



DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

8700 Hospital Drive • Douglasville, GA • Telephone (770) 920-7264 • Fax (770) 920-7371

SUGGESTED CHANGE TO THE MERIT SYSTEM HANDBOOK

CHANGE FROM:

YEAR: 2022

SECTION: 13-14 Definitions and 13-66 Duration

CURRENTLY READS: 13-14) Probationary period: An employee who has worked for the county Less than six (6) consecutive months from the date of hire, or greater time as set forth in Section 13-66.

Sec. 13-66) The probationary period shall be for a period of six (6) months; however, any employee required by state law to receive mandatory training prior to full-time employment shall have such employee's probationary period begin on the date all mandatory training is completed.

CHANGE TO: 13-14) Probationary period: An employee who has worked for the county less than **three (3)** consecutive months from the date of hire, or greater time as set forth in Section 13-66.

Sec. 13-66) The probationary period shall be for a period of **three (3)** months; however, any employee required by state law to receive mandatory training prior to full-time employment shall have such employee's probationary period begin on the date all mandatory training is completed.

REASON FOR CHANGE: The six months of probationary period is burdensome on employees, especially during this pandemic with Covid-19. If a probationary period is needed at all, which I think isn't, we should shorten it to three (3) months (90 days). I have worked in two other metro counties and they do not have a probationary period at all. They do performance appraisals annually and handle issues that way. Now that we are in the "great resignation", we are also experiencing hinderances in recruiting. Someone coming from a county with three weeks vacations and cannot get a sick day, nor a vacation for six months to a year is a very big problem for us all here in Douglas County. Some other sections this will affect are: Sections 13-124 Vacation Leave and 13-125 Sick Leave.

SUBMITTED BY:

Adrean Larcheveaux, Appraisal Supervisor



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SUGGESTED CHANGE TO THE MERIT SYSTEM HANDBOOK

CHANGE FROM:

YEAR: 2022

SECTION: 13-124 Vacation Leave and 13-125 Sick Leave

CURRENTLY READS: (a) Rate of leave accrual. Permanent, full-time employees begin to accrue vacation leave immediately upon employment, although vacation leave may not be used until the employee has successfully completed one (1) year of service.

13-125 (d) Rate of leave accrual. ...No employee may take sick leave until such employee has completed such employee's probationary period. (no change needed to wording, if the definition of probationary period is changed to three months.)

CHANGE TO: (a) Rate of leave accrual. Permanent, full-time employees begin to accrue vacation leave immediately upon employment, although vacation leave may not be used until the employee has successfully completed **three (3) months** of service.

REASON FOR CHANGE: The six months of probationary period is burdensome on employees, especially during this pandemic with Covid-19. If a probationary period is needed at all, which I think isn't, we should shorten it to three (3) months (90 days). I have worked in two other metro counties and they do not have a probationary period at all. They do performance appraisals annually and handle issues that way. Now that we are in the "great resignation", we are also experiencing hinderances in recruiting. Someone coming from a county with three weeks vacations and cannot get a sick day, nor a vacation for six months to a year is a very big problem for us all here in Douglas County. Some other sections this will affect are: 13-14 Definitions and 13-66 Duration.

SUBMITTED BY:

Adrean Larcheveaux, Appraisal Supervisor



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SUGGESTED CHANGE TO THE MERIT SYSTEM HANDBOOK

CHANGE FROM:

YEAR: 2022

SECTION: 13-124 Vacation Leave (a) Rate of leave accrual

CURRENTLY READS: Permanent, full-time employees begin to accrue vacation leave immediately upon employment, although vacation leave may not be used until the employee has successfully completed one (1) year of service.

Employees are entitled to the paid vacation according to the schedule below:

*Completed:

1 year = 10 days

5 years = 12 days

10 years = 18 days

15 years = 20 days

21 years = 24 days

24 years = 25 days

CHANGE TO: Option 1. Permanent, full-time employees begin to accrue vacation leave immediately upon employment, although vacation leave may not be used until the employee has successfully completed one (1) year of service. Employees are entitled to the paid vacation according to the schedule below:

*Completed:

1 year = 10 days

5 years = 12 days

10 years = 18 days

15 years = 20 days

21 years = 24 days

24 years = 25 days

*One (1) day shall mean an accrual rate of 8 hours for a 40 hour a week employee, 12 hours for 42-hour employee, and 24 hours for a 56 hour a week employee.



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Option 2. Permanent, full-time employees begin to accrue vacation leave immediately upon employment, although vacation leave may not be used until the employee has successfully completed one (1) year of service. Employees are entitled to the paid vacation according to the schedule below:

*Completed:

1 year = 10 days

5 years = 12 days

10 years = 18 days

15 years = 20 days

21 years = 24 days

24 years = 25 days

*One (1) day shall mean 8 hours for a 40 hour a week employee and 12 hours for 42-hour and 56 hour a week employee.

REASON FOR CHANGE: Option 1: Currently all Douglas County employees are accruing vacation time as 1 day = 8 hours. Employees working 12 and 24 hour shifts do not earn enough time to take 1 day off as is represented by this section. When we advertise for employment it is a misrepresentation to potential employees that they actually get "10, 12, 18, 20, 24, 25 DAYS" as not all Douglas County employees work a normal business day 8-hour schedule. 1 Day should be equal to their normal work schedule. The accrual rate should be 8 hours for a 40 hour employee, 12 hours for a 42 hour a week employee, and 24 hours for a 56 hour a week employee. Therefore, "1 day" as designated in 13-124(a) should be equal to their work schedule and a note placed in this section designating: *One (1) day shall mean an accrual rate of 8 hours for a 40 hour a week employee, 12 hours for 42-hour employee, and 24 hours for a 56 hour a week employee.

Change 2: In the event that Option 1 proposal is not adopted, please consider this: The majority of Sheriff's Office employees work 12-hour shifts (84 hour pay period). When they need to take a vacation day off they have to take 12 hours. The merit system was designed for an 8-hour day or 40 hour a week normal business day. The merit system has provisions to accommodate Fire Department employees who work 24 hours on and 48 off



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(56-hour employee) in sections 13-124(d) and 13-125(d). This allows them to have a higher accrual and accumulation rate. I would like to see the same consideration given for Sheriff's Office 84-hour employees as when they need a day off (sick or vacation) it takes 12 hours from their time.

SUBMITTED BY: _____

Kenneth Conner
Chief Deputy
Douglas County Sheriff's Office



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SUGGESTED CHANGE TO THE MERIT SYSTEM HANDBOOK

CHANGE FROM:

YEAR: 2022

SECTION: 13-124 Vacation Leave (d) Maximum accumulation

CURRENTLY READS: Unused vacation leave may be accumulated by the employee from year to year, but such accumulation may never exceed a total of thirty-five (35) days (280 hrs. /40-hr. employees; 420 hrs. /56-hr. employees).

CHANGE TO: Option 1: Unused vacation leave may be accumulated by the employee from year to year, but such accumulation may never exceed a total of thirty-five (35) days (280 hours for 40-hour employees; 420 hours for 42-hour employees; 840 hours for 56-hr. employees).

Option 2: Unused vacation leave may be accumulated by the employee from year to year, but such accumulation may never exceed a total of thirty-five (35) days (280 hrs. /40-hr. employees; 420 hrs. 42/56-hr. employees).

REASON FOR CHANGE: Option 1: The merit system sets a limit of 35 days as the maximum accumulation for an employee. The 35-day limit should not change, but the maximum accumulation rate should reflect the work schedule of the employee as it already does for 8-5 employees and sort of does for the Fire Department employees. Using the 35-day limit it should be implemented to reflect the normal work schedule of the different departments. Example 40-hour (8-hour day) employee's maximum accumulation should be set at 280 hours (35 days), 42-hour (12-hour day) employee's maximum accumulation should be set at 480 hours (35 days), and 56-hour (24-hour day) employee's maximum accumulation should be set at 840 hours (35 days). This allows each of them to store 35 Days according to their work schedule.



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Option 2: In the event that the Option 1 proposal is not adopted, please consider this. The majority of Sheriff's Office employees work 12-hour shifts (84 hour pay period). When they want to take a day off they have to take 12 hours. The merit system sets a limit of a 35-day accumulation which equals 240 hours for an 8-hour employee. The merit system was designed for an 8-hour day or 40 hour a week normal business day schedule. The merit system has a prevision to accommodate Fire Department employees who work 24 hours on and 48 off (56-hour employee) and allows them to store 35 days at a 12-hour schedule (420 hours). I would like to see the same consideration given for Sheriff's Office 84-hour employees where they can have a maximum accumulation rate of 420 hours.

SUBMITTED BY: _____

Kenneth Conner
Chief Deputy
Douglas County Sheriff's Office



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SUGGESTED CHANGE TO THE MERIT SYSTEM HANDBOOK

CHANGE FROM:

YEAR: 2022

SECTION: 13-125 Sick Leave (d) Rate of leave accrual

CURRENTLY READS: Permanent, full-time employees begin to accrue sick leave immediately upon employment at the rate of ten and one-half ($10\frac{1}{2}$) days per year. Credit to the employee at the end of each month at the rate of seven (7) hours per month for employees who work forty (40) hours per week, and ten and one-half ($10\frac{1}{2}$) hours per month for employees who work fifty-six (56) hours per week. No employee may take sick leave until such employee has completed such employee's probationary period.

CHANGE TO: Option 1. Permanent, full-time employees begin to accrue sick leave immediately upon employment at the rate of twelve (12) days per year. Credit to the employee at the end of each month at the rate of eight (8) hours per month for employees who work forty (40) hours per week, twelve (12) hours per month for employees who work forty-two (42) and twenty-four (24) hours for employees who work fifty-six (56) a week. No employee may take sick leave until such employee has completed such employee's probationary period.

OR

2. Option 2. Permanent, full-time employees begin to accrue sick leave immediately upon employment at the rate of ten and one-half ($10\frac{1}{2}$) days per year. Credit to the employee at the end of each month at the rate of seven (7) hours per month for employees who work forty (40) hours per week, and ten and one-half ($10\frac{1}{2}$) hours per month for employees who work forty-two (42) and fifty-six (56) hours per week. No employee may take sick leave until such employee has completed such employee's probationary period.



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REASON FOR CHANGE: Option 1: Currently, employees do not get enough sick time accrual. They accrue at a rate of 7 hours a month for a 40-hour employee and $10 \frac{1}{2}$ hours for 56-hour employee. That is not even a whole day off for either and 84 hour a week employee isn't even considered. 40-hour employees requires 8 hours of time to take a sick day, 84-hour employees requires 12 hours, and a 56-hour employee requires 24 hours. I feel that this is dated especially with the current on-going pandemic. Employees should at least earn 1 sick day a month depending on their normal scheduled work day.

Option 2

If the option 1 proposal is denied to allow for one sick day a month based on their normal work schedule please consider Option 2 for Sheriff's Office employees. The reason is that the majority of Sheriff's Office sworn personnel work 12-hour shifts (84 hour pay period). When they need to take a sick day off they have to take 12 hours. The merit system was designed for an 8-hour day or 40 hour a week normal county employee schedule. The merit system has a prevision to accommodate Fire Department employees who work 24 hours on and 48 off (56-hour employee) and allows them to receive 10.5 hours a month. I would like to see the same consideration given for Sheriff's Office 84-hour employees as when they need a day off it takes 12 hours from their time.

SUBMITTED BY: _____


Kenneth Conner
Chief Deputy
Douglas County Sheriff's Office



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SUGGESTED CHANGE TO THE MERIT SYSTEM HANDBOOK

CHANGE FROM:

YEAR: 2022

SECTION: _____

13-125 (f)

CURRENTLY READS: Sick Leave Retirement/Resignation. Any employee leaving employment after fifteen (15) years of service, having completed five (5) years of service by December 31, 2005, will receive one week's pay for every year of service, provided the employee has accumulated a minimum of 800 sick hours or 1200 hours if on a 56-hour pay week. All other employees hired on or after 01/01/2001 will only be able to have their accumulated sick leave credited towards time of service for their Defined Benefit Pension calculation.

CHANGE TO: Sick Leave Retirement/Resignation. Any employee leaving employment after fifteen (15) years of service, having completed five (5) years of service by December 31, 2005, will receive one week's pay for every year of service, provided the employee has accumulated a minimum of 800 sick hours or 1200 hours if on a 56-hour pay week. All other employees hired on or after 01/01/2001 will only be able to have their accumulated sick leave credited towards time of service for their Defined Benefit Pension calculation.

*Due to a change in the Merit System in 2022 this section remains unchanged. What is referred to as a 42-hour employee in other sections does not apply to 13-125(f). 42-hour employees are considered the same as 40-hour employees as it relates to this subsection.

REASON FOR CHANGE: If my other submitted requests are approved and there is a new recognition of a 42-hour (12-hour shift) for Sheriff's Office employees, those that come after us may misinterpret this section to mean that the 42-hour employees should adhere to the 1200 provision of the 56-



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hour employee. Because this change didn't occur until 2022 the 42-hour employees were at the same rate of accrual as a 40-hour employee and therefore was not afforded the opportunity accrue sick time at the same rate as 56-hour employees for all these years. Additionally, this "old" retirement benefit is no longer available to new employees, so it has no harm in remain unchanged. It just needs a notation so that it is clear and concise to those that come after us that as it relates to this section, a 42-hour employee is equivalent to a 40-hour employee. This change should only be considered if the other proposed changes are approved.

SUBMITTED BY: _____

Kenneth Conner

Chief Deputy

Douglas County Sheriff's Office