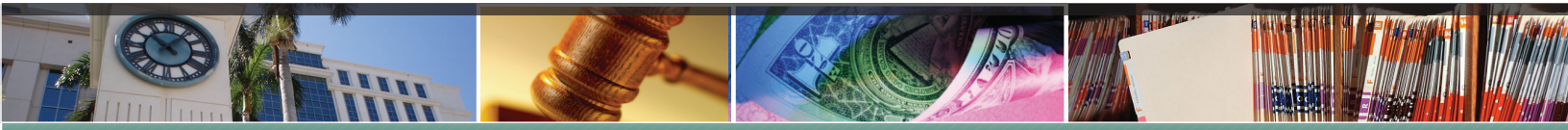

CLERK & COMPTROLLER
PALM BEACH COUNTY

SHARON R. BOCK
Clerk & Comptroller
Palm Beach County

Employee Handbook

Our Vision

To be recognized as the world-class leader in customer service, employee satisfaction and standards of excellence.

1-01 A Welcome message from the Clerk & Comptroller

Welcome to the Clerk & Comptroller's office!

Our employees have a reputation for excellence in serving the citizens of Palm Beach County. We are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity as guardians of the public trust. As such, you will find that the Clerk & Comptroller's office is a results-oriented culture based upon trust and mutual respect for your fellow employees and the public we serve. We should all feel fortunate to work with a team of such dedicated and talented professionals.

Our Vision is *to be recognized as the world-class leader in customer service, employee satisfaction and standards of excellence.* We accomplish this by consistently demonstrating our values:

Respect Everyone.
Act with **Integrity**.
Embrace **Diversity**.
Build **Relationships**.
Learn through **Innovation**.
Thrive on **Challenge**.
Celebrate **Achievements**.

Our focus on ethical conduct is essential as we carry out our mission to protect, preserve and maintain public records and public funds with integrity and accountability. It is critical that we avoid even the appearance of impropriety or wrongdoing. This handbook provides guidance in these areas.

Your leadership team has an open-door policy. If you have any questions, feel free to contact your supervisor, manager, director or chief officer at any time. We are here to help and support you.

I know you will find that the Clerk's office is a great place to work. Your unique contribution to our team helps ensure our continued excellence in serving the citizens of Palm Beach County. Thank you for joining our team and I look forward to your many contributions!

Best regards,

Sharon

1-02 Vision, Mission, Values, & Strategic Direction

Employees of the Clerk & Comptroller's office are committed to maintaining high professional standards and to operating in a fair and efficient manner. We believe our Vision, Mission, Values, and Strategic Direction will help us to become a world-class organization.

Our Vision

To be recognized as the world-class leader in customer service, employee satisfaction and standards of excellence.

Our Mission

To protect, preserve and maintain the public records and public funds with integrity and accountability.

Our Values

Respect everyone.

Embrace Diversity.

Act with Integrity.

Thrive on Challenge.

Learn through Innovation.

Build Relationships.

Celebrate Achievements.

Our Strategic Direction

Deliver Outstanding Service.

Be Effective & Efficient.

Be a Great Place to Work.

1-03 Employment At Will

The Clerk & Comptroller, Palm Beach County is an "at will" employer. Employment at will with the Clerk & Comptroller's office means that you may be terminated with or without cause at any time deemed necessary or desirable by the Clerk's office. Likewise, you may resign at any time. There is no express or implied contract for employment between you and the Clerk's office.

1-04 Open Door Philosophy

The Clerk & Comptroller's office promotes a teamwork atmosphere where employees can speak openly and honestly with members of the management staff. You are encouraged to approach your immediate supervisor or manager with any issue, suggestion, or question you may have. If at any time you are not satisfied with the response you receive from your supervisor or manager, or if you prefer to talk to someone else, you should feel free to contact the Human Resources department. The Clerk's office and the rest of the management team want you to succeed and are glad to help when needed.

2-01 Equal Employment Opportunity

The Clerk & Comptroller's office provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender/sex, age, national origin, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, marital status, military status, genetic information or any other legally protected status. This philosophy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leave of absence, compensation and training.

2-02 Anti-Harassment Policy

The Clerk's office strives to maintain an environment free from discrimination and harassment, where employees treat each other with respect, dignity and courtesy. The Clerk's office prohibits discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, age, gender/sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, national origin, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, military status, or any other legally protected status. We encourage you to report all perceived incidents of discrimination and harassment immediately. Please see Administrative Policy 98-2 Anti-Harassment and Complaint Procedure for more information.

2-03 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA) are federal laws that prohibit employers with 15 or more employees from discriminating against applicants and individuals with disabilities. The laws also, when needed, 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 the Clerk's office 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 our 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.

The Clerk's office will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that the essential functions of the job may be performed, unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation and/or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to the Clerk's office. Contact the Human Resources department with any questions or requests for accommodation.

3-01 Job and Employee Classifications

The Clerk & Comptroller's office has numerous job classifications throughout the organization. Each of these job classifications falls within one of approximately 30 pay grades. Each pay grade has a salary minimum, midpoint and maximum. Please refer to the Job Classification/Grade Order List, available on ClerkNet.

In order to determine benefits and overtime eligibility, and to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations such as the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), all employees are classified as one of the following:

- **Exempt:** These positions are not required to be paid overtime. Exempt employees' job duties, responsibilities and salaries place them in executive, administrative, professional, or information technology classifications, as defined by the FLSA. Exempt employees are expected to work the hours necessary for the successful completion of work obligations and are paid on a salaried basis.

- **Non-exempt**: These positions are not within one of the above-mentioned exemptions and are subject to the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA.

Employees are further classified as:

- **Introductory:** New non-exempt hires during first 90 days of employment and new exempt hires during first 180 days of employment, or until removed from introductory status. During this time period, employees are not eligible for most benefits.

- **Full-time:** Employees who are scheduled to work 40 hours per week.

- **Part-time eligible for benefits:** Employees who are scheduled to work at least 24 hours per week, but less than 40 hours per week.

- **Part-time eligible for employee-only benefits:** Employees who are scheduled to work 20 to 23 hours per week.

- **Part-time not eligible for benefits:** Employees who are scheduled to work less than 20 hours per week.

- **Variable/Seasonal/Student:** Employees hired directly by the Clerk & Comptroller's office for a specific period of time or for seasonal peaks. Employees in this classification are not eligible for benefits.

3-02 Job Opportunities

The immediate filling of any vacant position is imperative to ensure that our customers are well served. Therefore, it is our practice to simultaneously recruit both within and outside the organization through various sources, such as recruitment fairs, website advertising and employee referrals. However, it is the philosophy of the Clerk & Comptroller's office to promote from within, and we have a history of doing so.

Each position has certain minimum requirements for knowledge, skills and abilities that an applicant must possess in order to be considered for employment. Open positions are posted on ClerkNet as well as on our external website, www.mypalmbeachclerk.com. To apply for a posted position, you must submit an online application, along with an updated resume. Please refer to ClerkNet for application instructions and eligibility standards.

The Human Resources department conducts all initial screenings of job applications to ensure all minimum qualifications are met. The hiring managers of the various departments are responsible for interviewing and hiring determinations.

Offers of employment are contingent upon the successful completion of reference checks and a thorough criminal background check in accordance with state law. If you are hired into, transferred or promoted into a mandatory testing position, you must complete a physical examination, along with a drug screen and criminal background check, prior to starting in such a position. Mandatory testing positions have been designated as those positions within the Clerk's office in which employees regularly drive Clerk vehicles, evidence clerks, and criminal courtroom clerks, and coordinators, supervisors, and managers who oversee criminal courtroom clerks. If you are hired into, transferred or promoted into a position that requires driving, your driving record must be in compliance with the conditions set forth in Administrative Policy 12-01 Approved Drivers.

An applicant may not be selected for various reasons, such as: failure to meet job qualifications; unsatisfactory prior employment; falsification of information on the application; qualifications less than another applicant; reference or criminal background information that would give an appearance of impropriety in Clerk's office employment; or a confirmed positive drug test result. A refusal to submit to a test or a positive confirmed test may be basis for disqualification of further employment consideration and/or termination.

The Clerk's office reserves the right to fill positions without being posted or advertised.

3-03 Introductory Period

As a new employee, you are placed on introductory status so that you may determine if you made an appropriate career decision, and the Clerk's office may determine whether your initial work performance meets our needs. The introductory period is 90 days for non-exempt employees and 180 days for exempt employees. The introductory period provides supervisors with an opportunity to train you on your job duties and responsibilities, as well as policies, procedures, special equipment, and computer programs, as applicable. This time period also allows you to demonstrate your ability to perform the job functions, ask any questions about your work duties and practice the skills required for your job assignment.

During this period, all aspects of your performance are closely monitored, including your attitude, attendance and other appropriate factors, to assure that you are learning the skills required for the position. For all employees, an introductory review occurs at the completion of the introductory period. If your performance is rated at an unsatisfactory level (Needs Improvement) during the introductory period, your employment may be terminated. However, if you receive only one Needs Improvement rating, your introductory period may be extended up to 60 days in lieu of termination, at your manager's discretion.

If you are promoted, demoted, reclassified, or transferred into another position, you will be subject to an internal 90-day or 180-day introductory period as appropriate, unless waived by the Director or Chief Officer due to the performance of equal and identical work duties. If you, your supervisor and/or your manager are not satisfied with your performance within the internal introductory period, we will make every reasonable effort to return you to your former position. If that position is not available, you may be assigned to an existing vacant position for which you are qualified. Your pay rate will be adjusted to a rate equivalent to the work performed, which may include a decrease in pay.

3-04 Performance Management

To ensure that you perform your job to the best of your abilities, it is important that good performance is recognized and that you receive appropriate directions for improvement when necessary. Consistent with this goal, your performance will be evaluated by your supervisor on an ongoing basis.

We strongly encourage you to discuss job performance and goals with your supervisor informally at any time. Formal written reviews will also be conducted, which provide supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job performance, identify developmental needs and recognize strengths. The extent to which objectives from the preceding period were met will be reviewed, and new objectives and goals for the forthcoming period will be established.

Your performance is continually being evaluated based on our established competencies: Effective & Efficient, Great Place to Work, Organizational Values, Outstanding Service, and Leadership (if applicable). Should funding be available, bonuses awarded will be based on your performance during a specified review period and on your ability to meet the criteria of the established competencies. To be eligible, you must have completed your new hire Introductory Period with the organization, and not be on an active Performance Improvement Plan. Temporary employees are not eligible, as they do not receive performance appraisals.

Please visit the ePerformance page on ClerkNet for specific guidelines governing the ePerformance process.

3-05 Employee Identification Badge and Security

As a Clerk and Comptroller employee, you will be issued an identification (ID) badge that includes your name and picture. You are required to wear your ID badge in a readily noticeable location when entering Clerk's office buildings and while working. While not working, you are encouraged to remove your ID badge. Your badge should be kept in your possession, even during non-business hours, and you should never use your badge for non-work related purposes.

Your ID badge may also serve as a security access card, which will allow you access to designated areas. If you transfer to another department, such access may be modified depending on the access requirements of your new department and position. If you lose possession of your ID badge for any reason, you must immediately notify your supervisor, and replacement charges will apply. There is no charge to you for a replacement badge if it is broken while you are performing your duties. Upon termination or resignation from employment with the Clerk's office, your ID badge must be returned to the Human Resources department.

Because of the nature of our work, Clerk's office employees are subject to additional security measures, such as metal detectors and K-9 units. These measures are used to provide a safe and secure work environment and apply to both employees and customers. Additionally, department access is secured through keypad security devices. The keypad code will be issued to you by your supervisor and is not to be shared or disclosed to others without permission.

Further, the Clerk's office cannot assume liability for your personal property or money. You are responsible for the security and safekeeping of your personal items. Please report any missing items immediately.

3-06 Employee Personnel Records

Your personnel records will be kept current in the Human Resources department. Your personnel file and its contents are considered a public document and therefore open to the public for inspection. However, some information, such as your Social Security number, is confidential and will not be disclosed. Further, section 119.07, F.S., provides certain public officers and employees an exemption from public disclosure of home addresses, telephone numbers and picture identification. Please refer to the Public Record Exemption form on ClerkNet for more details.

Documents such as resumes, applications, reference checks, job descriptions, performance reviews, written warnings and commendations will be kept in your file. Generally, personnel files contain original documents of your employment actions, and in most cases you will receive an employee copy. Your personnel records are available for you to view during normal business hours. Please contact the Human Resources department to schedule an appointment to view your file. You may request copies during your appointment time.

Your personnel records must contain accurate and current information. Therefore, you are required to report any change to the following information immediately to the Human Resources department:

- name*;
- address;
- telephone number(s);
- emergency contact and telephone number(s);
- marital status;
- number of dependents;
- beneficiary for insurance and retirement; or
- education or training skills.

*In order to officially change your name in our records, you must supply the Human Resources department with a copy of your new Social Security card and supporting documentation reflecting your legal name change, if applicable. You must also complete a new W-4 in Employee Self Service.

3-07 References and Employment Verifications

From time to time, you may need the Clerk & Comptroller's office to verify your employment for loans or to prospective employers, and we are happy to do so as a courtesy. Please allow three (3) working days for your verification to be completed. Employees are not authorized to provide professional references on behalf of the Clerk & Comptroller's office. All employment references and verification requests must be directed to the Human Resources department, either by phone (561-355-4172) or fax (561-355-3815). Standard reference requests involve releasing your dates of employment, job title and the confirmation of your rate of pay, unless you have provided written authorization to release additional information. The Clerk's office will not be liable for information provided.

3-08 Reasons for Termination

The Clerk & Comptroller's office maintains that all of its employees are employed "at will," which means that you may be terminated with or without cause at any time deemed necessary or desirable by the Clerk's office. Likewise, you may resign at any time. There is no express or implied contract for employment between you and the Clerk's office. Employees who are involuntarily terminated are generally not eligible for rehire.

Reasons for termination without prior notice or warning may include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

- failure to report to work for three consecutive days without authorization;
- loafing, sleeping or willful unproductive use of time;
- horseplay, fighting or violence or interfering with the work of other employees;
- gambling on Clerk premises or while on duty;
- soliciting or accepting gifts;
- working or reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or non-prescribed substances;
- using, possessing, soliciting, selling or disbursing alcohol or non-prescription controlled substances during work hours;
- omitting information or submitting inaccurate or untruthful information or falsifying records;
- creating an intimidating, hostile, offensive or inappropriate work environment and/or violating Administrative Policy 98-2 Anti-Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure;
- stealing Clerk property or property of others;
- possession, use, or threatened use of weapons or firearms;
- unethical conduct as defined in Florida Statutes "Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees" (full text online at www.leg.state.fl.us, Chapter 112, Part III);
- failure to report an arrest and/or charge on the next business day;
- entering a guilty plea, being found guilty of or entering a plea of nolo contendere to any crime related to employment, or which implies a likelihood of potential harm to citizens or property; and
- failure to report any injury or accident immediately.

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive. The Clerk's office reserves the right to dismiss an employee without notice on other grounds.

3-09 Types of Termination

Termination of employment is part of the personnel activity within any organization, and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Terminations of employment may be designated as one of the following types:

Voluntary Termination

In order to resign your employment with the Clerk & Comptroller's office in good standing, you must notify your supervisor as soon as possible, but no less than two (2) weeks prior to leaving. A written notice should include the effective date of your resignation (e.g., last day of work), your reason for leaving, signature and other pertinent data. Failure to submit proper notification or failure to provide a two (2) week notice may affect your eligibility for rehire. The Clerk & Comptroller's office reserves the right to accept your resignation as irrevocable; should you choose to withdraw your resignation, the Clerk's office has no legal obligation to accept your withdrawal.

In the case of FRS retirement, the termination date received by Human Resources on your FRS Retirement Application or DROP Termination Form will be accepted as your last day worked. All employees scheduled to retire must still submit a written notice and are subject to the same conditions described above.

Unless instructed otherwise, you are expected to work during your resignation period. Therefore, there will generally be no leave approved during your final two (2) weeks of employment. In the event that circumstances are unavoidable and you are required to be away from work due to an emergency during your final two (2) weeks of employment, you may be required to provide documentation for the absence to be charged to available leave, as applicable. Your manager has discretion in determining if you will be approved for time away from work during your final two (2) weeks of employment. In some situations, the Clerk's office may waive the two (2) week notice period and accept a resignation effective immediately or at some time prior to the end of the resignation period, either with or without pay.

Any unused SAL/PTO or other leave is forfeited, as there is no payout of leave upon separation. In the event you resign prior to the end of your introductory period, the monetary value equivalent of any PTO leave used during the introductory period will be deducted from your paycheck in accordance with the Administrative Policy 04-02 Paid Time Off (PTO) Program.

Should you remain away from work without an approved explanation or fail to properly notify your supervisor of an absence for three (3) working days, you will be considered to have abandoned your position and to have voluntarily resigned. If you voluntarily resign in this manner, you will not be considered eligible for rehire.

Involuntary Termination

The Clerk & Comptroller's office treats every employee fairly; however, as a matter of law, you may be terminated with or without cause at any time at the discretion of the Clerk & Comptroller.

If you are involuntarily released from the Clerk's office, you are entitled to request a meeting with the Clerk & Comptroller within five (5) business days following termination. If you would like to request a termination meeting, please contact the Human Resources department, and a meeting will be scheduled as soon as practical. The meeting shall include you, the Clerk & Comptroller and an appointed Clerk's office Chief Officer. At that time, you may present any relevant facts relating to the reason for termination. You are permitted to bring another person to the meeting with the understanding that the third party's role is as an observer only.

3-10 Return of Property

If, for any reason, you should separate employment from the Clerk & Comptroller's office, any and all supplies, keys, equipment, electronic communication devices and accessories, or other Clerk's office property issued to you during your employment must be returned to your supervisor or manager on or before your last day of employment. Your ID badge must also be returned to your supervisor, who will then forward it to the Human Resources department. Should these items not be in your possession at the time of separation, you must return all Clerk's office property within seven (7) business days or the value of these items may be deducted from your final paycheck.

Your personal property must also be removed at the time of separation, or by appointment with the Human Resources department if circumstances do not allow for removal at the time of separation. The Clerk's office will notify you of pick-up procedures by letter. If your personal property is not picked up within the time period specified, your property will be disposed. No financial compensation for disposed items will be issued.

3-11 Exit Interviews

Exit interviews are a routine part of the termination process. The Human Resources department will schedule a personal exit interview with you upon notice of your resignation, as applicable. At this time, you may discuss your job, department, or the Clerk's office in general. Comments made during exit interviews allow the Clerk's office to obtain insight into your experience as an employee, and often these comments can help the Clerk's office in its mission to become a world-class organization. You will also receive information regarding benefits and final pay during your exit interview.

3-12 Final Pay

If you separate employment from the Clerk & Comptroller's office for any reason, your final paycheck will be issued on the next regular pay date following the pay period in which your employment terminated. Your final paycheck will be directly deposited into the bank account on file and your final pay stub will be mailed to the home address on file. To ensure that your final paycheck is processed correctly, please coordinate all termination activities with your supervisor or manager, including the return of any Clerk-issued property. Please refer to Employee Handbook Section 3-10 Return of Property for more information.

3-13 Rehire Eligibility

If you separate employment from the Clerk & Comptroller's office in good standing, you may be eligible for rehire based on a review of your entire employment history. You may be considered for rehire when, along with a recommendation from your most recent manager or supervisor, your history indicates consistently good to outstanding performance, engagement, attendance and adherence to Clerk's office values, policies and procedures.

Upon rehire, you will be subject to the applicable pre-employment screening process, including a background check and employment reference verification, as well as a drug test if you are hired into a mandatory testing position.

Regardless of the reason for or length of your separation, you will be treated as a new employee upon rehire. Therefore, you must participate in New Employee Orientation and you will be placed on introductory status. Your Paid Time Off (PTO) will begin accruing at the first year accrual rate as described in Administrative Policy 04-02 Paid Time Off Program. You will be eligible for health, dental, vision and other insurance programs on the first of the month following thirty (30) days of your rehire. You will be credited for all time worked with the Clerk's office for the purpose of the service award recognition program.

If you were enrolled and participating in health, dental, vision and/or other insurance programs during your initial employment with the Clerk's office and you continued participating via COBRA coverage while separated from the Clerk's office, you may be eligible to be reinstated for these benefits on the first of the month following your rehire date, subject to applicable premium deductions.

The Clerk & Comptroller reserves the right to make the final employment decision regarding any rehires. Any exceptions to this section must be approved by the Clerk & Comptroller.

3-14 Variable Employees

Variable positions are those positions that are limited in duration and are generally used to assist in the completion of a specific project, during times of peak workload, or during a leave of absence. The Clerk's office expects that variable employees will follow all policies and procedures and perform to the same standards of excellence as regular-status employees, and in turn will receive the same level of respect for their contribution. A variable employee's schedule may differ from the standard schedule set forth in Employee Handbook Section 4-06: Work Schedule and Break Periods. In addition, variable employees are paid only for time worked and are not eligible for Paid Time Off, holiday pay, other leaves of absence, or for participation in the various benefit plans offered by the Clerk's office (with the exception of statutory benefits such as Workers' Compensation). However, variable employees are eligible to take advantage of employee discounts offered through the Clerk's office, as well as events and activities that the Clerk's office sponsors.

Variable employees may be eligible to participate in the Florida Retirement System (FRS) if the assignment is scheduled for six months or longer. Please refer to Employee Handbook Section 5-09: The Florida Retirement System (FRS) for more information. At the point when a variable employee meets the requirements in accordance with the Affordable Care Act and the Clerk's measurement period, they may become eligible to participate in the Clerk's medical plan.

Variable employees who would like to be considered for a regular position at the Clerk's office must submit an online application. Variable employees are eligible to interview for positions with the Clerk's office on paid time. Variable employees are also eligible to participate in interview coaching sessions on paid time if the variable employee has an interview scheduled for a regular position with the Clerk's office. Variable employees are not eligible to check physical items out of the Clerk's Learning Library. However, they are eligible to use cloud-based resources like Lynda.com. Further, variable employees who wish to participate in voluntary training courses offered by the Clerk's office must do so on their own time with manager approval. Variable employees will be paid to participate in mandatory training courses.

Variable employees do not receive performance reviews and are typically not granted exit interviews.

The information contained in this section is not intended to be exhaustive. Please contact the Human Resources department for more information.

4-01 Salary Administration Program

The salary administration program at the Clerk & Comptroller's office is intended to provide equity in employee wages based on the nature of your duties, knowledge, skills, ability, experience and performance. The minimum, midpoint and maximum salary range for each pay grade is reviewed periodically and may be adjusted to reflect local labor market changes.

Your rate of pay is a personal matter between you and the Clerk & Comptroller. Comparison of salaries with fellow employees is discouraged.

As a new hire, typically you will be hired at the minimum of the salary grade for the position you are hired to fill. However, if business needs and your qualifications warrant a salary level above the minimum, a justification memorandum must be submitted and approved by the department's Chief Officer and the Clerk & Comptroller.

As an employee, if you are offered a promotional opportunity, your salary will be increased to the minimum salary of the new salary grade or you will receive a 5 percent salary increase, whichever is greater. If business needs or your qualifications warrant a salary increase above these conditions, a justification memorandum must be submitted and approved by the department's Chief Officer and the Clerk & Comptroller. Prior to the extension of any verbal or written offer, all promotional salary increases must be approved by the department Director, Chief Officer, and the Chief Human Resources Officer. Offers for exempt employees, as well as any promotional salary increase of 10 percent or more, require the approval of the Clerk & Comptroller. There is typically no salary increase provided for a lateral transfer (when an employee transfers within the same salary grade).

Typically, a demotion occurs when an employee moves within the organization from a position classified in a higher salary grade to a position classified in a lower salary grade. Demotions will typically be accompanied by a decrease in pay, which will be determined in part by the new position's duties and responsibilities and approved by the department Director, Chief Officer, and the Chief Human Resources Officer.

If a position is reclassified from non-exempt to exempt or to a higher or lower salary grade based on competitive survey results and/or in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the employee's salary will: 1) remain unchanged if their salary falls within the new salary grade; 2) be adjusted to the minimum of the new salary grade if their salary falls below the minimum of the salary grade; or 3) be frozen (red-circled) if their salary falls above the maximum of the new salary grade. If business needs or job qualifications warrant a salary change outside of these conditions, a justification memorandum must be submitted and approved by the department's Chief Officer and the Clerk & Comptroller.

If your salary is at the maximum of your salary range, you will remain eligible for any lump-sum bonuses based on performance.

4-02 Pay Schedule

You will be paid on a bi-weekly basis, every other Friday. If the regular payday falls on a holiday, paychecks will be issued on the last regular work day before the holiday.

Each work week begins at 12:01 a.m. Saturday and ends at 12:00 a.m. the following Friday. The two-week pay period begins at 12:01 a.m. Saturday and ends fourteen (14) consecutive calendar days later at 12:00 a.m. Friday. There are 26 pay periods each calendar year.

Please refer to the Payroll Processing Paydate Calendar on ClerkNet for specific pay date information.

4-03 Overtime

Because of the nature of our work, your manager may ask you to work overtime on weekends, holidays or additional hours during the regular workday to meet emergency deadlines or operational needs. You are expected to comply with such requests. Except for bona fide emergencies, all overtime work must be planned and authorized in advance by your manager. Managers have the discretion to determine prior overtime approval by assignment in order to ensure customer service needs are met. Managers may determine that overtime is necessary to complete required work or special projects, and therefore may deem overtime mandatory.

Non-exempt employees will be paid overtime compensation at one and one-half times the straight time rate for all hours physically worked in excess of forty (40) hours per work week. Each work week begins on Saturday and ends on Friday, as defined in Section 4-02: Pay Schedule of this Handbook. Overtime compensation is based on actual hours worked. Therefore, time taken for meal breaks, PTO, or any other leave of absence is not considered time worked and will not be factored into overtime compensation. However, holidays will be counted as time worked. Exempt employees will not receive overtime compensation.

When possible, supervisors or managers may schedule flexible time off for non-exempt employees during the work week, which will be given in lieu of overtime pay. Flexible time, when given, must be within the same work week in order to meet federal guidelines. When utilizing flexible time in lieu of overtime pay, appropriate comment codes and notes must be used in Kronos to account for the offsetting of hours.

Overtime compensation is not paid, nor is compensatory time given, to employees who stay to work a full eight (8) hour day when other governmental offices have closed early due to an emergency.

4-04 Direct Deposit

The Clerk & Comptroller's office requires direct deposit of your paycheck. You may directly deposit your pay into up to three (3) separate accounts that contain your name. The accounts may be at different institutions, and they must accept direct deposits and participate with the national clearinghouse known as "NACHA." A first-time setup of direct deposit may take up to two (2) pay periods. You will receive a paper check during this time.

You may view your paycheck and direct deposit information using Employee Self Service. In addition, if you would like to make changes to your direct deposit account(s), you must update this information through Employee Self Service. You may receive up to two (2) paper checks after any changes are made.

4-05 Timekeeping

As an employee of the Clerk & Comptroller's office, you will use Kronos, our automated time and attendance system, for recording your hours worked each day and your absences. Non-exempt employees are required to stamp in and out each day and for lunch breaks at their assigned work station. You will be given a work schedule that indicates your work start and stop times. If you are required to work at another Clerk's office location and receive prior management approval, you may clock-in or –out at that location.

You are responsible for obtaining prior approval from your manager or supervisor for absences and/or scheduled time off. If you are a non-exempt employee, your supervisor or manager is your timekeeper and is responsible for updating any pay exceptions, such as PTO and schedule changes. If you are an exempt employee, you are responsible for entering applicable leave codes in Kronos, and your supervisor or manager will enter special pay codes and schedule changes.

You are encouraged to review your timecard in Kronos to ensure that all hours worked and pay exceptions are indicated correctly. To ensure accurate pay, you must review and approve your timecard at the end of each pay period. You are responsible for notifying your supervisor or manager, of any inaccuracies.

Please refer to Administrative Policy 04-08 Attendance for more information.

4-06 Work Schedule and Break Periods

The standard full-time work week for all departments at the Clerk & Comptroller's office is forty (40) hours, five (5) days per week, Monday through Friday with one (1) hour for lunch daily. The work schedule at most of our locations is from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. However, your work schedule may vary to accommodate the needs of our customers. Refer to Section 4-02: Pay Schedule of this Handbook for more information on the work week at the Clerk's office.

If you are a non-exempt employee, a one-hour or one-half hour lunch period away from your workstation for which you are not paid will be scheduled by your immediate supervisor to assure uninterrupted coverage of the department. Everyone is required to take an unpaid lunch break of a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes. Taking time to eat a healthy mid-day meal will help you to be productive all day.

If you are a non-exempt employee, a fifteen (15) minute rest break in mid-morning and one in mid-afternoon away from your workstation for which you are paid will be scheduled by your supervisor so as to assure uninterrupted coverage of the department. Break periods are a benefit, not an entitlement or a guarantee; no one is required to take a break. In addition, break time may not be accumulated and used for other purposes. Breaks are for the purpose of allowing employees to refresh themselves and not to "make up" for time lost from tardiness, leaving early, or extending the lunch period. No breaks may be taken during the first or last 1.5 hours worked.

All paid breaks must be taken on the premises in a reasonable distance from the work station to afford you adequate time to rest and return to the work station. You should not be frequenting public retail areas off premises on paid breaks, as your rest period time is covered under Workers' Compensation. The Clerk & Comptroller's property may extend outside the offices in limited circumstances on county property. Such areas include the Main Courthouse and Governmental Center coffee shops, the 6th Floor Governmental Center terrace, and atriums of the Main Courthouse and Governmental Center offices.

Your work schedule may be adjusted to accommodate business needs, employee needs (such as dependent child or elder care), or public transportation needs, as long as it is fair and consistent with departmental staffing needs, hours, services, and supervision. Work schedules are established to ensure fair treatment of co-workers and proper coverage in the department, unless other arrangements have been approved by your supervisor. Employees who are assigned to an alternate work schedule may be assigned a different lunch and/or break schedule arrangement if necessary.

Upon request, a Director or Chief Officer may vary your work hours to accommodate an infrequent or unusual circumstance. Approvals will be granted on a case by case basis and in compliance with the FLSA.

4-07 Attendance Expectations

The success of the Clerk & Comptroller's office depends on a team effort. Everyone must be at work when scheduled to provide the quality of service expected by our customers. Absence or tardiness places a burden on the team that can reduce our level of customer service and hinder departmental productivity.

If you are unable to report to work as scheduled, you must provide proper and timely notice to your supervisor or manager. Please refer to Administrative Policy 04-08 Attendance for detailed information.

4-08 Safe Harbor (Salary Basis)

An exempt employee is paid on a "salary basis," which means the employee regularly receives a predetermined amount of compensation each pay period. The predetermined amount cannot be reduced because of variations in the quality or quantity of the employee's work. Outside of the exceptions discussed below, an exempt employee must receive the full salary for any work week in which the employee performs any work, regardless of the number of days or hours worked. Exempt employees do not need to be paid for any work week in which they perform no work. If the employer makes deductions from an employee's predetermined salary, then that employee is not paid on a "salary basis." If the employee is ready, willing and able to work, deductions may not be made for time when work is not available.

According to the United States Department of Labor, deductions from pay are permissible when an exempt employee is absent from work for one or more full days for personal reasons other than sickness or disability if the deduction is made in accordance with a bona fide plan, policy or practice of providing compensation for salary lost due to illness. Deductions are also permissible as a way to offset payment employees receive as jury or witness fees, for military pay, or for unpaid disciplinary suspensions of one or more full days imposed in good faith for workplace conduct rule infractions.

Also, an employer is not required to pay the full salary in the initial or terminal week of employment, for penalties imposed in good faith for infractions of safety rules of major significance, or for weeks in which an exempt employee takes unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act. In these circumstances, either partial day or full day deductions may be made.

It is the Clerk and Comptroller's policy to comply with applicable wage and hour laws and regulations. Therefore, we prohibit managers from making any improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees.

If you believe that an improper deduction has been made to your salary, you should immediately report this information to your direct supervisor. Reports of improper deductions will be promptly investigated. If it is determined that an improper deduction has occurred, you will be reimbursed for these deductions.

4-09 Alternative Schedule for Mass Transit or Carpooling

The Clerk's office supports "going green" initiatives and reducing our carbon footprint. If you commute to work via Tri-Rail, bus, or carpool, you may request supervisor/manager approval to reduce your lunch period by fifteen (15) minutes and end your work shift fifteen (15) minutes early, so that you can arrive timely at the train or bus station or, if necessary, coordinate your carpool departure. You may not forego one of your paid fifteen (15) minute breaks in order to end your work shift early. A carpool is defined as two or more people who ride in the same vehicle to and from work.

Proof that you currently utilize one of these transportation methods may be requested at a minimum of every six (6) months by your supervisor or manager. In addition, you are required to sign and submit an Alternative Schedule for Mass Transit or Carpooling Attestation Form. This fifteen (15) minute courtesy is not a guarantee and is subject to supervisor/manager approval.

If you are interested in connecting with other employees regarding carpooling arrangements, email events@mypalmbeachclerk.com for more information. In addition, registering with South Florida Commuter Services may provide you with other options and benefits. Visit the Clerk Perks page on ClerkNet for more information.

4-10 Flexible Work Schedules

The Clerk & Comptroller's office supports our employees' desire for a work-life balance and acknowledges that our business needs and the way we perform our work has changed with continued technological enhancements. Therefore, the Clerk's office supports flexible work schedules as long as they are compatible with our business needs, do not interrupt or cause undue hardship on our business operations or affect customer service. It is important to note that not every position at the Clerk's office is conducive to working a regular flexible work schedule.

Occasional Flexible Work Time

Your manager has the discretion to "flex" your time to accommodate business needs or for an occasional family responsibility, doctor appointment, or other personal engagement outside of the office, as long as it does not interrupt or cause an undue hardship on business operations.

- For example, with manager approval, you may take two hours to attend a parent-teacher conference on Monday, and work thirty minutes extra Tuesday through Friday to make up the 2 hours. Any time flexed must be made up in the same workweek. {Workweek is defined as 12:01am on Saturday to midnight on Friday.}
- For example, your manager may require you to work 2.5 hours on a Saturday to test a new program, and then allow you to leave a 30 minutes early every day during the same workweek, or leave 2.5 hours early one day during the same workweek.

NOTE: Exempt Courtesy time may be applicable if you are an exempt employee.

Regular Flexible Work Schedules

Based on business needs, your manager may approve a work schedule that falls outside of our normal business hours of 8am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. Flexible work schedules may not begin before 7am or end after 6pm and must include at least a thirty (30) minute lunch period. It will be each Chief Officer's responsibility to ensure staff working before 8am or after 5pm is appropriately supervised. In addition, sufficient staffing must be maintained during normal office hours of Monday through Friday from 8am to 5pm. The Information Technology (IT) help desk will be available from 7am to 5:30pm. Any emergency IT issue that occurs after 5:30pm will continue to be routed to Palm Beach County's Information Systems Services (ISS).

Schedule options include:

1. Five (5) 8-hour workdays with 30 minutes for lunch.
2. Staggered shifts (e.g. 7:45am-4:45pm, 8am-5pm, 8:15am-5:15pm).
3. Any other arrangement as approved by your supervisor/manager and director.

If you are approved to work a flexible work schedule, you are expected to work that schedule unless your manager/supervisor pre-approves departure from the schedule.

Holiday Pay/PTO

You will be paid holiday pay if a holiday falls on a day that you are regularly scheduled to work. If a holiday falls on a day that you are not normally scheduled to work, you will be allowed to schedule a day to observe the holiday, which must be approved by your manager/supervisor.

All flexible work schedules are subject to *Employee Handbook Section 4-06: Work Schedule and Break Periods*. No employee is entitled to a flexible schedule. Approval of any flexible work time or flexible work schedule is at your supervisor/manager's discretion based on business need. The Clerk's office reserves the right to suspend any flexible work schedules based on business needs.

5-01 Employee Benefits

The Clerk & Comptroller's office has established a variety of employee benefit programs designed to assist you and your eligible dependents in meeting the financial burdens that can result from illness or disability, and to help you plan for retirement. This portion of the Employee Handbook contains a very general description of the benefits for which you may be eligible as an employee of the Clerk & Comptroller's office. Please understand that this general explanation is not intended to and does not provide you with all the details of these benefits. Therefore, this Handbook does not change or otherwise interpret the terms of the official plan documents. Your rights can be determined only by referring to the full text of the official plan documents, which are available for your examination in the Human Resources department. To the extent that any of the information contained in this Handbook is inconsistent with the official plan documents, the provisions of the official documents will govern in all cases.

Please note that nothing contained in the benefit plans described herein shall be held or construed to create a promise of employment or future benefits, or a binding contract between the Clerk & Comptroller's office and its employees, retirees or their dependents, for benefits or for any other purpose. All employees shall remain subject to involuntary termination or discipline of the same extent as if these plans had not been put into effect.

The Clerk & Comptroller's office reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to amend, modify or terminate, in whole or in part, any or all of the provisions of the benefit plans described herein, including any health benefits that may be extended to retirees and their dependents. Further, the Clerk & Comptroller's office reserves the exclusive right, power and authority, in its sole and absolute discretion, to administer, apply and interpret the benefit plans described herein, and to decide all matters arising in connection with the operation or administration of such plans.

For more complete information regarding any of our benefit programs, please refer to the Summary Plan Descriptions, which are provided to you separately upon benefits election. If you need another copy of these descriptions, please contact the Human Resources department.

5-02 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

It is the policy of the Clerk & Comptroller's office to ensure compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). HIPAA offers protections for you that improve portability and continuity of health insurance coverage. This legislation provides protections for the privacy of your Protected Health Information (PHI). PHI does not pertain to all health information; it only includes information that your employer receives directly from a medical facility, doctor's office and/or the health insurance carrier. This information will be housed in Human Resources department and locked when not in use. All correspondence from the Human Resources department containing PHI will be sealed.

For more information, please refer to Administrative Policy 12-04 HIPAA Privacy and Security Policy.

5-03 Medical, Dental and Vision Insurance

Comprehensive group health, dental, and vision plans are available to all Clerk & Comptroller employees who work 20 hours or more per week. With the exception of the vision plan, the premium cost for group benefits is shared by you and the Clerk & Comptroller. Your share of the premium is deducted from your paycheck every other Friday.

Employees scheduled to work 24 hours or more per week may choose to enroll eligible dependents (spouse, domestic partner and/or eligible child[ren]) as well. If you choose to enroll dependents, you must show proof of the dependent relationship. Continued dependent status of adult children is verified on an annual basis.

Employee-only benefits are extended to part-time employees who work at least 20 hours per week, but less than 24 hours per week. These employees may choose to elect group health, dental, and/or vision coverage for the employee only.

As a new employee, you become eligible to participate in the health, dental and vision plans on the first day of the month following thirty (30) days of employment. If you elect to enroll at this time, you cannot be denied coverage by the insurance plan. Your new hire election of coverage must be made within the first 31 days of employment. If you elect not to join the health plan within the first 15 days of employment, you may enroll during the Open Enrollment period, which typically takes place the last quarter of the year.

Except for your new hire election, any additions, cancellations or changes whatsoever you wish to make to your group insurance coverage may occur only during the annual Open Enrollment period or as a special enrollment in the following instances:

- marriage;
- gaining a dependent;
- divorce;
- losing a dependent;
- termination/commencement of your spouse's or domestic partner's employment; or
- change in your eligibility for coverage or your spouse's or domestic partner's eligibility for coverage due to change in employment status (for example, if you transfer from a full-time, benefits eligible position to a part-time, benefits ineligible position).

You must notify the Human Resources department and complete the appropriate paperwork within thirty (30) days of the occurrence of the above-mentioned events.

You may update or change your beneficiary information by logging into Employee Self Service.

5-04 Disability Insurance

The Clerk & Comptroller's office offers short-term and long-term disability plans to all employees who work twenty (20) hours or more per week. You are enrolled in the short-term disability coverage on the first day of the calendar month coinciding with or following 180 continuous active days of employment with the Clerk's office, and you are eligible for long-term disability coverage on the first day of the calendar month coinciding with or following 12 continuous months of employment with the Clerk's office.

Short-term and long-term disability insurance coverage is funded by the Clerk's office and is available for employees only.

During active employment, an employee must be approved on a Leave of Absence to receive the disability benefit. Please refer to the leave options: Administrative Policy 93-07 Family and Medical Leave Act and Domestic Partner Leave Policy (FMLA/DPL) and Employee Handbook section 6-07 Discretionary Leave.

Short term disability insurance may not be immediately available to active employees following the 14 calendar day waiting period when the employee has sick transition leave (2011). If you have a sick balance (SAL), you must exhaust sick time prior to receiving any short-term disability benefit, even if the sick balance exceeds the waiting period.

5-05 Life Insurance

Basic group term life insurance is available to all employees who work 20 hours or more per week. This coverage becomes effective on the first of the month following thirty (30) days of employment. Coverage is funded by the Clerk's office and is available for employees only. Basic group term life insurance in the amount of two (2) times your annual salary is payable to your named beneficiary in the event of your death.

You may voluntarily elect to participate in post-tax supplemental term life insurance, dependent life insurance and/or whole life insurance. Although enrollment in supplemental life and dependent life is limited to the New Hire Election window, within thirty (30) days of a qualified life event or Open Enrollment, a thirty (30) day written cancellation period will apply if you wish to discontinue plan participation. Please refer to Employee Handbook Section 5-06: Supplemental Insurance for more information.

American Family Life Assurance Company of Columbus (AFLAC)
American Family Life Assurance Company of Columbus (AFLAC) offers Personal Accident/Indemnity, Personal Cancer Indemnity, Personal Sickness Indemnity, Personal Recovery Plus and Long Term Care insurance programs at a group rate through payroll deductions. Enrollment is completed on an individual basis through an AFLAC representative. Some AFLAC participation is subject to the flexible benefits plan, which means that certain AFLAC premiums are taken on a pre-tax basis and others on a post-tax basis. AFLAC coverage must be elected within 31 days of hire, and coverage will become effective on the first day of the month following thirty (30) days of employment. Once a plan election is made, changes may only be made during Open Enrollment sessions or within thirty (30) days of a qualifying event. Additional information can be obtained through the Human Resources department.

Legal Insurance/Identity Theft
The Clerk & Comptroller recognizes that you may be involved in legal proceedings in your personal life, or you may desire protection from identity theft. Therefore, employees have the option of enrolling in a legal insurance plan, an identity theft plan or both.

The legal insurance plan, which offers preventative and defensive legal assistance, is available as a voluntary supplemental benefit. This plan is available through payroll deduction as an after-tax benefit.

The Identity Theft plan provides credit score and analysis, 24/7 monitoring and notification and more. You may enroll in the legal insurance and/or identity theft benefits throughout the year. A thirty (30)--day written cancellation period will apply if you wish to discontinue plan participation.

Whole Life Insurance - MetLife
Whole life insurance may also be purchased on a voluntary supplemental basis. This type of insurance allows you to purchase coverage in the amount you desire and insure family members as well as yourself. Whole life insurances typically have a cash value portion as part of the insurance product.

You may enroll in this after-tax whole life insurance benefit throughout the year. Enrollment is completed on an individual basis through a MetLife representative. A thirty (30) day written cancellation period will apply if you wish to discontinue plan participation.

5-07 Flexible Healthcare & Dependent Care Spending Accounts

The *Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Code Section 125* authorizes flexible benefits plans, which have three (3) components: a premium redirection account, healthcare spending account and dependent care spending account. Any employee participating in the health, dental or vision plans, as well as some AFLAC supplemental plans, will automatically be part of the insurance premium redirection account. This means that premiums are deducted from your paycheck on a pre-tax basis. Participation in this account is automatic, unless you request post-tax treatment of your premium deductions in writing during the Open Enrollment period.

Participation in the healthcare flexible spending account allows you to set aside tax-free dollars from your paycheck to reimburse yourself for eligible out-of-pocket medical, dental, vision, prescription and other expenses as defined in the IRS Section 502. It is important that you are conservative when deciding the amount to redirect into this account, as IRS regulations require that any money left at the end of the calendar year will be forfeited. This is known as the "use it or lose it" provision. Minimum and maximum participation amounts apply to these options. For details, please review the information on the Pay & Benefits page of ClerkNet.

Participation in the dependent care flexible spending account allows you to set aside tax-free dollars from your paycheck to reimburse yourself for eligible out-of-pocket dependent care expenses. In order to be eligible for reimbursement, the dependent child(ren) must be under the age of thirteen (13). Similar to the healthcare flexible spending account, it is important that you are conservative when deciding the amount to redirect to this account, because any money left at the end of the calendar year is subject to the "use it or list it" provision. Minimum and maximum participation amounts apply to these options. For details, please review the information on the Pay & Benefits page of ClerkNet.

Participation in the healthcare spending and/or dependent care spending account(s) must be elected within 31 days of your date of hire and will be effective the first of the month following thirty (30) days of employment. Elections cannot be transferred between accounts.

Enrollment under any of the three (3) components of flexible benefits is subject to IRS regulations. Therefore, once a plan election is made, changes may only be made during the Open Enrollment period or within thirty (30) days of a qualifying event.

5-08 Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA)

The *Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) of 1986* gives you and your qualified dependents the opportunity to temporarily continue current health, dental and/or vision insurance coverage under the applicable Clerk & Comptroller plans at the time of a "qualifying event," which would normally result in your loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are your resignation or termination (for reasons other than gross misconduct), your death, a reduction in your hours which leaves you ineligible for benefits, a leave of absence, your divorce, and a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements. Removing an ineligible dependent through an Open Enrollment election will not initiate COBRA eligibility. Instead, you are responsible for notifying the Clerk's office within thirty (30) days if a dependent(s) becomes ineligible for coverage, so that the dependent(s) may be offered COBRA coverage. Certain dependents may not be independently eligible for COBRA.

If you elect to continue your insurance coverage under COBRA, you or your dependent will pay the full cost of coverage at the organization's group rates, plus an administration fee. The designee of the Clerk's office will provide you with a written notice describing your rights granted under COBRA when you initially become eligible for group coverage. This notice contains important information about your rights and obligations.

Should you have any questions regarding COBRA, please contact the Human Resources department.

5-09 The Florida Retirement System (FRS)

The Florida Retirement System (FRS) is a state-administered retirement program for employees who are employed in regularly established positions. Enrollment and participation in the FRS program is required. You may choose to participate in the FRS Pension Plan or the FRS Investment Plan. Effective July 1, 2011, you must contribute 3 percent of your gross compensation on a pre-tax basis toward your retirement plan.

The FRS Pension Plan is a traditional defined-benefit retirement plan. If you were hired prior to July 1, 2011, vesting occurs after six (6) years of service. If you were hired on or after July 1, 2011, vesting occurs after eight (8) years of service. Pension plan benefits are based on a formula that considers years of service, employee class participation and income history. Once vested, benefits are paid at age 62, or after 30 years of service if enrolled prior to July 1, 2011; or at age 65, or after 33 years of service if enrolled after July 1, 2011. Early retirement benefits are reduced by 5 percent for each year between your age at retirement and your normal retirement age. If you terminate employment prior to vesting, you are not eligible for a retirement benefit. For further details on the FRS Pension Plan, log on to myFRS.com or contact the Human Resources department. If you are interested in retirement, you should contact the Human Resources department no later than three months before your anticipated retirement date.

The FRS Investment Plan is a defined contribution plan in which you will allocate your contributions, as well as your employer contributions, to available investments. Vesting occurs after one (1) year of service. Under this plan, you will choose how to distribute contributions among the investment funds in the plan, which are subject to regular gains and losses of the investment market. The FRS Investment Plan distribution or account balance roll-over can be made at the time you separate employment or retire and may be subject to income tax. In addition, distributions made prior to age 59 ½ may be subject to a 10 percent penalty tax. You may choose from several available payout options when the benefit is taken. If you terminate employment prior to vesting, you are only vested in your contributions. If you elect not to take a distribution of your contributions and you are later hired by another FRS employer within five (5) years from your date of termination, the unvested amount will be reinstated. If you are enrolled in the Investment plan and are interested in retirement, contact FRS at (866) 446-9377.

As a new hire, you will be defaulted into the Pension Plan. You may use the new hire election option between months two and five of employment to switch to the Investment Plan.

The Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) is a program through FRS that allows you to retire and begin accumulating your retirement benefits, without terminating employment, for up to 60 months from the date you first reach normal retirement. This program is only available for employees enrolled in the FRS Pension Plan. While participating in DROP, your monthly retirement benefits remain in the FRS Trust Fund, earning tax-deferred interest while you continue to work. You do not earn additional service credit for retirement during the DROP period. In order to obtain your DROP benefits, you must terminate all employment with FRS employers when your DROP participation ends. For many, this is the "best of both worlds," providing both a retirement benefit and a lump sum to be invested by the member after DROP ends.

FRS retirees, regardless of the type of plan participation, who have completed six (6) years of service (if hired prior to July 1, 2011) or eight (8) years of service (if hired after July 1, 2011) at the Clerk & Comptroller's office may be eligible to continue health, dental, and vision benefits during retirement through the Clerk & Comptroller's office plans.

5-10 Deferred Compensation

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) code 457(b) governs a retirement savings program that permits deferment of part of your salary up to the IRS allowable amount. This program allows you to redirect tax-deferred and/or after-tax (Roth Accounts) income towards retirement savings through automatic payroll deductions. There is no employer matching for this program.

The deferred compensation program accepts eligible rollover distributions from other eligible retirement plans -- for example, IRA, 403(b), 401(k) and another governmental 457(b) plan, if the other governmental 457(b) plan permits such transfers.

Enrollment is completed through ICMA-RC by visiting their website, icmarc.org. Please see ClerkNet for more information.

5-11 Employee Assistance Program

The Clerk & Comptroller's office offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which provides confidential and professional assistance and consultation services should you or your family need help resolving the many serious problems that can influence your personal lives and affect your job performance.

Employment with the Clerk & Comptroller's office will not be terminated for seeking counseling services. We believe this important service can help relieve stress due to:

- alcohol and drug abuse;
- marital discord and domestic violence;
- child abuse;
- financial and legal issues;
- behavioral and psychological problems; and
- work-related problems.

EAP confidential services include:

- initial evaluation and assessment;
- treatment planning;
- counseling and outside referral, if recommended;
- family consultation;
- benefit coordination; and
- follow-up services.

You may utilize the EAP service as frequently as you would like at no charge. However, there may be costs associated with any counseling, treatment or hospitalization recommended by the EAP, and the Clerk's office assumes no financial responsibility for your portion of any co-pays, coinsurance, deductibles or premiums. Time away from the office for EAP appointments will be charged against your available leave balance.

Special financial arrangements for clients referred by the EAP are offered by some medical facilities, community agencies and private practitioners. The EAP staff keeps in mind the seriousness of the problem and your ability to pay for services, and works with the available resources to give you the best advice on how to get help. For more information, you may place a confidential call to EAP at (561) 233-5460. The EAP office is located at 100 Australian Avenue, Suite 100 in West Palm Beach.

Your supervisor may refer you to the EAP when:

- signs of distress become apparent;
- you ask for help; or
- personal issues may be cause for a change in your job performance or behavior.

The details about your counseling sessions are confidential. However, if your supervisor refers you to the EAP, your supervisor will be advised whether you kept the appointment and whether you have chosen to follow EAP recommendations. If you would like your supervisor to have more information regarding your particular issue, the EAP will help you decide what information to release.

In addition, the EAP also provides remedial counseling and program supervision for employees who are referred by management due to performance or work issues in conjunction with the Clerk & Comptroller's Administrative Policy 93-08 Drug-Free Workplace Policy. All of the provisions described above apply to such referrals, with the

exception that an employee who chooses not to comply with program requirements may be terminated. Please refer to the Administrative Policy 93-08 Drug-Free Workplace Policy for more information.

5-12 Credit Union

As an employee of the Clerk & Comptroller's office, you may choose to become a member of the Credit Union of Palm Beach County, which offers a full range of banking services, including checking and savings accounts, loans, ATM cards, certificates of deposit, IRA accounts, Visa cards and direct payroll deposit.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the credit union, you may visit www.pbccu.coop or contact the Human Resources department.

5-13 Official Travel

If you are required to travel for training or official business, you are entitled to be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses, such as registration fees, lodging expenses, transportation costs, meal allowances, tolls and parking. A travel request must be completed in Employee Self Service well in advance of the planned travel. Travel requests must be approved by your manager and director or Chief Officer.

If you are required to use your private vehicle in the conduct of your official duties, you will be reimbursed mileage at the current statutory rate. In these cases, you must complete a Mileage Expense Log form and an Expense Report in Employee Self Service, both of which must be approved by your manager.

Please refer to Administrative Policy 07-01 Travel for more information.

5-14 Parking

As an employee of the Clerk & Comptroller's office, you are provided parking at no cost. However, if you are assigned to one of the downtown West Palm Beach buildings, you will be required to pay a one-time $10.00 deposit to obtain an access card/transponder for Palm Beach County Parking. Should you leave the Clerk & Comptroller's employment, you will be reimbursed the $10.00 deposit once you return the parking access card/transponder to the Palm Beach County Parking Garage office.

If you work in the Governmental Center, you will initially be provided with parking in the Judicial Center Parking Garage. You will automatically be placed on the waiting list for Lot 4 (located directly north of the Governmental Center) and for the Governmental Center Garage. When space is available in Lot 4, you will be given the option by the County Parking office to move, or to remain in the Judicial Center Parking facility until a space becomes available in the Governmental Center Garage.

If you work at a branch location, you will have access to parking in a lot near your work location.

The Palm Beach County Parking Garage office may be contacted directly for any questions at 561-355-3235.

5-15 Clerks 4 Wellness

Partnering with CIGNA and the Gehring Group, the Clerk & Comptroller's office has effectively launched and maintained an award-wining wellness initiative to improve health outcomes, reduce medical costs, increase employee productivity and create a culture of wellness. In alignment with agency values, the Clerk's office manages the Clerks 4 Wellness program with support provided by our very own Wellness Champions. The mission of the Clerks 4 Wellness program is to *"educate, encourage and engage the Clerk's employees and their families in the overall improvement of body and mind."* The program provides opportunities for you to participate in a variety of educational and fun events, while learning techniques to enhance physical fitness and activity and to manage stress.

The Clerks 4 Wellness program has been nationally recognized by the American Heart Association as a Gold Level Fit Friendly company, and locally by the South Florida Worksite Wellness and South Florida Business Journal as one of the healthiest employers for companies between 500 and 1,000 employees.

For more information, please visit the Clerks 4 Wellness page on ClerkNet.

5-16 Educational/Professional Certification Achievement Awards

To recognize educational achievement, the Clerk & Comptroller's office provides a salary increase upon your completion of an accredited, approved degree program and/or the attainment of a professional certification. The degree and/or certificate must relate to the functions and responsibilities of the Clerk's office and must be achieved during your employment with the Clerk's office.

To be eligible for the educational achievement award, you must have at least one year of service at the Clerk's office, and you must be in good standing at the time the achievement award is granted (i.e., no Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) within the last year). If you are on a PIP at the time you earn your degree or certification, you may be eligible for the achievement award one year after you successfully complete the PIP (as long as no other PIP is in place at that time).

Professional certificates are issued by national organizations that have an established code of ethics, support the practice of applied research to develop the profession and support a defined body of knowledge. Additionally, the profession must have a credentialing organization which sets professional standards in the field. Should there be multiple levels of certificates offered under such an organization, only the highest attainable level of certification will be considered for this award.

In order to be considered for an educational/professional certification achievement award, you must provide an original, sealed degree transcript or an official copy of your professional certificate to the Human Resources department. Please notify your manager that you have submitted a transcript/certificate for consideration for an educational/professional certification achievement award. Upon verification by the Human Resources department, you will receive the achievement award in the following pay period. Awards will not be made retroactive.

DEGREE/CERTIFICATION	SALARY INCREASE
Associate's Degree	$500.00 one-time annual salary increase
Bachelor's Degree/Master's Degree/JD/PhD.	$1,000.00 one-time annual salary increase
Professional Certification	$1,000.00 one-time annual salary increase

The total salary increase for recognizing the educational achievement of any one employee is not to exceed $1,500.00 during the employee's entire employment with the Clerk's office. For example, if you were awarded a salary increase of $1,000.00 for achieving a Bachelor of Arts degree, you may only be considered for another $500.00 when achieving a Master's degree.

If the achievement award you receive would cause your salary to exceed the maximum of your pay grade, you will only be eligible for a salary increase to the maximum of your pay grade; however, you will receive the difference in a one-time lump sum payment. If your salary is already at the maximum of your pay grade when you earn your degree or professional certification, you will be eligible for a one-time lump sum bonus of $500 or $1,000 depending on the degree/certification earned.

5-17 Tuition Reimbursement Program

***** Please Note: This program has been temporarily suspended.**

Pursuant to *Sec. 112.063, F.S.*, the Clerk & Comptroller offers a tuition reimbursement plan to assist you in furthering your education. The program's intent is to increase your knowledge, skills, and abilities, and thereby enhance job performance and expand your career opportunities within the Clerk & Comptroller's office. Please refer to Tuition Reimbursement Guidelines and Tuition Reimbursement Application on ClerkNet for more information.

5-18 Employee Referral Program

The Clerk's office offers an Employee Referral Program to help fill openings at our office. Each successful referral will result in a $50 cash reward. All current full-time and part-time Clerk & Comptroller employees are eligible to participate in the program, with the exception of:

- Human Resources recruitment staff (Recruiter and Recruitment Manager);
- Directors, managers or supervisors responsible for the direct or indirect supervision of the vacant position;
- Chief Officers;
- variable staff; and
- contract employees.

In order to be eligible to receive the reward, the referral must indicate your name as the referral source on his/her original application. In addition, the referral must be hired for a regularly established position (not a variable position), and he/she must remain employed for six consecutive months. Once these criteria have been satisfied, you will be eligible to receive a $50 cash referral reward. Rewards given through the Employee Referral Program are subject to required deductions as provided by law. This program is subject to change due to budgetary needs and/or limitations.

Because the Clerk's office is an Equal Opportunity Employer, your recommendation of any applicant must be without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, marital status, military status, genetic information or any other legally protected status.

You may refer a candidate for more than one position as long as the candidate's qualifications match the requirements for each position. There is no limit to the number of candidates that you may refer for employment. Referrals are valid one year from the date of application.

Please refer to the Employee Referral Program page on ClerkNet for more information.

6-01 Holidays

The following holidays will be observed by employees of the Clerk & Comptroller's office:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King's Birthday	Rosh Hashanah
Presidents' Day	Columbus Day
Memorial Day	Veteran's Day
Independence Day	Thanksgiving (2 days)
	Christmas (2 days)

- Regular part-time employees who are scheduled to work 25 hours or more per week will be entitled to holiday hours prorated based upon the employee's weekly scheduled work hours. When a holiday falls on a non-scheduled work day, these employees should coordinate with their supervisor to take another scheduled work day off with pay.

- Regular part-time employees who are scheduled to work between 20 and 24 hours per week are entitled to six (6) paid holidays, which will be prorated based upon the employee's weekly scheduled work hours. These holidays include:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving Day
Independence Day	Christmas Day

- Regular part-time employees who work under 20 hours per week, variable employees, and student interns are not eligible for holiday pay.

- Unless otherwise noted below, employees must be in paid status on the regularly scheduled work days before AND after a holiday to be eligible for holiday pay.
    - If an employee is <u>not</u> in a paid status on the regularly scheduled work days before and/or after a holiday, the employee may be eligible to receive holiday pay with Chief Officer approval.
    - Approval may not be granted if:
        - An employee is charged with an unapproved absence either the day before <u>or</u> after a holiday.
        - An employee is on any type of approved non-FMLA leave without pay either the day before or the day after the holiday.

- Employees on approved Paid Time Off (PTO) when a holiday occurs will receive holiday pay for that day.

- Paid holiday time is counted as work time for the purpose of determining overtime eligibility.

Early Release Preceding a Holiday

The Clerk & Comptroller may authorize an early release on certain business days before a holiday. Management will have the discretion to release employees provided that sufficient staff is available to maintain minimal service levels through the end of the business day.

- The Management team will announce to employees when an early release has been approved.

- In order to receive early release ADM time, you must have been at work that day and allowed to leave early. Employees who are on an approved PTO or on an unpaid leave on an early release day will not receive early release ADM time.
- No employee is entitled to early release. Consideration for early release is at the manager's discretion. Management shall rotate coverage to allow employees an equal opportunity to participate in this benefit.

Payroll team will make the ADM code available on authorized early release days

Please refer to the Holiday and Paydate Calendar on ClerkNet for more information.

6-02 Paid Time Off Program (PTO)

The Clerk & Comptroller's Paid Time Off Program (PTO) is an all-purpose leave policy for sick time, vacation, Family Medical Leave/Domestic Partner Leave (FMLA/DPL), medical appointments and personal business. PTO combines traditional vacation and sick leave into one flexible leave plan.

Regular employees who work thirty (30) or more hours per week are eligible for PTO upon successful completion of the Introductory Period, which is 90 days for non-exempt employees or 180 days for exempt employees. PTO should be approved in advance, except for unforeseeable emergency circumstances.

Please refer to Administrative Policy 04-02 Paid Time Off Program for more details.

6-03 Transition Sick Leave

Effective January 1, 2012, the Clerk & Comptroller's office implemented a Paid Time Off (PTO) program that is applicable to both non-exempt and exempt employees. Some employees have sick leave balances from prior sick leave policies or from PTO converted to sick leave. These sick leave balances are designated as Transition Sick Leave (SAL). All SAL is available for use until exhausted, and is not eligible for pay out at any time. If your SAL balance is exhausted, you must utilize available PTO for any absence.

SAL may be used only for illness, injury, doctor's appointments, Family and Medical Leave Act and Domestic Partner Leave (FMLA/DPL), approved appointments with the Employee Assistance Program, or immediate family illness, injury or doctor's appointments requiring your assistance. "Immediate family" is defined as mother, father, sister, brother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, stepmother, stepfather, stepsister, stepbrother, spouse, domestic partner, child, domestic partner's child, stepchild, grandchild, grandparent, step-grandparent, daughter-in-law and son-in-law.

Should additional time for bereavement or travel be needed in the event of a death, up to two (2) additional days of PTO may be requested. Please refer to Employee Handbook Section 6-04: Compassionate Leave for more information.

6-04 Compassionate Leave

As an employee of the Clerk & Comptroller's office, you may be granted compassionate administrative leave up to three (3) days in the event of a death in your immediate family. The definition of "immediate family" for compassionate leave includes mother, father, sister, brother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, stepmother, stepfather, stepsister, stepbrother, spouse, child, stepchild, grandchild, step-grandchild, grandparent, step-grandparent, daughter-in-law and son-in-law. The definition of "immediate family" extends to qualified domestic partnerships as well. With manager approval, PTO may be requested for additional time for bereavement due to travel.

The three (3) compassionate administrative leave days and any additional PTO should be taken consecutively within a reasonable time, either on or after the day of the death, or on or after the day of the funeral service. These days may not be postponed or used intermittently. You should make your supervisor aware of your situation as soon as possible. Proof of death and relationship to the deceased may be required.

With Chief Officer approval, you may be granted administrative leave* of up to two (2) hours to attend a co-worker's wake or funeral services locally. Management is responsible to ensure the office has appropriate coverage for business operations.

**KRONOS Code "ADM" for Administrative Leave with pay will be used for these instances*

6-05 Jury Duty/Court Appearance Leave

If you are summoned for jury duty or are subpoenaed to appear as a witness in a job-related or non-job-related case, you must notify your supervisor as soon as possible after receiving notice. If the duty requires you to call in the night before, you must immediately advise your supervisor upon confirmation by the Court whether or not you are required to report for jury duty the following day. If you are required to call in for more than one day, you must contact your supervisor each day with a status.

	Summoned for Federal Jury Duty/County or Circuit other than PB or 15th JC or Selected to serve on a Federal Jury Trial or County or Circuit other than PB or 15th JC	**Summoned for PB County or 15th Judicial Circuit Jury Duty or Selected to Serve on a PB County or 15th Judicial Circuit Jury Trial**	**Witness in a Job-Related Case**	**Witness in a Non-Job-Related Case**
Employee Pay Status	Administrative leave with pay will be granted for the hours you are required to report for jury duty selection, serve on a jury trial, or serve as a witness in a job-related case, not to exceed the number of hours in your normal workday.			You must use available PTO for your absence.
Report to Work	If you are not required to report for duty/service until after your scheduled work start time, you may choose to report to work first or use PTO. You must notify your supervisor of your choice as soon as possible. If no PTO is available, you must report or return to work immediately.	You are not required to report to work until you have completed your jury duty service (i.e., you have been dismissed from jury duty or the jury trial is concluded). If you are dismissed from duty/service before 3pm, you may choose to report to work after dismissal or use PTO. You must notify your supervisor of your choice as soon as possible. If no PTO is available, you must report or return to work immediately. If you are dismissed from duty/service after 3pm, you are not required to report to work and will be paid administrative leave with pay for the remainder of the day.	If you are not required to report to serve as a witness until after your scheduled work start time, you may choose to report to work first or use PTO. You must notify your supervisor of your choice as soon as possible. If no PTO is available, you must report or return to work immediately.	
Return to Work	If you are dismissed from duty/service before 3pm, you may choose to report to work after dismissal or use PTO. You must notify your supervisor of your choice as soon as possible. If no PTO is available, you must report or return to work immediately. If you are dismissed from duty/service after 3pm, you are not required to report to work and will be paid administrative leave with pay for the remainder of the day.	You are not required to return to work until you have completed your jury duty service (i.e., you have been dismissed from jury duty or the jury trial is concluded). If you are dismissed from duty/service before 3pm, you may choose to report to work after dismissal or use PTO. You must notify your supervisor of your choice as soon as possible. If no PTO is available, you must report or return to work immediately. If you are dismissed from duty/service after 3pm, you are not required to report to work and will be paid administrative leave with pay for the remainder of the day.	If you are dismissed from serving as a witness before your scheduled work end time, you may choose to report to work after dismissal or use PTO. You must notify your supervisor of your choice as soon as possible. If no PTO is available, you must report or return to work immediately.	

	Summoned for Federal Jury Duty/County or Circuit other than PB or 15th JC or Selected to serve on a Federal Jury Trial or County or Circuit other than PB or 15th JC	Summoned for PB County or 15th Judicial Circuit Jury Duty or Selected to Serve on a PB County or 15th Judicial Circuit Jury Trial	Witness in a Job-Related Case	Witness in a Non-Job-Related Case
Jury/ Witness Fees Paid	Pay for the first three days of jury duty in a County or Circuit Court, and all Federal jury duty pay, excluding mileage and meals, must be turned in to the Clerk's Accounting department. You may retain payment for jury duty beyond the first three days of jury duty in a County or Circuit Court. Any pay received or turned over to the Clerk's office must be accounted for when filing annual federal tax returns as prescribed by the Internal Revenue Service.		Witness, mileage, or meal fees must be turned in to the Clerk's Accounting department. Follow normal travel approval procedures when incurring mileage and meal expenses as a witness in a job-related case. Any pay received or turned over to the Clerk's office must be accounted for when filing annual federal tax returns as prescribed by the IRS.	You may retain any witness, mileage, or meal fees.

6-06 The Family & Medical Leave Act and Domestic Partner Leave (FMLA/DPL)

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) entitles eligible employees to take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a twelve (12) month period for specified family and medical reasons, including but not limited to pregnancy, child birth, foster care, adoption and care for your own serious health condition or a serious health condition of your child, spouse, or parent. This leave has been extended to employees who need to care for the serious health condition of a registered domestic partner, the serious illness or injury of a covered service member who is your registered domestic partner, or the birth or adoption/placement of a child with a registered domestic partner.

Please refer to Administrative Policy 93-07 Family and Medical Leave Act and Domestic Partner Leave Policy (FMLA/DPL) for detailed information.

6-07 Discretionary Leave

The Clerk & Comptroller's office offers two types of Discretionary Leave to eligible employees: Medical Leave and Unpaid Personal Leave. Both types of leave are subject to a thirty (30) calendar day maximum. These leaves are not a guarantee, right, or entitlement and may be authorized only in extraordinary circumstances. The details and eligibility criteria for each type of leave are discussed below.

The Chief Human Resources Officer, your department's Chief Officer and the Clerk & Comptroller will review your request to determine approval / disapproval. When reviewing your request, the following factors will be considered:

- your length of service at the Clerk's office;
- your attendance history;
- your performance, performance reviews, and warnings (if applicable);
- operational and staffing needs of the department;
- your reason for the leave request;
- your physician's recommendation;
- the expectation that you will return to work when the leave expires; and
- other factors as determined in the best interests of the Clerk & Comptroller's office.

Approval is at the sole discretion of the Clerk's office and will not be routinely granted. If granted, you may be assigned to a different position or location in the Clerk's office upon your return, which may result in a change in job, pay, pay grade, benefits, and/or working conditions.

While in an unpaid status on any leave, the Clerk's office will continue to fund the employer-paid portion of insurance premiums for plans in which you are enrolled. Once you return to work with the Clerk & Comptroller's office and resume a paid status, any premium arrears balance will be deducted from your earnings. Should you not return to work and separate employment following the leave, you are obligated to pay any outstanding health, dental, vision, and optional life insurance deductions. If arrears are not repaid and you separate employment, you will be considered ineligible for rehire. In addition, you will not receive holiday pay if you are in an unpaid status either the day before or the day after the holiday. Further, there is no accrual for retirement credit for the Florida Retirement System (FRS) Pension Plan while in an unpaid status. Please refer to the FRS Pension Plan summary plan description at www.myfrs.com for additional details.

If you did not receive a performance review prior to going on leave, it will be conducted upon your return. Your performance review period will be reduced by the amount of leave time taken. For example, if you are out for fourteen (14) days, your performance review period will be reduced by fourteen (14) days. Any pay increases will be processed once you return and will be prorated for the time actually worked.

Discretionary Medical Leave

A Discretionary Medical Leave may be granted on a continuous or an intermittent basis for your own serious health condition; however, will not be granted for time in which you become eligible for FMLA. This leave is a Clerk & Comptroller-specific benefit and not part of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), or any other mandated leave or job continuity program.

You are eligible to apply for a Discretionary Medical Leave if:

- you have been employed in a full-time, regular status position at the Clerk's office for at least six (6) months;
- you have exhausted all FMLA time OR do not yet qualify for FMLA; and
- you have not received this type of leave in the past 12-month period.

Specifically, if you have been approved to be on FMLA leave for a personal serious health condition but are unable to return to work once the FMLA leave is exhausted, you may be granted a Discretionary Medical Leave. If you are not yet eligible for FMLA due to length of service or hours worked, and you have a personal serious health condition for which an FMLA leave would have been applicable, you may be granted a Discretionary Medical Leave.

You must apply for a Discretionary Medical Leave in writing at least fourteen (14) calendar days in advance of the requested absence (if reasonable). Your request must be accompanied by a physician's supporting statement and should be addressed to the Human Resources Administrator-Benefits. Your request must include the reason for the leave, as well as the length of time requested.

If a Discretionary Medical Leave is granted, you will be required to use your SAL first (if applicable) and then PTO concurrently on a one-to-one hourly basis during your absence. If you exhaust your SAL and/or PTO before the end of the leave, the remainder of the leave period will be unpaid. However, you may qualify for Short-Term Disability benefits. Please refer to Employee Handbook Section 5-04 Disability Insurance for more information.

Discretionary Unpaid Personal Leave

A Discretionary Unpaid Personal Leave may be granted for non-FMLA family emergencies or unplanned opportunities (for example, your daughter will be competing in the National Spelling Bee or your brother is in critical condition in the hospital and the family has been called). A Discretionary Unpaid Personal Leave cannot be used 1) to extend a vacation in place of earned PTO time, 2) for your own serious health condition, or 3) for the purpose of accepting employment elsewhere or to go into business for yourself.

You are eligible to apply for a Discretionary Unpaid Personal Leave of Absence if:

- you have been employed in a full-time regular position at the Clerk's office for at least one (1) year; and
- you have exhausted your SAL (if applicable) and/or PTO; and
- you have not received this type of leave in the past 12-month period.

You must apply for a Discretionary Unpaid Personal Leave in writing at least thirty (30) calendar days in advance of the requested absence (if reasonable). Your request must be accompanied by supporting documentation and should be addressed to the Human Resources Administrator-Benefits. Your request must include the reason for the leave, as well as the length of time requested. If you do not make a request by the third day of an absence, a final determination will then be made regarding your employment status. Please refer to Administrative Policy 04-08 Attendance.

6-08 Military Leave

Employees recalled to active duty of the military shall receive all the rights and privileges authorized by Federal, Military and Veteran's Laws with respect to leave, status and re-employment, pursuant to Florida Statutes 115.07 and 115.14.

If you are in a military reserve unit or National Guard, you must annually advise your manager that you are still a member. After notice or presentation of official orders, you will receive leave with pay not to exceed the term of the order, or seventeen (17) work days, whichever is less, within the Federal fiscal year of October 1 through September 30 to travel to and from and attend training. Such leave will not be charged to accrued Paid Time Off (PTO) leave.

If you are in a military reserve unit or National Guard and are called to active military duty, you will receive regular base pay for the first thirty (30) days of active duty, not to exceed the term of the order, after notice or presentation of official orders.

Advance notice is required for all periods of military leave unless such notice is precluded by military necessity or otherwise impossible or unreasonable as interpreted under applicable law. You are required to supply military orders for any and all military leave absences of more than thirty (30) days, which can be used to establish your basic eligibility for protection under the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994. If you are unable to provide satisfactory documentation of military service in excess of thirty (30) days, the Clerk & Comptroller's office may reserve its right to contact the military unit with your assistance to obtain such documentation.

All other active duty military leave will be granted upon presentation of notice or official orders but will be considered leave without pay. Insurance benefits will cease at the end of the month in which active duty begins, but you will be offered COBRA coverage (please refer to the COBRA section under Employee Benefits and Wellness in this Handbook for more information). Upon return from active duty with an honorable discharge, you will be reinstated to the same or similar position at the same rate of pay, and insurance benefits will begin the first of the month following your return to work.

You are required to notify your manager of an interest in reinstatement within the following time frames:

- Period of active service is less than 31 days: You must report to work by the beginning of the first regularly scheduled work day at the end of duty plus time required to travel home safely and an eight (8) hour rest period.

- Period of active service is 31 to 180 days: You must submit an application for re-employment no later than fourteen (14) days after the completion of duty.

- Period of active service is 181 days or more: You must submit an application for re-employment no later than 90 days after the completion of duty.

6-09 Domestic Violence Leave

The Clerk & Comptroller's office may grant three (3) days of Domestic Violence Leave to eligible employees in accordance with Florida Statutes 741.313. You are eligible for this leave benefit if you have been employed by the Clerk and Comptroller for a period of three (3) or more months.

The three (3) days of leave may be used during any twelve (12) month period if you or a family or household member is the victim of domestic violence or sexual violence. Transition sick leave (SAL) or Paid Time Off (PTO) must be used concurrently with the Domestic Violence leave time, if such leave is available. If there is no available SAL or PTO time, the Domestic Violence Leave will be unpaid. You may use Domestic Violence Leave to:

- seek an injunction for protection against domestic violence or an injunction for protection in cases of repeat violence, dating violence, or sexual violence;
- obtain medical care and/or mental health counseling for you or a family or household member to address physical or psychological injuries resulting from the act of domestic violence or sexual violence;
- obtain services from a victim services organization, including but not limited to a domestic violence shelter or program or a rape crisis center as a result of the act of domestic violence or sexual violence;
- make your home secure from the perpetrator of the domestic violence or sexual violence or to seek new housing to escape the perpetrator;
- seek legal assistance in addressing issues arising from the act of domestic violence or sexual violence or to attend and prepare for court-related proceedings arising from the act of domestic violence or sexual violence.

Except in cases of imminent danger to your health or to the health or safety of a family or household member, you must provide appropriate advance notice of the leave request to your manager. Appropriate documentation of the act of domestic or sexual violence must be submitted to your manager or supervisor either before or immediately after the leave.

6-10 Public Accountability for Leave Time

Pursuant to the principles of public accountability, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) allows public employers to deduct partial day absences from applicable leave banks. Therefore, all non-exempt employees are expected to use available leave banks to cover partial day absences prior to entering a no-pay status. All exempt employees are expected to use available leave bank time to cover partial day absences in excess of four (4) hours per day, or as required by management. All exempt employees are also expected to use available leave bank time to cover any approved absences related to FMLA (including FMLA leave absences less than four (4) hours per day) or similar types of leave (e.g. Workers' Compensation).

If you are an exempt employee, the Clerk & Comptroller's office may permit up to four (4) hours of time off with pay for personal reasons, without using PTO. However, these four (4) hours are a courtesy and a benefit, not an entitlement or guarantee. The four (4) hour courtesy is based upon the understanding that as an exempt employee, you are expected to work all hours necessary to complete your job, which at times results in you working on average more than forty (40) hours per week. Should your time on the job and/or performance be lacking, you will no longer be extended this courtesy and must use PTO for any partial day absence. Please refer to Administrative Policy 04-02 Paid Time Off Program for more information.

Exempt employees should not be denied use of this four (4) hour courtesy when his or her PTO allotment is completely depleted, without the situation first being discussed with the Human Resources department and/or Legal Services.

6-11 Benefits Premium Obligations

If you are on an unpaid personal leave of absence and/or not currently receiving earnings from the Clerk & Comptroller's office, you remain obligated to pay the employee portion of any applicable premiums while covered under the Clerk's benefit plans. The Clerk's office is unable to deduct employee premiums for benefit plans you have elected during a period of unpaid leave.

Any premiums not collected while you are on unpaid leave will accumulate in an arrears balance. Once a "paid status" is resumed with the Clerk & Comptroller's office, the premium arrears balance will be deducted from your earnings until paid in full as follows:

- Health coverage premiums will be deducted from your pay as an additional 50 percent of your current health premium contribution each pay period, until premiums are current.
- All other group benefits premiums will be deducted from your pay as an additional 100 percent of your current group benefit premium contribution(s) each pay period, until premiums are current.

If you are on unpaid leave and you do not return to work following the unpaid leave of absence and/or you separate employment, you are obligated to pay any outstanding premiums toward health, dental, vision, additional life, spousal life, dependent life and Pre-Paid Legal/Identity Theft within seven (7) calendar days following employment separation. Failure to remit any premiums that are owed upon employment separation will result in a collection effort, and you will be considered ineligible for rehire.

If you are on unpaid leave and participating in the health care and/or dependent care flexible spending accounts (FSA), contributions are suspended during the period of unpaid leave. Upon your return to work, the remaining annual FSA contribution amount pledged is recalculated over the remaining applicable pay periods for the calendar year.

While on unpaid leave, if you have any individual benefits with AFLAC and MetLife, you are subject to the provisions of those carriers. The Clerk & Comptroller's office will not fund any premiums due for these supplemental benefits while you are on an unpaid leave of absence. You may be required to remit premium payments directly to the carrier. While on unpaid leave, you should contact these carriers individually to determine the status of benefits and to make any necessary premium payment arrangements. Please contact the Human Resources department for more information.

7-01 Service to Our Customers

The Clerk & Comptroller's office strives to provide the highest level of service to our customers. Our customers include vendors, attorneys, litigants, law enforcement officers and other branches of government, as well as the general public and our fellow co-workers.

Our employees will remain professional at all times and exceed all expectations in promptness, courtesy, accuracy, integrity and quality. It is our goal to continually look for ways to enhance the customer service experience we deliver. If you cannot help a customer, or if a customer becomes unreasonable or abusive, you should remain calm and immediately contact your supervisor or manager. You will be trained on the specific customer service standards for your department.

To help us deliver the best customer service experience possible, multilingual employees are required to provide translation services on an as-needed basis.

7-02 Telephone Courtesy Standards

One of the first contacts many customers have with the Clerk & Comptroller's office is by telephone. The prompt and courteous answering of telephone calls reflects the attitude of a helpful and considerate staff and leaves a favorable impression with the public, judges, attorneys and others who may call. With this in mind, we strive to maintain a "three-ring policy," meaning all calls should be answered by the third ring. The following are additional telephone courtesy standards:

- Greet callers and identify yourself.
- Be pleasant, helpful and courteous.
- Take responsibility for the customer's satisfaction and be sure to transfer calls properly. Be certain the call is being transferred to an employee who can assist the customer. Relay to your co-worker any pertinent information that the customer has already shared with you (name, case number, reason for call, etc.).
- Be sure to record messages completely and accurately and relay them in a timely manner to the appropriate individual.
- Return all calls promptly.
- Leave a positive impression. Always thank the caller and let them know you are glad to be of service.

7-03 Work Duties

It is the goal of the Clerk & Comptroller for you to be cross-trained and able to perform competently the full range of tasks listed in your job description. Therefore, while you are given a regular work assignment and placed where your manager believes you can best contribute to your department, this assignment may change periodically in order to achieve the goal of cross-training. In addition, it may be necessary to fill in and help in areas other than your normal work assignment due to high work volumes or staff shortages.

Some employees are sworn in as Deputy Clerks to assist in carrying out the official duties of the Clerk & Comptroller and in performing the services required by Florida Statutes or court orders. If you are assigned Deputy Clerk status, you will be required to take a formal oath to uphold the Constitution and laws of the United States and the State of Florida. No one can be a Deputy Clerk who is not eligible for election to the Office of Clerk of the Circuit Court.

Some employees will be entrusted with the responsibility of handling public money. Public money is defined as cash, checks, other legal tender, or any other money handled on behalf of the Clerk & Comptroller in the performance of your job duties. If your job requires you to handle public money, you will be provided with training on the procedures specific to your department. Your supervisor will also provide you with *Responsibility for Custody of Public Money Part I of II* and *Responsibility for Custody of Public Money Part II of II* for your signature, which will be placed in your personnel file. At all times, it is important to understand that although you may have temporary possession of public money, ownership remains with the Clerk & Comptroller. Employees assigned to public funds are expected to protect, preserve and maintain these funds with integrity and accountability. Disciplinary measures for overages, shortages, errors, and remiss application of cash handling policies and procedures shall not necessarily be linked to a specific monetary amount, but may include patterns in shortages and overages, unauthorized change making, and other misuse of public funds. Failure to accurately maintain the funds as assigned may result in progressive disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

7-04 Standards of Conduct

The Clerk & Comptroller's office expects every employee to adhere to the highest standards of job performance and personal conduct. In order to carry out its responsibilities to the taxpayers, the Clerk's office must have certain rules and regulations. They help us work together effectively as a team and to understand what we have a right to expect from each other, as well as from our supervisors. For the purpose of this Handbook, the term "supervisor" represents all staff that have the responsibility of employee supervision.

The following are guidelines for *Standards of Conduct* expected of you as an employee of the Clerk's office. These guidelines must not be interpreted as an expressed or implied contract for employment, and the Clerk's office reserves the right to terminate any employee with or without cause at any time deemed necessary or desirable by the Clerk's office.

The Clerk's office requires that you are familiar and comply with all rules and regulations in carrying out your assigned duties. Supervisors will make every reasonable effort to provide you with adequate training for your job and in any rules and regulations pertaining to your job.

Violations of the *Standards of Conduct*, depending on the severity of the offense, may result in progressive disciplinary action. Please refer to the Progressive Discipline section under Conduct Standards and Workplace Expectations in this Handbook for more information. Due to the severity of specific offenses, immediate involuntary termination may result. Examples of these offenses are identified by an asterisk (*) in the list below.

The following are examples of offenses or conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including involuntary termination.

1. You must observe time limitations of rest and meal periods. You must not be tardy, absent, or depart from work early without the permission of your supervisor. Paid time off (PTO) and other types of leave benefits must not be abused. You must request approval from your supervisor in advance of any anticipated absence as outlined in Administrative Policy 04-02 Paid Time Off Program.

2. *You must not fail to report to work and must not have an absence/leave for three consecutive days without authorization from your supervisor and/or manager.

3. You must maintain dress and grooming appropriate to the type of work performed as outlined in Administrative Policy 97-2 Standards for Attire and Grooming.

4. *You must not loaf, sleep on the job, or take part in any other willful unproductive use of time.

5. *You must not take part in horseplay, fighting, violence or any other action interfering with the work of other employees or service to the public.

6. *You must not take part in gambling of any kind on Clerk & Comptroller premises or at any other place while on duty.

7. You must not solicit funds or services, sell goods or tickets, distribute literature or petitions for any purpose on Clerk & Comptroller premises or at any other place while on duty without prior authorization from your Director or Chief Officer.

8. You must not use threats or profane or abusive language in dealing with customers, co-workers, supervisors, or other persons contacted in business relationships, or otherwise provoke or abuse others in any way.

9. *You must not solicit, accept, or agree to accept fees or gifts, or consideration of monetary value of any kind or otherwise take advantage of customers or business contacts for personal gain.

10. You must not reveal privileged or confidential information to unauthorized persons. This must include the unauthorized transmission of privileged or confidential information and images via all electronic devices.

11. You must conduct yourself in an appropriate and professional manner while on duty. Conduct unbecoming of a public employee will not be tolerated. Such conduct includes actions which reflect unfavorably on the Clerk's office, cause embarrassment or are damaging to the reputation of the Clerk's office or in general reflect unprofessionally on the Clerk's office.

12. *You must not work or report for work under the influence of alcohol or nonprescription controlled substances.

13. *You must not use, possess, solicit, sell or disburse alcohol or non-prescription controlled substances during the work day.

14. *You must not knowingly, verbally or in writing, omit information or submit inaccurate or untruthful information. Falsification of any administrative and/or departmental record, report, or document, including, but not limited to, employment, payroll, leave, timekeeping, travel reimbursement, or any other official records, is strictly prohibited.

15. *You must not exhibit behavior which creates an intimidating, hostile, offensive, or inappropriate work environment. This activity is prohibited, including any violation as outlined in Administrative Policy 98-2 Anti-Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure or Administrative Policy 08-07 Workplace Violence Avoidance and Intervention Policy.

16. You must not violate Administrative Policy 98-1 Electronic Mail Communications and/or use Internet access for non-Clerk & Comptroller business purposes.

17. *You have the responsibility to protect and safeguard Clerk & Comptroller property and the person and property of customers and other employees. You must not be in unauthorized possession of or steal any property of the Clerk & Comptroller, its employees or the public, regardless of value, or remove or attempt to remove such property from the premises.

18. *You must not possess, use or threaten use of weapons or firearms while on duty and/or on the premises.

19. You must use public records, tools, materials, equipment, facilities, property and funds responsibly and only for purposes authorized by the Clerk & Comptroller. Careless use of public resources that leads to waste and personal, unauthorized use of public resources will not be tolerated.

20. You must exercise reasonable care and maintenance of and must not destroy or abuse records, tools, equipment, materials, facilities, property or funds.

21. You are expected to comply with all Federal, State, Local and Clerk's office rules, regulations, ordinances, laws, statutes, policies and procedures.

22. *Any injury, illness or accident must be reported immediately in accordance with the procedures specified by Palm Beach County's Risk Management department. Failure to report any injury, illness or accident may result in forfeiture of Workers' Compensation benefits.

23. All accidents involving Clerk & Comptroller vehicles and/or equipment must be reported immediately to your supervisor. Clerk & Comptroller vehicles are defined as any County owned, rented, or leased motorized vehicle including vehicles owned, rented, or leased by employees when used in the course and scope of conducting Clerk & Comptroller business or in conjunction with the Clerk & Comptroller mileage agreement. Disregard for or violations of safety rules such as speeding, driving without a seat belt, unsafe operation of a vehicle, or operating a Clerk & Comptroller vehicle without approved Driver Authorization is prohibited. Please refer to the Clerk & Comptroller Business Vehicles section under Conduct Standards and Workplace Expectations in this Handbook for more information.

24. *You must perform work assignments within the scope of your job. Refusal to perform assigned work or to follow reasonable directives or exhibiting defiance, contempt, or antagonism to supervision is considered insubordination.

25. *You must not participate in or initiate concerted activities such as a work slowdown, non-performance in whole or in part by any employee or group of employees, mass call-in alleging sickness or work stoppage.

26. You must not copy or distribute unauthorized written or printed materials on Clerk & Comptroller premises or while on duty.

27. *You must not demonstrate unethical conduct as specified in Chapter 112, Florida Statutes, "Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees."

28. *If you are placed under arrest and/or charged with any crime related to employment, or that would potentially have a negative impact on the Clerk's office, or which implies a likelihood of potential harm to citizens or property, you must report that arrest to your immediate supervisor or manager on the next business day after the arrest occurred.

29. *You must not be found guilty, enter a plea of nolo contendere or guilty to any crime related to employment or which implies a likelihood of potential harm to citizens or property.

30. You must not give or provide legal advice or services. The Clerk's office will only provide ministerial services to customers, clients, citizens, or other persons either directly through work or personally.

31. Deputy clerks must have prior written approval from the Chief Officer prior to performing any deputy clerk service outside of working hours.

32. All supervisors and managerial staff are expected to set an example for subordinates by complying with all rules, regulations and policies.

*Violations of these rules, depending on the severity, may result in immediate involuntary termination without previous warning due to the serious nature of the infraction. The above list of examples of offenses of conduct, which may lead to disciplinary action, is not all-inclusive.

7-05 Progressive Discipline

All employees are expected to meet performance standards and behave appropriately in the workplace. Disciplinary action is a process of communicating with employees in an effort to change behavior or correct deficiencies, not to punish. Depending on the circumstances, acceptable disciplinary actions may include verbal counseling, first written warning, second written warning, suspension, involuntary termination or a combination of disciplinary actions. The severity of specific offenses may result in immediate involuntary termination.

Disciplinary actions are an opportunity for you to improve your performance. If you have a concern about a warning that you have received, you may contact your manager/supervisor or the Human Resources department. All warnings are documented and will be included in your personnel file.

Up to three (3) warnings for the same or different offenses during a twelve (12) month period may result in involuntary termination. (Please review Administrative Policy 04-08 Attendance for guidelines on attendance and tardiness warnings.) Final warnings have no expiration and may be taken into account in subsequent disciplinary action at management's discretion.

If you are not present to be issued a counseling or warning, Progressive Discipline will be escalated to the appropriate level upon your return. For example, if you call out three days in a row, resulting in unapproved absences, you will be issued a 2nd written warning that references the missed 1st written warning and Verbal Counseling when you return on the fourth day.

A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), a formal written plan to help employees improve performance or modify behavior, may be administered at any stage of the Progressive Discipline process.

If a violation of a policy, practice, or procedure of the Clerk & Comptroller's office is deemed to be serious, an investigation may be conducted. In these cases, the Clerk & Comptroller may recommend a suspension while the investigation is conducted. The investigation will be completed in a timely manner; however, the duration of the suspension will be determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on the breadth of the investigation.

If the investigation results in a recommendation of termination, any days while under suspension will be without pay and will not be considered days worked. If the recommendation is to allow you to return to work, it is at the Clerk & Comptroller's discretion to determine the number of days paid, if any.

Additionally, the Clerk & Comptroller may recommend a suspension with or without pay depending on the severity of the violation. In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), suspensions without pay of less than one work week are limited to non-exempt employees, unless a major safety rule has been violated.

All recommended suspensions and terminations must receive final approval from the Clerk & Comptroller.

7-06 Standards for Attire & Grooming Policy

At the Clerk & Comptroller's office, it is our goal to present ourselves in a way that reflects our efficient and professional work environment. That includes the way we dress. Therefore, the Clerk & Comptroller has established guidelines for attire and grooming that will ensure we project a positive image. Please refer to Administrative Policy 97-2 Standards for Attire & Grooming for detailed information.

7-07 Employment of Relatives

In order to avoid even the appearance of favoritism in the employment, advancement or promotion of employees, only one person from a family may be employed by the Clerk & Comptroller's office at any given time. Hiring of relatives of current employees by the Clerk's office is strictly prohibited.

We understand that situations may arise in which persons involved may be free from conflict. However, some employment decisions will remain susceptible to prejudices that occur simply because of the relationship. Therefore, this restriction regarding the employment of relatives is necessary and may result in a qualified candidate being rejected for a position.

Current employees who are family members hired under a prior policy are "grandfathered." However, no Chief Officer, director, manager, supervisor, or employee with equivalent status by any other title may directly or indirectly appoint, employ, manage, supervise, direct, promote, advance or advocate for advancement an employee who is a relative or where a dating relationship exists.

Further, you may not advocate for the advancement, promotion, work assignment or any condition of employment concerning another employee who is a relative or where a dating relationship exists.

The definition of "family member" or "relative" for purposes of this section include mother, father, daughter, son, spouse, domestic partner, domestic partner's child, sister, brother, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, stepmother, stepfather, stepson, stepdaughter, stepsister, stepbrother, stepchild half-brother, half-sister, grandchild or grandparent.

If you are planning to marry or become related by marriage or Domestic Partnership to another Clerk employee, you may continue your employment with the Clerk's office. However, you and your partner must notify your respective supervisors and/or managers. The reporting relationship will be evaluated to determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, how the conflict of interest will be eliminated, which may result in a job assignment change. Additionally, future requests for transfer or promotion by either party may be denied if a direct or indirect reporting relationship will be created as a result of the promotion or transfer.

Exception to the "Employment of Relatives" rule will be made for relatives hired under the "Student Intern" job classification for temporary summer and/or holiday work assignments. Additionally, relatives who volunteer their services through the Volunteer Program will not be subject to the "Employment of Relatives" rule.

7-08 Outside Employment or Volunteer Activity

Because of the obligations to our customers, the Clerk & Comptroller's office must be aware of any concurrent employment and/or volunteer activity you may have to determine whether or not it presents a potential conflict. You must notify your manager and authorization from the Clerk & Comptroller's office must be obtained prior to commencing any outside employment or volunteer activity. If your outside employment and/or volunteer activity presents a possible conflict of interest with the exercise of your responsibilities in our office, permission to accept outside employment and/or volunteer activity will be denied.

You must complete the *Employee Approval Request for Outside Employment or Volunteer Activity* form upon hire and any time thereafter that you decide to pursue outside employment or volunteer activity.

Part-time home-based business activities, such as Avon and Tupperware, must also be approved. This type of activity cannot interfere with work assignments, may not be conducted during work time and may not involve the public. You may only interact with your co-workers for such activities during your lunch period.

If you are a full-time employee at the Clerk's office, your employment with our office must be your primary employment. Outside employment or volunteer activity is permissible only if it complies with all the following criteria:

1. The outside employment or volunteer activity is not with an entity that regularly appears in court or conducts business with the Clerk's office.

2. The outside employment or volunteer activity is capable of being fulfilled outside of working hours and is not in conflict with the performance of your duties and responsibilities. Working hours may vary based on business need.

3. The outside employment or volunteer activity does not require or induce you to disclose confidential information acquired in the course of and by reason of official duties.

4. The outside employment or volunteer activity does not present a conflict of interest and the outside employment or volunteer activity does not reflect adversely on the integrity of the Clerk's office.

5. The outside employment or volunteer activity shall not be conducted on Clerk & Comptroller time, on standby, or in any manner that interferes with your job with the Clerk's office.

6. The outside employment or volunteer activity shall not involve use of Clerk's office equipment, facilities, computers, telephones, resources or supplies.

If you are approved for outside employment and/or volunteer activity and demonstrate a decrease in job performance, or are frequently absent or tardy, approval of the outside employment and/or volunteer activity may be rescinded or your employment with the Clerk & Comptroller may be terminated.

If you have accepted approved outside employment or volunteer activity, you are not eligible to receive compensation during an absence from work which is the result of an injury on the second job or volunteer activity, except through PTO. If you have outside employment or volunteer activity, you may not use Clerk & Comptroller's office sick leave, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Worker's Compensation leave, or unpaid

personal leave of absence to work at the outside position or volunteer activity. Improper use of any of the aforementioned leave will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

7-09 Gift Policy

Soliciting, accepting or agreeing to accept gifts from customers who receive our services in the conduct of their business or who benefit from our services is inappropriate and prohibited, no matter how appreciate the customer is of the fine service they receive from our employees. Please refer to Administrative Policy 95-01 Gift Policy for more information.

7-10 Conflicts of Interest

The Clerk & Comptroller, Palm Beach County considers even the appearance of a conflict of interest a very important matter. It is essential that as a public employee, you be independent and impartial in regard to all of your work. Florida Statutes, Chapter 112 Part III describes a conflict of interest as "a situation in which regard for a private interest tends to lead to disregard of a public duty or interest." Any relationship or situation that reasonably calls into question your ability to neutrally and objectively process the work or perform your duties without bias presents a potential conflict of interest. There is no clear rule or standard that identifies every possible conflict of interest situation. You are encouraged to discuss situations with your supervisor and manager to get clarity on particular or unique situations.

Relationships that call into question your ability to carry out your job functions in the best interests of the office present a direct conflict of interest and are prohibited. Examples of these types of relationships include close personal or business relationships between you and your supervisor(s), you and vendors or customers, and you and any employees you supervise.

Employees who live with each other may not supervise one another. A supervisor is not to loan money personally to an employee, and you are not to rent from your supervisor. If you have an existing or potential financial or significant interest in an existing or potential Clerk vendor or customer, you must disclose the relationship to your supervisor.

The Clerk's office requires you to exercise good judgment at all times. You may not accept requests to "perform a favor" for relatives, friends, other Clerk & Comptroller employees, acquaintances or any other parties related to the processing of Clerk & Comptroller business on their behalf. You may not use or disclose information you are privy to because of your employment with the Clerk's office. Although information may be of a public nature, you are expected to use discretion and maintain confidentiality at all times.

The definition of "family member" or "relative" for purposes of this section only includes father, mother, son, daughter, domestic partner's child, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, spouse, domestic partner, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, half-sister, grandparent, great-grandparent, grandchild, great-grandchild, step grandparent, step great-grandparent, step grandchild, step great-grandchild, person who is engaged to be married to the public officer or employee or who otherwise holds himself or herself out as or is generally known as the person whom the public officer or employee intends to marry or with whom the public officer or employee intends to form a household, or any other natural person having the same legal residence as the public officer or employee.

You shall not file, docket, process or deal *in any way* with any and all matters, cases, filings, invoices or requests for service that involve yourself or a relative. You may not accept requests to file, docket, process or "perform a favor" for relatives, friends, other Clerk employees, acquaintances or any other parties, related to the processing of Clerk & Comptroller business on their behalf.

As soon as you know a matter involving you or a relative *in any way* has been filed, has been received in the office, when an arrest has occurred or a warrant has been issued, you must immediately complete an *Employee Conflict of Interest* form and notify your supervisor. The following are types of actions that require completion of the Conflict of Interest Internal Reporting Form:

- if you or a relative have been arrested, or a warrant has been issued, regardless of where the arrest occurred or the warrant was issued;

- if any type of court case or administrative action or other court matter will be filed or brought in Palm Beach County (State or Federal Court, civil or criminal, including foreclosures, bankruptcy, and family matters);
- if you or a relative received a traffic ticket or if you or a relative are issued a traffic notice or violation anywhere within the state of Florida;
- if you or a relative receive a parking ticket issued anywhere in Palm Beach County; or
- if you receive a summons for County or Circuit Court Jury Duty (not Federal).

You must not discuss the situation with anyone at the office, nor should you handle any pleading, paper, file or work regarding the matter, including but not limited to filing, copying, indexing, docketing or processing of any kind. A "matter," for conflict of interest purposes, includes but is not limited to cases, filings, invoices and any other Clerk's service request or official duty, wherein you or a relative are:

- a plaintiff or defendant;
- a witness or jury member;
- an arresting officer;
- an attorney, paralegal or notary; or
- interested in the service request based on a business or personal relationship.

You or a relative, as party to any litigation, have the same rights as any other citizen, and should be given the same assistance that the Clerk's office normally gives to citizens. It is important for all Clerk's office employees to understand the difference between performing Clerk's business functions and dealing with one's personal affairs. Any personal matters involving any of the functions of the Clerk's office must be handled separate and apart from your employment responsibilities.

If you have a personal matter that requires a transaction with the Clerk's office, you must:

- be clocked out of the Clerk's timekeeping system;
- remove your Clerk's office I.D. badge;
- be on the customer side of the counter; and
- wait in line.

You will be treated in all respects as an ordinary customer. This includes looking at the court file, obtaining copies, filing pleadings and purchasing forms. You must immediately report to your supervisor and manager any instances of conflict of interest and must not assist any employee who is engaged in a conflict of interest.

7-11 Drug-Free Workplace Policy

The Clerk & Comptroller's office is committed to providing a safe work environment and promoting the well-being and health of our employees. Abuse of alcohol and drugs jeopardizes this commitment and has a serious impact on the productivity of our office. Therefore, as a term of condition of employment with the Clerk's office, you are prohibited from the unlawful manufacture, sale, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance. Please refer to Administrative Policy 93-08 Drug-Free Workplace Policy for more information.

If you have knowledge that a Clerk's office employee has violated the Clerk's Drug-Free Workplace Policy, please bring this information to the immediate attention of your supervisor or manager. You may also contact the Human Resources department or the Ethics Hotline at 888-WARN-PBC.

7-12 Smoke-Free Environment

Florida laws prohibit smoking in public buildings, including restrooms. You may only smoke or use electronic cigarettes or any alternative nicotine product or device in designated areas outside of Clerk & Comptroller buildings, but not in a direct access path of any doorways. Please ask your supervisor for the designated areas closest to your department.

7-13 Clerk & Comptroller Property and Equipment

Clerk & Comptroller's office equipment is property of the office and may be used for Clerk & Comptroller's business use only. Personal use of Clerk & Comptroller equipment is strictly prohibited. Examples of Clerk & Comptroller equipment are phones, computers, copy machines, fax machines, printers, micrographics equipment, scanners, etc. Employees have no expectation of privacy with respect to the use of such equipment, which may be monitored at any time without notice by the Clerk & Comptroller and management staff.

7-14 Clerk & Comptroller Electronic Communication Devices

As an employee of the Clerk & Comptroller's office, you may be issued electronic communication devices due to the nature of your work. It is imperative that these devices are readily accessible at all times during work hours and that messages are responded to as soon as possible. Exempt staff shall carry the devices as necessary after hours and promptly respond to messages. Electronic communication devices are to be used for business purposes. However, reasonable personal use is permitted, provided such does not impose any additional cost to the Clerk's office.

For safety reasons, you should not operate the electronic communication device if you are driving unless you use earphones or a hands-free device. If you receive a call while driving, you are advised to safely pull your vehicle off the roadway to accept the call. Texting or e-mailing while driving is strictly prohibited.

Use of electronic communication devices and information technology, authorized or unauthorized, constitutes your consent to Clerk & Comptroller monitoring and review of the use of the device including, but not limited to the content of e-mails, texts, instant messages and telephone messages or other electronic records relating to the device. You should have no expectation of privacy in texting, instant messaging or any other communication that is performed using any Clerk & Comptroller-issued devices. All use of these devices also must be consistent with other Clerk & Comptroller policies. All cell phone and electronic device usage is subject to audit and review to determine compliance with this policy.

The use of electronic communication devices shall comply with Florida's public records laws which require that all public records be stored and retained by the Clerk & Comptroller's office per the record's retention schedule and be subject to public review. The term "public records," as defined in Fla. Stat. § 119.011(11), means "all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, data processing software, or other material, regardless of the physical form, characteristics, or means of transmission, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business" of the Clerk's office. The Florida Supreme Court has interpreted this definition to encompass all materials made or received by an agency in connection with official business which are used to perpetuate, communicate or formalize knowledge. A public record includes all documents, however prepared, that are circulated for review, comment or information, regardless of whether it is "final" or an official expression of policy or marked "preliminary" or "working draft" or similar label.

You are authorized to communicate official business primarily through the Clerk & Comptroller's e-mail system. It is recognized that circumstances occasionally may require communicating through text messages or other form of instant electronic medium. As this form of communication is not archived in the same manner as email, you individually must take the necessary steps to record these messages through an accepted archiving method. Intentionally deleting this type of communication is a violation of this section, for which you may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All electronic communication devices issued are the property of the Clerk's office and shall be returned immediately upon separation of employment from the Clerk's office.

7-15 Clerk & Comptroller Business Vehicles

Any employee who is required or requested to drive a Clerk & Comptroller or County owned or leased vehicle must be authorized to do so by completing a Request for Approved Driver Status form. All Clerk & Comptroller or County owned or leased vehicles are to be used for Clerk & Comptroller's official business only.

The Clerk & Comptroller is committed to ensuring the safety of all employees and has established rules and regulations regarding the operation of Clerk & Comptroller or County vehicles. Please refer to Administrative Policy 12-01 Approved Drivers Policy for detailed information.

7-16 Elections and Political Activities

The Clerk & Comptroller is an independent Constitutional Officer elected by the voters in Palm Beach County every four (4) years. The Clerk & Comptroller encourages you to register and to vote in all elections. If you are considering running for elected public office or participating in political activities, the Clerk & Comptroller's office has established general guidelines for you to follow. Please refer to Administrative Policy 02-04 Political Activities and Running for Elected Office for more detailed information.

7-17 Nonprofit Fundraisers and Charities

The Clerk & Comptroller is committed to making Palm Beach County a great place to live, work and raise our families. The Clerk's office supports participation in nonprofit fund-raising activity for groups such as school and community athletic clubs, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, among others. Fundraisers for these types of organizations may be shared with fellow employees after obtaining approval from your supervisor or manager, and must be conducted only during lunch and break periods. Use of Clerk & Comptroller's office equipment, facilities or supplies is strictly prohibited.

Please refer to Administrative Policy 08-01 Social Responsibility Policy for more information on the Clerk & Comptroller's dedication to charitable events.

7-18 Dress Down Friday Program

Clerk & Comptroller employees are committed to making Palm Beach County a great place to live and work. The Clerk's office has a proud history of supporting worthy charitable causes that improve the quality of life for those in need.

The Clerk's Dress Down Friday Charity Program began in 1994. In return for wearing casual attire to work each Friday, you may donate $4 from your paycheck every two weeks. Your contributions are donated to nonprofit organizations nominated by employees and selected by employee vote every year. Please refer to the Charitable Giving page on ClerkNet for more information on how charities are selected. To participate in the Dress Down Friday Charity Program, log onto Employee Self Service (ESS) via ClerkNet. Select *Self Service* > *Payroll and Compensation* > *Voluntary Deductions* > *Add Deduction* > *Dress Down Charity*. Enter $4.00 in the *Amount* field.

Even though dress is casual when participating in the Dress Down Friday Charity Program, it is important to remember that you are representing the public image of the Clerk's office and should follow Administrative Policy 97-2 Standards for Attire & Grooming.

7-19 Housekeeping

The Clerk & Comptroller's office expects you to adhere to the highest standards of job performance, and this includes keeping your work area neat and orderly at all times. Neatness and good housekeeping are signs of efficiency. Easily accessible trash receptacles and recycling containers are located throughout all Clerk & Comptroller buildings. Please put all litter and recyclable materials in the appropriate receptacles and containers. Always be aware of good health and safety standards, including fire and loss prevention.

Because of the presence of sensitive electronic equipment and original paper documents, food and beverage items should not be consumed at your workstation, except for beverages in covered containers.

Please report anything that needs repairing or replacing to your supervisor or manager immediately.

7-20 Use of Telephones

We recognize that in today's society, employees want to stay connected with family and friends. However, we do not want to compromise our customer service standards; therefore, we expect you to receive calls and text messages with discretion.

Personal phone calls, text messaging and use of the Internet to view images or communication on your personal electronic communication device shall be limited to your lunch or break times or with your supervisor's approval. Incoming personal calls and text messages during working hours should be restricted to emergencies. Personal calls from Clerk & Comptroller's office phones are strictly prohibited. Personal cell phones should be on "vibrate" or "silent" mode while in the workplace.

Due to the variety of positions we have throughout the Clerk's office, some positions have heightened customer service standards as well as accessibility. Each department has standards that will allow you to receive messages of an emergency nature. Please provide the direct telephone number of your department to those people who would need to call you in the event of an emergency.

Personal cell phones must not be used for the unauthorized transmission of privileged or confidential information and/or images.

7-21 Use of Internet, Intranet, and E-Mail

The Clerk & Comptroller's computer systems allow access to the Internet, Intranet, and e-mail communication systems to facilitate the effective and efficient conduct of Clerk business. You are permitted access to these systems to assist in the performance of your job.

Recreational "surfing" of the Internet or using it for personal use is prohibited and is subject to disciplinary action up to and including involuntary termination of employment. Internet usage may be monitored by Palm Beach County or Clerk & Comptroller's office staff.

A countywide e-mail system is available to Clerk & Comptroller employees through Palm Beach County. According to Florida Statutes, information transmitted on or received by the county's e-mail system is public information. Therefore, unless it is protected by statute, e-mail messages are available for retrieval and viewing by others, even if the e-mail message is deleted. Use of the e-mail system shall be limited to conducting the business of the Clerk's office only. E-mail may be monitored regularly by Palm Beach County or Clerk & Comptroller staff. Please refer to Administrative Policy 98-1 Electronic Mail Communications for detailed information.

In addition, you may have access to a variety of computer programs depending on your job assignment. Computer programs and databases may not be used for anything other than official Clerk's office business. Downloading files or loading personal files or software, including screen savers and/or games is prohibited on Clerk's office computers.

You may be assigned password access to the various computer systems utilized by the Clerk's office. You may not provide your login information to any unauthorized person. If you feel that your login information is known by any unauthorized individual, you must immediately notify your supervisor and change your password, or request a new password from the designated security officer.

7-22 Service of Process

As required by Section 48.031, Florida Statute, the Clerk's office must establish private areas where employees may accept service of process for matters outside of their official employment duties. The Clerk's office has established that any available conference room or vacant office may be used for this purpose. If you have any questions about a designated area in your department, please ask your supervisor or manager.

7-23 Bullying

The Clerk's office will not in any instance tolerate bullying behavior. If you violate the Clerk's anti-bullying philosophy, you may be subject to progressive discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

"Bullying" is defined as repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted in the workplace by one or more persons against another or others that leads to intimidation, humiliation or fear for safety.

The following types of behavior are a few examples of bullying in the workplace:

- **Verbal bullying:** Slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or his or her family; persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- **Gesture bullying:** Nonverbal threatening gestures; glances that clearly convey threatening messages.
- **Exclusion:** Socially or physically excluding or deliberately disregarding a person in work-related activities.

The following examples could constitute bullying in the workplace:

A. Persistent singling out of one person.
B. Angrily shouting or raising a voice toward an individual in public or in private.
C. Using verbal or obscene gestures.
D. Mocking another person.
E. Continually refusing to allow a person to speak or express themselves (i.e., ignoring or interrupting).
F. Purposely ignoring another person.
G. Personal insults and/or use of offensive nicknames.
H. Public humiliation in any form.
I. Constant criticism on matters unrelated or minimally related to the person's job performance or description.
J. Public reprimands.
K. Spreading harmful rumors and gossip regarding individuals.
L. Manipulating the ability of someone to do his or her work (e.g., overloading, withholding information, setting deadlines that cannot be met).
M. Deliberately excluding an individual or isolating him or her from work-related activities, such as meetings.

The following examples do NOT constitute bullying in the workplace:

A. Decisions relating to job duties.
B. Deadlines needing attention or expected to be met.
C. An employee's assigned workload.
D. Direction given from supervisors/managers to employees relating to their job duties, including policies, procedures, and guidelines established by the Clerk's office.

Managers and supervisors have a key role in the protection of persons from bullying pursuant to this employee handbook section. If you are the victim of bullying in the workplace, speak with your manager, supervisor, or the Human Resources department to initiate a complaint (verbal or written). Complaints will be taken seriously and fully investigated.

8-01 Workers' Compensation

Any accidents or injuries occurring during the course of the work day must immediately be reported to your manager, but no later than 24 hours following the incident. Minor injuries may be treated at the Palm Beach County Occupational Health Clinic at 100 Australian Avenue, West Palm Beach, which is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. You may contact the Clinic at 561-233-5450. Serious injuries should be treated at the nearest hospital. If you are unable to work due to a work-related accident, you must be examined at the Clinic before returning to work. Once you are fit to return to work, you must provide a signed statement from the Clinic physician that you are fit for work.

Workers' Compensation is provided in accordance with the Florida Workers' Compensation Law. All employees of the Clerk & Comptroller's office are insured under this coverage for injuries resulting from accidents on the job.

Florida Workers' Compensation law does not require the Clerk's office to compensate you for the first seven (7) days absent due to a result of a work-related accident. However, as an enhanced benefit, the Clerk's office has made it a practice to compensate you at your regular wage for the first seven (7) consecutive work days if you are unable to return to work due to a work-related injury.

According to established guidelines, Florida Workers' Compensation insurance may fund 2/3 of your wages for a limited time period once placed on Workers' Compensation leave. You may choose to substitute the remaining 1/3 of wages by using accrued SAL or PTO. A letter from the Payroll Department will be forwarded to you giving you this choice.

Should you be returned to "light duty" by the County Risk Management Department, you are considered to be able to perform the essential duties of your light duty assignment. Any continued doctor, therapy and/or clinic appointments should be scheduled around work shifts, as early or late in the day as possible, as to not unduly interrupt the operations of your department.

You must use SAL or PTO for Workers' Compensation leave that occurs during working hours. If you have exhausted all SAL and PTO time, time away from work for doctor, therapy and/or clinic appointments will be without pay.

In conformance with an opinion issued by the United States Department of Labor Employee Standards Administration, any Workers' Compensation leave taken by an employee counts as Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave. Thus, if you are out for six (6) weeks of Workers' Compensation, those six (6) weeks are concurrently counted towards the twelve (12) week FMLA allotment, leaving you with only six (6) weeks of leave available for that year under FMLA.

8-02 Emergency Evacuations

As an employee of the Clerk & Comptroller's office, you are required to take the *Emergency Evacuation Training for Employees* course prepared by Palm Beach County Risk Management within your first week of employment. This training provides general information and instructions regarding your responsibilities during an emergency, fire safety and bomb threat guidelines.

When a fire alarm sounds or a bomb threat has been confirmed by the Clerk's office, you must immediately follow the established guidelines and procedures in your department. Do not use your cell phone during an emergency evacuation.

You may receive periodic changes and/or updates from the Emergency Floor or Office Coordinator assigned to your work area.

8-03 Hurricane Procedures and Weather Emergencies

At times, Palm Beach County experiences extreme weather conditions, especially during hurricane season, which is from June 1 through November 30. You are encouraged to review the Hurricane Preparedness Plans on ClerkNet in the case of an emergency.

The Clerk & Comptroller's office utilizes an automated telephone system, Connect4Clerks, to notify you of emergency situations and to provide appropriate instructions. The Clerk's office also maintains an Emergency Information Hotline number (561-233-0341), which you are required to call for office status updates as necessary during a storm.

Should the Clerk's office need to take hurricane precautions, you must:

- ensure your contact information is updated in Employee Self Service, as well as with your supervisor and manager;
- complete hurricane preparedness for your work area before dismissal. This includes safeguarding equipment, records, and other items that may be susceptible to water and wind damage and/or to utility outages; and
- maintain daily contact with your supervisor or manager during any period of office closure prior to and after the storm.

Detailed instructions are provided in the Employee Hurricane Preparedness Guide, located on ClerkNet.

If your work location is closed, you will be placed on paid Administrative Leave for the duration of the closure, even if you are already on paid pre-approved leave (including, but not limited to, FMLA/DPL or PTO). If you are in an unpaid leave status either the day before or after an office closure, you will not receive Administrative Leave for the closure, unless approved by a Chief Officer. Administrative Leave is only in effect until you are instructed to return to work. If you are unable to return to work when instructed, you must make arrangements with your manager to use available PTO.

8-04 Workplace Violence Avoidance and Intervention Policy

The Clerk & Comptroller's office strongly believes that you should be treated with dignity and respect and that you should be provided with a safe work environment. Your personal safety is at risk when violent behavior is displayed or threatened. Should you observe violent behavior or the threat of violent behavior by any party, immediately notify your supervisor and/or the Human Resources department so that the proper authorities may be contacted for an investigation. All complaints will be fully investigated.

Please refer to Administrative Policy 08-07 Workplace Violence Avoidance and Intervention Policy for detailed information.

8-05 Visitors in the Workplace

To provide for the safety and security of employees and the facilities, only authorized visitors are allowed in the workplace. Restricting unauthorized visitors helps maintain safety standards, protects against theft, ensures security of equipment, protects confidential information, safeguards employee welfare and avoids potential distractions and disturbances. You are responsible for the conduct and safety of your visitors. If you observe an unauthorized individual on Clerk premises, you must immediately notify your supervisor.

9-01 Communication with Employees

The Clerk & Comptroller's office believes in keeping our employees fully informed about the policies, procedures, practices and benefits of our organization. We are committed to making our Vision, Mission, and Values a reality. We believe that we will do so by believing that knowledge is power and by:

- communicating organizational goals and changes;
- facilitating teamwork, collaboration, and partnership;
- recognizing and rewarding achievements;
- supporting continuous learning and improvement; and
- encouraging innovation.

We believe in an open and participatory environment. We encourage you to take active responsibility for the manifestation of our Vision, Mission and Values. We fully support your development and growth to your fullest potential. In support of these guiding principles, the Clerk's office commits resources for full and accurate communication at every level of the office.

You can keep abreast of office information and events through several avenues, including:

- our intranet site, ClerkNet;
- our external website, www.mypalmbeachclerk.com;
- e-mail messages;
- flyers, brochures and memoranda;
- department bulletin boards;
- staff meetings;
- our internal newsletter, Employee Update; and
- video communications on ClerkNet.

9-02 Communication with Press and Media

Much of the information we work with is confidential or sensitive, and frequently we receive inquiries from the media about our operations. All inquiries from newspapers, television stations, radio stations, magazine reporters and other media concerning our operations must be referred, without comment, to the Chief Communications Officer via your supervisor or manager.

You should not feel pressured to respond to an inquiry. You should ask for the person's name and phone number and inform them that you will be referring their question to the Chief Communications Officer. By following these guidelines, you are ensuring that the media receives complete and accurate information about the Clerk & Comptroller's office.