Information Technology Director shall provide a recommendation regarding said request and submit the request form to the County Administrator for final approval or denial.

j. Telecommuting Agreement

An approved Telecommuting Request Form and a signed, written Telecommuting Agreement between the telecommuting employee and the department is required, and shall be retained in the Human Resources Division. The Telecommuting Agreement shall include the department procedures required during the telecommuting arrangement. The Telecommuting Agreement does not constitute a contract of employment and should not be interpreted as creating a contract of employment, either expressed or implied.

The Telecommuting Agreement may be modified at any time by the employee or the County, with advance, written notice. This telecommuting agreement may only be modified upon mutual agreement of the parties.

A minimum two-week written notice shall be provided whenever possible in advance of termination of the agreement. Termination of the telecommuting agreement may be considered a voluntary discharge of employment if telecommuting is a condition of employment or if the opportunity to work on county property is not available.

Telecommuting Agreements shall be reviewed annually by the Department Head or designee and the telecommuting employee. If it is determined that a change to the agreement is required due to a change in work location, schedule, hours or PHS processes, a new Telecommuting Agreement shall be submitted to the Human Resources Division by December 31 annually.

If the parties cannot reach a mutual agreement prior to the end date of the Telecommuting Agreement and there is no County office space available for the employee to return, the employee may be subject to discharge.

83. Personal Appearance

a. Purpose

Employees contribute to the culture and reputation of the County in the way they present themselves. Personal appearance is an essential element to a favorable impression with residents, customers and elected officials and good public relations. Employees at all levels and job positions are representative of the organization and, therefore, dress, grooming and personal hygiene affects the public's impression of the County. The following factors are important in establishing personal appearance guidelines:

1. To present a professional appearance at all times
2. To promote a positive working environment and limit distractions caused by inappropriate dress
3. To ensure health and safety while working

b. Dress and Grooming

Employees are expected to be neat and clean in appearance and dress in a manner appropriate to the nature of their position and job duties in accordance with job description. Employees should avoid clothing, fragrances, hairstyles, or jewelry that may detract or interfere with the performance of their work or which may detract from the public service mission or image of the County. Employees are expected to maintain clean and appropriate oral and body hygiene.

c. Unacceptable Attire

While current styles provide a wide range of suitable attire, employees must demonstrate professionalism and maturity in their selection. Employees working in an office setting are generally expected to dress in business or business casual attire, but may also be granted flexibility to dress casually, as determined by the Department Head.

All items listed below are examples of inappropriate/unacceptable work attire:

1. Torn or excessively faded and/or worn pants
2. Soiled, torn or ripped clothing
3. Sweatpants, exercise pants or pajama bottoms
4. Beach attire
5. Revealing, distracting or provocative clothing
6. Spaghetti strap, halter or midriff tops/dresses
7. Clothing with offensive words, pictures or logos
8. Clothing with drug, tobacco or alcohol messages or logos

d. Uniforms or Outdoor Setting

Employees may be required to wear a uniform as defined in the position job description. Employees who perform outside work may wear casual clothing when approved by the Department Head; however due to safety hazards, shorts and open-toed shoes shall not be allowed. Dress should be appropriate for conditions and health or safety standards.

e. Fragrances

To accommodate individuals who are sensitive to fragrances, employees are discouraged from wearing or applying excessive amounts of perfume, cologne, scented lotions or body washes or other similar scented products in the workplace.

In some circumstances, the Department Head may be required to prohibit fragrances to accommodate a disability. The Department Head shall consult the Human Resources Division prior to making any accommodation.

f. Body Piercing and Tattoos

If an employee has piercings, they shall not pose any safety threats. Employees may be required by a Department Head or manager to remove body piercing(s) during work hours if the Department Head determines the body piercing(s) is unsafe, does not reflect a professional image or limits communications.

Extreme, offensive, negative or profane tattoos should be covered while working.

g. Management Discretion

If employees have questions about whether something is appropriate, they should ask their manager prior to wearing it to work. Managers have the authority and expectation to send employees home without pay or by using their accrued PTO to change their appearance if an employee is not dressed or groomed appropriately.

(Section 83 adopted by the County Board 01/08/19)

84. Personal Use of County Equipment, Property or Services

a. Purpose

The personal use by County employees of County equipment, property or services on work time is prohibited, except as authorized by the Department Head.

b. Authorized Use

Department Heads may authorize employees to use County equipment away from their workstations and off County premises when such use is County work related. Monitoring such use will be the responsibility of the Department Head.

(Section 84 adopted by the County Board 01/08/19)

85. Personnel Files

a. Purpose

Reasonable access to personnel records shall be authorized in accordance with State Statutes.

The Human Resources Division shall maintain the official files of all County employees. Duplicate employee personnel files or documents shall not be maintained within each department.

b. Contents

The personnel file shall include, but is not limited to, records associated with employment including dates of service, positions held, salaries or wages, payroll records, printed employee evaluation records not stored in the County's performance review software, corrective and/or disciplinary actions, policy acknowledgments, and other information as deemed appropriate by the Human Resources Division.

The Human Resources Division maintains separate files for records that are not included in the personnel file. Documents maintained may include, but are not limited to, medical records, benefit records, leave records, ADA records, workers' compensation records, investigation records, employment Eligibility Verification I-9 forms, pre-employment testing documents, background checks, letters of reference or other materials used by the employer for staff management planning.

c. Public Inspection of Records

The employee name, employment dates, status, classification title, and salary of employees are available for public inspection during regular office hours by contacting the Human Resources Division. Unless otherwise provided by law, all other information, including employee personnel files, shall be considered confidential and shall be accessible only to those employees who utilize such official records in order to perform their assigned duties.

d. Employee Inspection of Records

An employee or an employee's authorized representative (designated in writing by the employee) shall have the opportunity to inspect and/or copy his or her personnel file in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes.

To request to inspect or copy records in the personnel file, employees shall complete a Request for Viewing/Copying Your Personal File Form located on the Employee Portal or in the Human Resources Division and submit the form to the Human Resources Division. Upon receipt, the Human Resources Division shall coordinate a time with the employee to view the file or deliver copies. If printed copies are requested, the employee shall be required to pay a reasonable copy fee per copy as designated by the Human Resources Division.

e. Alteration of the Records

Employees or an employee's authorized representative shall not remove or alter personnel records. If an employee disagrees with any information in his or her personnel file, the employee may submit a written statement explaining his or her position which shall be included in the file.

(Section 85 adopted by the County Board 01/08/19)

86. Pets in the Workplace

a. Purpose

Chippewa County is responsible for assuring the health and safety of all employees. In keeping with this objective, animals, reptiles, birds and employee's pets are prohibited in all County buildings, except as otherwise provided under this policy.

b. Service Animals for Employees

If an employee with a disability requires the assistance of a “service animal” as defined by Wis. State Statute 106.52(1)(fm), an exception may be made after consultation and approval of the Human Resources Director or designee. A service animal may accompany an employee with a disability at work if it is deemed to be an acceptable and reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). An emotional support animal and comfort animal that is not trained to work or perform a task in support of a disability does not qualify as a service animal under this policy and is therefore prohibited.

If the service animal is approved by the Human Resources Director or designee, the employee will be permitted to bring a service animal to the office, provided that the animal’s presence does not create any health concerns or is a danger to others. The care of the service animal is solely the responsibility of the employee. Employees are responsible for the following:

1. Keeping service animals under control at all times.
2. Any clean-up or damage to County property by their service animal.
3. Providing documentation proving the animal is up to date on vaccinations.
4. Having comprehensive liability insurance covering potential injuries.
5. Having a way to transport the animal in the event it creates a health concern or is a danger to others at work.

c. Service Animals for Visitors

For visitors of the County, a “service animal” as defined by Wis. State Statute 106.52(a)(fm) is permitted in County buildings. A visitor’s service animal may accompany an individual with a disability to all areas of County facility where the public is normally allowed to go. An individual with a disability may not be segregated from other visitors. County employees may not ask about the person’s disability, require medical documentation, require a special identification card or training documentation for the animal, or ask that the animal demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task.

It is acceptable for County employees to ask the visitor if the service animal is required to accompany them because of a disability. If the visitor says yes, then it is acceptable to ask what work or task the service animal has been trained to perform to assist with the disability. If the visitor does not have a disability or the animal is not trained to perform a task, the employee is encouraged to explain to the visitor that Chippewa County does not permit pets, comfort animals or emotional support animals in the building. The employee may instruct the visitor to remove the animal from the County facility before providing them County services.

If it is a service animal, the service animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal’s work or the individual’s disability prevents using these devices. The owner must ensure the immediate clean up and disposal of animal waste.

A person with a disability may be asked to remove his or her service animal from a County facility if:

1. The service animal is out of control and the owner does not take immediate, and effective action to control it.
2. The service animal's behavior poses a threat to the health or safety of others.
3. The service animal is not housebroken.

If an employee has concerns or problems regarding a service animal, the employee should:

1. Talk to the pet's owner to determine whether the concern or problem can be resolved immediately.
2. Contact his or her manager for assistance.
3. Consult the Human Resources Division.

d. Service Dogs in Training for Visitors

Wisconsin law allows service dogs in training in facilities open to the public. Service dogs in training must wear a harness or leash and special cape and the trainer must present credentials for the dog issued by a school for dog training.

e. Law Enforcement

The Sheriff's Department is permitted to have an animal or the law enforcement K-9 in all County buildings and County vehicles during the time period in which law enforcement is carrying out its official duties.

(Section 86 adopted by the County Board 11/10/2020; 09/09/2025)

87. Children in the Workplace

Employees are welcome to bring their children to visit their office or worksite with approval by the Department Head or designee, provided that the visits are infrequent, brief and planned in a fashion that limits disruption to the workplace. While children are in the workplace, they must be directly supervised by the host/parent at all times and not be placed under the supervision of other employees. Children are not permitted to assist the employee with work or use/ touch County property such as computers, equipment, supplies, etc. If the frequency, length or nature of visits becomes problematic, the employee will be advised of the situation and will be expected to take corrective action.

Regular and/or extended presence of children during work hours is not permitted due to the potential for interruption of work, as well as the potential for such presence to negatively impact productivity and/or present avoidable exposure to safety risks and/or potential legal liability. The workplace may not be used as an alternative to regular child care, and bringing children to the workplace on a frequent basis, such as during school breaks or before/after school is not permitted. Likewise, a child who is ill and unable to attend school or day care may not be brought to the workplace.

The presence of the child may not disrupt the work environment or negatively affect the productivity of the employee who brought the child, the employee's colleagues, or County customers or clients.

(Section 87 adopted by the County Board 01/14/2025)

88. Media Communications

a. Purpose

To address the manner in which County business and operations related communication with the media shall be handled, including off the record and anonymous statements.

b. Authorized Communications

Department Heads and Elected Officials are authorized to respond to media inquiries on routine matters relating to their area of business operations only. Department Heads and Elected Officials shall notify the County Administrator's Office that a response to the media occurred. Matters not yet discussed with a policy committee or of a sensitive nature, shall be discussed with the Administrator, before talking with the media.

Inquiries related to overall County policy matters shall be made only by the County Administrator, the County Board Chair or a County Board Supervisor.

All employees (except Department Heads and Elected Officials) are prohibited from representing the County through contact with the media on County-related matters unless directed by the Department Head or County Administrator.

In the event a non-authorized employee is contacted by the media, the employee shall notify the media they are not authorized to represent the County regarding the matter and refer the inquiry to their Department Head or the County Administrator.

All employees are prohibited from providing off the record or anonymous statements to the media.

c. Conduct

All communications with the media shall be carried out in a courteous and professional manner, with the expectation that journalists shall demonstrate a similar level of professionalism and courtesy in their dealings with the County.

Department Heads and Elected Officials shall confirm with the journalist their deadline and respond within the identified timeline when feasible and advise the journalist if this is not possible. Every attempt shall be made to promptly return calls from the media.

All communications shall be factual, never speculative or place blame, and shall be on the record.

d. Press Releases

A press release is generally used to make an announcement to a number of media correspondents or to different groups of media at once. All press releases shall be reported to the County Administrator's Office.

e. Press Conference

Press briefings or press conferences allow the County to provide in-depth information to the media, and provide the media with an opportunity to meet and question individuals authorized

to speak in behalf of the County. All press conferences shall be approved in advance in writing by the County Administrator with the exception of Sheriff.

f. On-Site Interviews

Any non-routine request by the media to visit the County facility or office to carry out interviews, filming or recording shall be referred to the County Administrator's Office for discussion and approval.

(Section 88 adopted by the County Board 01/08/19)

89. Social Media

a. Purpose

Chippewa County departments may utilize authorized social media platforms to further enhance communications with the public in support of the County's Strategic Plan. Social media facilitates further discussion of county issues, operations and services by providing members of the public the opportunity to participate in many ways using the Internet. Examples of authorized social media platforms include Facebook® and LinkedIn®, Twitter® and Instagram®.

b. Scope

This policy applies to all Chippewa County departments and authorized employees that contribute to any kind of social media platform.

This policy is intended to provide authorized Chippewa County departments and authorized employees with a framework for use of social media as part of an authorized employee's job duties. This policy also provides general guidelines for the personal use of social media by all employees.

c. Changes to this Policy

Chippewa County may, from time to time, modify the Social Media Policy to reflect legal, technological and other developments. The most current copy of the policy is available on the Employee Portal.

d. Employee Personal Use of Social Media

1. Employees shall not use their government-issued e-mail address for their primary username or login for personal social media profiles and/or platforms.
2. Use of social media for personal use should in no way interfere with job duties. Time spent on social media sites should be limited to personal break times. Departments may establish additional work rules applying to social media platforms that are more restrictive than those listed in this social media policy.
3. If an employee identifies himself/herself as a Chippewa County employee during their personal use of social media, the employee shall clearly indicate that he/she is speaking on his/her own behalf and not on behalf of Chippewa County. The employee's social media profile and any related content should be consistent with how the employee wishes to present himself/herself to co-workers, colleagues, supervisors, and the public.

It is recommended that a disclaimer be used as follows: "The opinions expressed on this site are my own and do not reflect the opinions of Chippewa County."

4. Chippewa County shall not ask potential or current employees to provide their personal social media password. In order for Platform Administrators to be set up and assigned permissions, a personal social media email address or username may need to be provided to the Social Media Review Team.
5. Personal social media platforms may be subject to legal discovery or record requests.
6. Employees are discouraged from sending or accepting social media friend requests to or from their Department Head or other Chippewa County managers, with the exception of LinkedIn® requests.
7. Employees are discouraged from sending or accepting social media friend requests to or from Chippewa County clients or customers, with the exception of contracted business partners of the County through LinkedIn® requests.
8. Employees found in violation of this social media policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

e. Department Use of Social Media

1. Department Heads are responsible for assessing if the use of social media platforms is appropriate for their department.
2. Department Heads requesting to utilize social media platforms for business-related purposes shall file a request with the Social Media Review Team, as defined under Section g, by completing a "Request to Utilize Social Media Platform" form located on the Employee Portal. If approved, all content shall be published according to the guidelines set forth in this policy.
3. The Social Media Review Team shall notify the requesting Department Head of the approval or denial of the request.
4. Department Heads and managers shall read and thoroughly review the Social Media Policy, in addition to signing the Acknowledgment Form (Appendix 3) located on the Employee Portal.
5. Department Heads are responsible for ensuring that social media platforms are used appropriately through training, supervising, coaching and, when necessary, taking disciplinary action.
6. Department Heads shall designate a Platform Administrator and a back-up Platform Administrator. A Platform Administrator is a Chippewa County employee who is authorized by the Social Media Review Team and the Department Head to manage a social media platform. Platform Administrators are responsible for the content placed on the social media platform and shall adhere to this policy and all applicable policies of Chippewa County. There shall be a Platform Administrator and back-up Platform Administrator in each department utilizing social media platforms.

7. Department Heads shall contact the IT Help Desk in an emergency to obtain access to social media platforms if the Department Head does not otherwise have access.
8. Department Heads and managers shall not provide “social media recommendations” for current employees on any social media platform.
9. Department Heads and managers shall not ask potential or current employees for their personal social media password. In order for Platform Administrators to be set up and assigned permissions, a personal social media email address or username may need to be provided to the Social Media Review Team.
10. Department Heads and managers are discouraged from sending or accepting social media friend requests to and from employees, with the exception of LinkedIn® requests.
11. Department Heads and managers are discouraged from sending or accepting social media friend requests to or from Chippewa County clients or customers, with the exception of contracted business partners of the County through LinkedIn® requests.

f. Platform Administrator Responsibilities – Business Use of Social Media for Work Purposes

1. Platform Administrators shall be designated by their Department Head and the Social Media Review Team to manage a social media platform.
2. Platform Administrators shall read and thoroughly review the Social Media Policy. Platform Administrators shall be properly trained as defined in Section h and shall attest to their training and knowledge of the Chippewa County policy for the use of social media platforms by completing the Acknowledgement form (see Appendix 3) located on the Employee Portal.
3. All Chippewa County related communication through social media platforms shall be professional in nature and conducted in accordance with Chippewa County policies.
4. Use of all social media platforms shall adhere to applicable state, federal, local laws, and regulations, including copyright and trademark infringement laws. In addition, all social media platforms shall adhere to this social media policy.
5. Where appropriate, the Chippewa County Technology policy shall apply to all social media platforms and related content.
6. Open records laws and policies apply to social media content and therefore content shall be able to be managed, stored, retrieved, and archived for compliance. All social media platforms and entries shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure. The IT Division shall archive social media platforms. Costs associated with archiving social media shall be budgeted and paid for by the department utilizing the social media platform to be archived.
7. Chippewa County reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that it deems in violation of this policy or any applicable law. Platform Administrators shall post the disclaimer indicating that certain posts may be removed if in violation of this policy or any applicable law (see Social Media Disclaimer, Appendix 4 located on the Employee Portal).

8. Each Chippewa County social media platform shall include an introductory statement which clearly specifies the purpose and content scope of the platform. The introductory statement shall include: goal or strategy of the social media platform, social media platform code of conduct, content that is prohibited and rights to remove such content, average or goal response time of the Platform Administrator to comments/posts, any necessary instructions for public posts such as approval process of the Platform Administrator and notice that responses by the Platform Administrator or other Chippewa County employees may be offline in the form of messages, emails or phone calls when appropriate. Introductory statements for each social media platform shall require pre-approval from the Social Media Review Team. Social media platforms should link back to the official Chippewa County website for forms, documents, and other information. For example, on Facebook®, this information shall be contained in the “About” section.
9. Each Chippewa County social media platform account is the sole proprietorship of Chippewa County. Platform Administrators are authorized to post content on behalf of Chippewa County, but do not own the accounts. Platform Administrators shall not use their personal social media accounts for logging into Chippewa County social media platforms unless granted permission by the Social Media Review Team.
10. In the event an employee’s or Platform Administrator’s social media authorization is terminated or terminates employment with Chippewa County, the employee or Platform Administrator shall surrender all rights, including Administrative authority and passwords, to all Chippewa County social media platforms. If permission was granted to use an employee’s personal social media account for logging into a Chippewa County social media platform, and the employee or Platform Administrator’s authorization is terminated or terminates employment with Chippewa County, the employee, Platform Administrator or Department Head shall work with the Social Media Review Team to remove the personal account and reassign to an approved active employee account. All social media platforms shall clearly indicate that they are owned and maintained by Chippewa County and shall have Chippewa County contact information prominently displayed.
11. The following social media content is prohibited on Chippewa County social media platforms:
 - a). Content containing graphic, obscene, explicit, or racial comments or submissions, and comments that are abusive, hateful, or intended to defame any individual or organization.
 - b). Content containing solicitations or advertisements, including promotions or endorsements of any financial, commercial, or non-governmental agency.
 - c). Content that attempts to defame or defraud any financial, commercial, or non-governmental agency.
 - d). Content that suggests or encourages illegal activity, including comments that infringe on copyrights or trademarks.
 - e). Content that promotes political purposes or a political candidate/party.
 - f). Content that promotes or endorses any religious organization.

- g). Content that is repetitive.
- h). Content containing personally identifiable medical or health information.
- i). Content containing confidential or proprietary information about Chippewa County or its employees. Comments shall follow County policies and federal law and regulations, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- j). Content containing video footage or a photo of a minor without prior written consent by a parent or guardian, unless the minor is unidentifiable.
- k). Content containing copyrighted video footage or copyrighted photo(s) taken by someone other than the Chippewa County Platform Administrator without prior written consent of the owner(s) video footage or photo(s) without authorized use outlined in a Terms of Use statement on the website source. If someone wishes to submit video footage or photo(s) for posting, send to the Platform Administrator for consideration to post.
- l). Content containing information that may compromise the safety, security, or proceedings of public systems or any criminal or civil investigations.
- m). Content containing non-topically related content outside the limited public forum established to discuss County issues, operations and services.
- n). Content that makes false statements or provides false information.

Any questions regarding content containing the above shall be brought to the attention of the Department Head and/or a member of the Social Media Review Team.

- 12. Platform Administrator's role in managing video footage or photo(s) is as follows:
 - a). Video footage and photos taken by the Platform Administrator are owned and copyrighted by the Platform Administrator and are not required to have a Social Media Permission form (Appendix 2) signed unless the video footage or photo(s) include an identifiable minor. If the video footage or photo(s) includes an identifiable minor, the Platform Administrator shall obtain a Social Media Permission Form (Appendix 2).
 - b). If the video footage or photo(s) are classified as "public domain", or if the website that the video footage or photo(s) originated from has a Terms of Use statement that allows its use, the Platform Administrator is not required to have a Social Media Permission form (Appendix 2) signed.
 - c). If video footage or photo(s) are posted and a person in the picture requests it to be removed from the social media platform, the Platform Administrator may remove the video footage or photo(s).
- 13. Platform Administrators are authorized to respond to comments offline when necessary.

14. Platform Administrators should not cite or reference County contractors or suppliers without approval from a Department Head. Care should be taken to not promote one contractor or business over another or provide preferential treatment of any kind.
15. Social media posts should be treated as an extension of Chippewa County's official website. Whenever possible, links should direct viewers back to Chippewa County's official website for more information, forms, documents or online services.
16. Platform Administrators shall not post references or employment recommendations for current or former employees of Chippewa County on any social media site. All requests for references or recommendations shall be directed to the Human Resources Division and/or the Department Head.
17. All Platform Administrators shall be trained according to this policy to ensure compliance with the policy.
18. Chippewa County logos, marks, and insignia shall be used on Chippewa County social media platforms owned and maintained exclusively for County business and related County purposes. Chippewa County's name, logos, marks, and insignia shall not be used to promote any political party, candidate or for partisan political purposes, to conduct private commercial transactions, endorse any product or to engage in private business or personal activities.
19. Employees found in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge

g. Social Media Review Team

Members of the Social Media Review Team are as follows: The County Administrator, the IT Director, the Human Resources Director, and the Assistant Corporation Counsel. The Human Resources Director shall maintain all original social media platform department documents including, but not limited to, completed forms in the policy appendix.

h. Training

1. All department social media training shall require pre-approval by the Social Media Review Team.
2. Training options may include:
 - a). On site social media training coordinated by Chippewa County
 - b). Social media conference or off site training
 - c). Live or recorded social media webinar
3. Department Heads, Platform Administrators and Back-Up Platform Administrators shall read the Social Media Policy and be trained prior to using any social media platform and annually thereafter.
4. Department Heads, Platform Administrators and Back-Up Platform Administrators shall attest to their review of the policy and training by completing the Acknowledgment form (see Appendix 3). Department Heads, Platform Administrators and Back-Up Platform Administrators shall submit proof of training along with the Acknowledgement form to

the Social Media Review Team prior to using any social media platform and annually thereafter.

5. Social media training shall be paid for by the Department utilizing social media.
 - i. Reporting Violations

Chippewa County employees shall report any potential violations of this policy to Department Heads or the Human Resources Director. Chippewa County prohibits taking retaliatory action against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another employee shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

- j. Social Media Metrics

1. Metrics related to social media shall be created and tracked by the Department utilizing social media. Facebook® metrics are located under the Insights tab. Platform Administrators shall view the video tour offered by Facebook® to better utilize the metric feature. Some examples of metrics may include:
 - a). Community engagement which could be determined by the number of likes, number of comments or number of personal messages within the social media platform.
 - b). Time spent by the Platform Administrator or others within the department monitoring, engaging, posting, etc. on the social media platform.
 - c). Positive and Negative comments made about Chippewa County, employees or citizens on the social media platform.
2. The Department Head of the Department utilizing social media shall review in writing and submit all metrics on an annual basis to the Social Media Review Team.

(Section 89 adopted by the County Board 03/14/2017; 11/10/2020)

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90. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- a. Purpose

To ensure compliance, promote ethical generative AI use and ensure confidentiality of protected or confidential County information.

With the increasing popularity of generative AI chatbots such as ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot, it has become necessary to outline the proper use of such tools while working at the County. While we know that adopting new technologies assists the County in efficient operations, we also understand the risks and limitations of generative AI chatbots and want to ensure responsible use.

Our goal is to protect employees, clients, customers, consumers, contractors, and the County from harm.

- b. Overview

While AI chatbots can be used to perform a variety of functions, this policy addresses only the use of a web-based interface to ask or "prompt" the chatbot in a conversational manner to find answers to questions or to create or edit written content.

Some examples of what could be created using an AI chatbot include:

1. Emails and letters
2. Social media posts, reports and other publications
3. Policies and job descriptions
4. Spreadsheet calculations
5. Foreign language translations
6. Coding development or debugging
7. Document or information sorting
8. Outlines or summaries of internal or external information

There are, however, risks in using this technology, including uncertainty about who owns the AI-created content and security/privacy concerns with inputting proprietary company information or sensitive information about an employee, client, customer, consumer, etc., when interacting with the chatbot. Additionally, the accuracy of the content created by these technologies cannot be relied upon, as the information may be incomplete, incorrect, outdated, plagiarized, misleading or—in some cases—fabricated.

AI output should be closely reviewed and verified by the employee. Any inaccuracies or errors in the information will be the sole responsibility of the employee presenting or publishing it, not the AI platform that generated it.

c. Prior Authorization and Recordkeeping

Employees wishing to use generative AI chatbots shall notify their Department Head or designee prior to use. Employees shall notify them of what platform will be used and the purpose for the use.

Employees authorized to use an AI platform shall log the date or date ranges of such use, the purpose of the use, the AI platform used and brief description of the results of such used.

d. Requirements

Due to the risks associated with generative AI chatbots, limited use may be allowed while performing work for the County.

All AI-generated content must be reviewed for accuracy before relying on it for work purposes. If a reliable source cannot be found to verify factual information generated by the chatbot, that information cannot be used for work purposes.

County email addresses, credentials or phone numbers can be used to create an account with these technologies only after gaining prior approval from your Department Head or designee.

e. Acceptable uses of AI

1. Asking general-knowledge questions meant to enhance your understanding of a work-related topic

2. Brainstorming ideas related to projects you are working on
3. Creating formulas for Excel spreadsheets or similar programs
4. Developing or debugging code, to be verified before deployment
5. Drafting content for an email or letter
6. Entering employment-related decisions, including disciplinary actions, hiring, firing or promotions (as long as no identifying information is entered)

f. Prohibited Uses of AI

1. Automated screening or profiling of employees, candidates or resumes
2. Use that results in harm, bias, discrimination, insensitive, or fraudulent or deceptive acts or communications
3. Use that violates applicable law or exposes the County to legal liability
4. Use that violates any of the County's other HIPPA, Human Resources or Information Technology policies
5. Entering or inputting all of the following information into an AI platform, no matter the purpose for the following:
 - a). Confidential client, customer, consumer or company information
 - b). Private Health Information (PHI)
 - c). Names of customers, clients, consumers.
 - c.) Names of Chippewa County employees or unpaid individuals such as volunteers, interns, contractors, etc.
 - d.). Personal information that may be used to identify any individual (Including, for example, names, contact information, personal identifiers, employment history or personal characteristics such as age, race, religion, health, sex, sexuality or personal financial information.

(Section 90 adopted by the County Board 01/14/2025)