

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

SECTION I

Paragraph 1. Insurance Benefits

- a) The County provides medical and life insurance programs to permanent full time county employees. The County may make other benefits and group insurance plans available for its employees upon authorization of the Board of Commissioners.
 1. Upon separation of regular permanent employment, an employee may continue coverage under the County's medical insurance plan subject to COBRA provisions.
 2. Effective July 1, 2000, to be eligible for the County's Retiree Health Plan the retiree must be eligible for state retirement benefits and by either:
 - a) Having reached age sixty (60) and having worked the last five (5) years in continuous full time service with Hoke County, or
 - b) Having reached age fifty-five (55) and having worked the last twelve (12) years of the calculated creditable service in full time service with Hoke County.
 3. Upon reaching his/her 65th birthday the retiree will become ineligible for the County's Retiree Health Plan and Health Insurance will terminate.

The County's retiree health plan is medical only. Premiums are calculated as follows:

Retiree pays

- 1) Retiree pays 0% of current premium when he/she has thirty (30) years of creditable service with Hoke County; (Effective July 1, 2008)
 - 2) Retiree pays 25% of current premium when he/she has twenty – five (25) years of creditable service with Hoke County.
 - 3) Retiree pays 50% of current premium when he/she has fifteen (15) years of creditable service with Hoke County;
 - 4) Retiree pays 75% of current premium when he/she has twelve (12) years of creditable service with Hoke County
- b) Premiums will be calculated annually and will be subject to adjustment as necessary.

Paragraph 2. Unemployment Compensation

The county shall pay such unemployment compensation benefits as required by law and authorized by order of the Employment Security Commission.

Paragraph 3. Old Age and Survivors Insurance (Social Security)

The county, to the extent of its lawful authority and power shall extend Social Security benefits for its eligible employees in accordance with the provisions of the Social Security Act. The federal Social Security program provides monthly benefits upon retirement, based on the mandatory retirement age. (Refer to current Social Security Administration guidelines.) The county shall pay such Social Security benefits as required by law.

Paragraph 4. Retirement Benefits

Each employee in a budgeted position, working a minimum of 1,000 hours per year, will be enrolled in the Local Government Employees' Retirement System. Employees contribute, through payroll deduction, six percent (6%) of their gross payroll each month to the system. Qualified employees also may be eligible for a Death Benefit in the amount and under the conditions set by the Local Government Employees' Retirement System.

Paragraph 5. Death Benefit

If an employee dies before age seventy (70) while still in service with at least one (1) year as a contributing member of the Retirement System, the employee's beneficiary will receive a lump-sum payment equal to the employee's highest twelve (12) months' consecutive salary during the preceding twenty-four (24) months, not to exceed \$50,000.

Paragraph 6. Law Enforcement Officers' Separation Allowance

The county shall provide a special separation allowance to qualified law enforcement officers as is required by law.

Paragraph 7. Supplemental Retirement Income Plan for Law Enforcement Officers

All law enforcement officers automatically become members of the State Supplemental Retirement Income Plan on the date of hire.

Paragraph 8. Benefits – Other

Hoke County, as the employer, provides the following additional benefits to employees:

- a) Workers' Compensation – Provides coverage to all full and part-time employees to cover medical expenses and lost time from work due to work-related injuries. Employees are required to use accrued time for first seven days of absence from work. Any injury that requires missed work over 7 days Workers Compensation Act will provide weekly payment in the amount of (66 2/3) of salary.
- b) Employee Assistance Program (EA)) – Provides assistance to all employees and immediate family members in resolving family problems, alcoholism, marriage difficulties, financial trouble, stress, drugs, and depression.

Paragraph 9. Benefits – Other (Optional)

Additional deductions or benefits may be allowed at the option of the employee, under the provisions of the insurance contracts, and their cost may be deducted from the employee's pay:

- a) Miscellaneous insurance
- b) Credit union
- c) Deferred compensation plans, authorized by Section 457 of the Internal Revenue Code – provide supplemental long-term retirement.
- d) FlexPlan, authorized by Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code – allows employees to spend pretax dollars on insurance premiums and deductibles, uncovered health and medical expenses, and expenses for care of dependent children.
- e) United Fund contributions.
- f) Prudential 401 (k) Plan

SECTION II, GOVERNING BOARD BENEFITS

Paragraph 1. Insurance Benefits

A) The County shall provide the same menu of medical and life insurance programs to the Hoke County Board of Commissioners as are provided for full time employees. Other group insurance plans also offered to full time employees shall be offered to the Hoke County Board of Commissioners.

1. Effective July 1, 2005, Upon separation from the Hoke County Board of Commissioners, the board member may continue

coverage under the County's medical insurance plan subject to COBRA provisions.

2. Effective July 1, 2005, Hoke County Board of Commissioner members shall be eligible for the County's Retiree Health Plan by:
 - a) Having served 8 years as a member of the Hoke County Board of Commissioners
 - b) Upon reaching his/her 65th birthday the retiree will become ineligible for the County's Retiree Health Plan and Health Insurance will terminate.
- B) The County's retiree health plan is medical only. Premiums are calculated as follows:
1. County pays 100% of current premium when commissioner meets the eligibility requirements noted in Section VI, Para. 1, Subsection A-2.
 2. Coverage is dropped when retiree becomes eligible for Medicare. If a retiree becomes eligible for another employer-sponsored plan, then county coverage shall immediately become secondary.

SECTION III Annual Leave

- a) For the purpose of earning and accruing annual leave, the period of twelve (12) calendar months between January 1 and December 31 is established as the leave year.
- b) For the purpose of earning benefits any employee must work at least half of a bi-weekly payroll to earn leaves.
- c) Employees shall not be permitted to take annual leave during the first nine (9) months unless the denial of such leave will create an unusual hardship. Any annual leave granted during this period shall have the prior approval of the Department Head or County Manager.
- d) Each employee occupying a permanently established budgeted position shall earn annual leave bi-weekly in accordance with following schedule of total service:

1 month through 48 months:	3.0770 bi-weekly - ten (10) days/year
49 months through 168 months:	4.6154 bi-weekly - fifteen (15) days/year
169 months through 240 months:	5.5385 bi-weekly - eighteen (18) days/year
241 months and above:	6.1539 bi-weekly - twenty (20) days/year.
- e) Annual leave may be accumulated without any applicable maximum until December 31 of each calendar year. **However, if the employee separates from**

service, payment for accumulated leave shall not exceed thirty (30) days or 240 hours. On December 31, any employee with more than thirty (30) days or 240 hours of accumulated leave shall have the excess accumulation transferred to sick leave and only thirty (30) days or 240 hours are carried forward to January 1 of the next calendar year.

- f) Earned annual leave shall be taken with the prior approval of the employee's department head and/or supervisor. Prior notification of annual leave in excess of three (3) days by department heads shall be submitted to Human Resources.

- g) Any employee who separates in good standing and is reinstated within one (1) year may receive credit for previous service for the purpose of accruing annual leave. The total months of previous service will be recognized at the end of nine (9) months. Any advanced annual leave owed the county shall be deducted from the employee's final compensation.

- i) The estate of an employee who dies while employed by the county shall be entitled to payment for all of the accumulated annual leave credited to the employee's account, not to exceed maximum of thirty (30) days or 240 hours.

- h) An employee who is separated shall be paid for annual leave accumulated to the date of separation, which is not to exceed a maximum of thirty (30) days or 240

SECTION IV HOLIDAYS AND LEAVE

Paragraph 1. Paid Holidays Observed

- a) The following holidays, and such others as the Board of County Commissioners may designate, shall be observed by county offices and shall be counted as hours worked:
 - 1. New Year's Day
 - 2. Martin Luther King Day
 - 3. Good Friday
 - 4. Memorial Day
 - 5. Independence Day
 - 6. Labor Day
 - 7. Veterans Day
 - 8. Thanksgiving (two days)
 - 9. Christmas (state holiday schedule)

- b) All salaried employees appointed to a permanently established position, both full and part-time, normally scheduled to work on the day on which the holiday falls, shall receive these holidays with pay.

- c) Employees who wish to use leave for religious observances must request leave from their respective department heads. The department head will attempt to arrange the work schedule so that an employee may be granted annual leave for the religious observance. Annual leave for religious observance may be denied only when granting the leave would create an undue hardship for the county.

Paragraph 2. Effect of Holidays on Other Types of Paid Leave

Regular holidays that occur during an annual, sick, or other paid leave period of any officer or employee of the county shall not be charged as annual, sick, or other paid leave.

Paragraph 3. Holidays – When Work is Required

Employees required to perform work on regularly scheduled holidays will be paid for the Holiday pay and hours worked.

SECTION V Sick Leave

- a) Employees may be granted earned sick leave for absence due to the following:
 - 1. Sickness or bodily injury that prevents the employee from performing his or her regular duties.
 - 2. Medical or dental appointments for the employee or immediate family.
 - 3. The actual period of temporary disability caused or contributed to by pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth, or recovery thereof. A doctor's certificate is required to verify the employee's period of temporary disability for these reasons.
 - 4. Exposure to a contagious disease when continuing work might jeopardize the health of others.
 - 5. Death in the employee's immediate family, not to exceed three (3) days for any one occurrence. The department manager may authorize additional leave time, under exceptional circumstances.
 - 6. Sickness or illness of immediate family. The term immediate family means an employee's wife, husband, mother, father, guardian, son, daughter, brother, sister, in-law, and adopted relationships that can be derived from the family members named herein.
- b) Employees must notify their immediate supervisor of all requests for sick leave before the leave is taken, or not later than two (2) hours after the beginning of a scheduled working day. Sick leave may be taken only with the approval of the immediate supervisor.
- c) Each regular salaried employee occupying a permanently established budgeted position shall earn sick leave on a bi-weekly basis at the rate of 3.6924. Sick leave will be cumulative for an unlimited number of days. At the time of

separation, any sick leave owed the county shall be deducted from the employee's final compensation.

d) The employee's department head or the County Manager may require a statement from a physician or other acceptable proof that the employee was unable to report to work, as a condition of approving sick leave. At the expiration of an authorized sick leave period, the employee's department manager or the county manager may require a physical and/or mental examination at the county's expense and by a physician of its choice to determine if the employee is able to resume his or her normal duties.

e) Sick leave earned in a completed month is allowed as creditable service at the time of retirement to employees who are members of the North Carolina Local Government Employees' Retirement System. One (1) month of credit is allowed for each twenty (20) days of unused sick leave when an employee retires, and one (1) additional month is credited for any part of twenty (20) days' unused sick leave left over. The maximum number of sick days that may be added at retirement is ten (10) days for each year of membership service and prior service standing to the employee's credit.

f) Unused sick leave earned from another North Carolina government agency and/or entity will be accepted and transferred to the county as follows:

1. The maximum number of days added or accepted will be fifty (50).

Verification received in hours will be calculated and accepted in days reverting to the nearest whole. Days earned in excess of fifty (50) will be transferred for retirement purposes only.

ADVANCED SICK LEAVE

Purpose:

There are occurrences brought about by serious and prolonged medical conditions that cause employees to exhaust all available leave, and therefore, be placed on leave without pay. Such employees forced to go on leave without pay could be without income during the most critical point in their life. This policy intends to enable an employee to have an income when the employee has been seriously affected by a medical condition or maternity leave that requires absence from work for a prolonged period of time resulting in possible loss of income due to lack of accumulated leave.

Policy:

In cases of prolonged medical condition or maternity leave, an employee may apply to become a recipient of borrowed Sick Leave. Medical condition means, the medical condition of an employee that is likely to require an employee's absence from work for a period of four workweeks or more, and to result in a substantial loss of income to the employee due to limited leave in the employee's account. The intent of this policy is to assist employees in case of a crisis involving a serious or prolonged medical condition that qualified for family medical leave. It is not the intent of this policy to apply to incidental, normal, short-term medical conditions or illnesses. The use of advanced sick leave for any purpose other than specified by this policy is prohibited.

Individual leave records are confidential and only individual employees may reveal their leave balances.

Procedure:

Employees must have worked for Hoke for a minimum of one year in a permanently budgeted position to be eligible to apply for a sick leave advance.

Request for advanced Sick Leave will not be considered within twelve months of previous occurrence. Sick Leave advances may not be less than eight hours and may not exceed eighty (80) hours.

A repayment schedule must be prepared in the form of a promissory note to be paid in full in one year or less from date of loan of sick leave advancement. Note must be signed by employee requesting loan and witnessed.

All leave accruals: sick, vacation, compensatory, and petty must be applied to advanced sick leave until all advanced sick leave hours have been repaid.

Advanced sick leave must be requested in writing by the employee, recommended by the Department Head, County Manager and Personnel Officer. Request must be approved by the Board of County Commissioners at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

Hoke County reserves the right to garnishee the final wages of employee should employee discontinue working for Hoke County

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993

PURPOSE: To define Hoke County's Policy and Procedure with Regard to Family and Medical Leave

GENERAL: Hoke County is an employer subject to the provision of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and the regulations issued relating to said Act by the U.S. Department of Labor. If at any time it is determined that the terms of this policy violate or differ from the provision of said Act or said regulations then, in that event the Act or Regulations shall control County Policy.

Employees who have been employed for at least twelve (12) full months and for at least 1,250 hours during the year preceding the start of a family or medical leave are eligible for family and medical leave as provided by the terms of this policy. Any request for family or medical leave by an employee that is not eligible under the terms of this policy must be reviewed by the County Manager after consultation with the employee's department head for Leave Without Pay. Ineligible employees are not entitled to any family or medical leave under the terms of FMLA. Employees will be returned to the same or to an equivalent position upon their return from leave. If family and medical leave is granted, the employee must first use and apply all of his or her accrued paid comp leave, vacation leave, sick leave, and petty leave to the family and medical leave period. The remainder of the leave will then consist of unpaid leave; the total cumulative family and medical leave shall not exceed twelve (12) weeks in any twelve (12) month period.

REASONS FOR FMLA: An eligible employee may be granted a total of twelve (12) weeks of family and medical leave during any twelve (12) month period. Said twelve (12) month period being measured backward from the date leave is used.

- (a) the birth of the employee's child in order to care for such child;
- (b) the placement of a child with the employee for formal adoption or foster care;
- (c) to care for the employee's spouse, child or parent who has a serious health condition; (one which requires either inpatient care or continuing treatment of a health care provider); or
- (d) a serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her job.

RESTORATION TO EMPLOYMENT: An employee eligible for family and medical leave---with the exception of in certain circumstances of those employees designated as "key" employees ---will be restored to his or her position or to a position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. Hoke County cannot guarantee that an employee will be returned to his or her original job. The determination as to whether a position is an "equivalent position" will be made by Hoke County. Upon requesting family and medical leave, an employee must be notified of his or her status as a "key" employee if there is any possibility that the employee may be denied reinstatement after the leave.

RETURN FROM FMLA: An employee must notify department head to Return from Family and Medical Leave" before he or she can be returned to active status. If an employee wishes to return to work prior to the expiration of a family or medical leave absence, notification must be given to the employee's supervisor at least five (5) working days prior to the employee's planned return. An employee returning from FMLA must provide a release to return from the applicable health care provider.

FAILURE TO RETURN FROM FMLA: The failure of an employee to return to work upon the expiration of a family or medical leave of absence will subject the employee to immediate termination unless an extension is granted. Any employee, who requests an

extension of family or medical leave due to the continuation, recurrence or onset of her or his own serious health condition, or of the serious health condition of the employee's spouse, child or parent, must submit a request for an extension, in writing, to the employee's immediate supervisor. This written request should be made as soon as the employee realizes that she or he will not be able to return at the expiration of leave period.

PRIVACY ISSUES AND CERTIFICATIONS: Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, an employer must keep information concerning a disabled employee's medical condition confidential. The information must be maintained in separate medical files, and access to the files must be restricted to those who have specific need for the information. Thus, an employer must keep confidential a written certification verifying an employee leave request based on a condition that would also allow the employee protection under the ADA. Employers must be careful not to inquire into possible future effects of an employee's "serious health condition" during the certification process. For example, if a written certification verifies that an employee has cancer, the employer may not inquire into whether the employee's illness is terminal. Supervisors are not to discuss leave requests or medical conditions with employees. Someone in each department, knowledgeable about leave policies and the ADA, shall be designated as responsible for processing leave request to the Personnel Department. The employee's supervisor should only be told that the employee will be taking leave and will return at a specified date.

The entitlement to leave for the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care will expire twelve (12) weeks from the date of the birth or placement.

APPLICATION FOR FMLA: In all cases, an employee requesting leave must complete an "Application for Family and Medical Leave" and return to the designated person in their department to process with the Personnel Department. The completed application must state the reason for the leave, the anticipated duration of the leave, and the starting and ending date of the leave.

NOTICE OF FMLA: An employee intending to take family or medical leave because of an expected birth or placement for adoption or foster care or because of a planned medical treatment, must submit an application and notice for leave at least thirty (30) days before the leave is to begin unless such notice is not practicable under the circumstances. In all other instances the employee must give notice and application to his or her immediate supervisor as soon as practicable as the necessity for leave arises.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATION OF FMLA: An application for leave based on the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's spouse, child or parent must also be accompanied by a "Medical Certification Statement" completed by the applicable health care provider. The certification must state the date on which the health condition commenced, the probable duration of the condition, and the appropriate medical facts regarding the condition.

If the employee is needed to care for a spouse, child or parent, the certification must so state along with an estimate of the amount of time the employee will be needed. If the employee

has a serious health condition, the certifications must state that the employee cannot perform the functions of his or her job. Hoke County may require additional medical certification every thirty (30) days or as authorized by law.

BENEFITS COVERAGE DURING FMLA: During a period of family or medical leave, an employee will be retained on the Hoke County employees' health plan and under the same conditions that applied before leave commenced. To continue health coverage, the employee must continue to make any required contributions that he or she was required to make to the plan before taking leave. Failure of the employee to pay his or her share of the health insurance premium may result in loss of coverage.

If the employee fails to return to work after the expiration of the leave, the employee will be required to reimburse Hoke County for payment of health insurance premiums during the family leave, unless the reason the employee fails to return is the presence of a serious health condition which prevents the employee from performing his or her job or to circumstances beyond the employee's control.

Any employee is not entitled to accrual of any seniority or employment benefits that would have accrued if not for the taking of the leave. An employee who takes family or medical leave will not lose his seniority or employment benefits that accrued before the leave begins.

APPLICATIONS FORMS: All Applications for Family or Medical Leave, and Certification of Physician or Practitioner Forms are available by contacting the Personnel Department.

- a) Leave without pay may be granted for up to twelve (12) weeks by the Department Head after all paperwork supporting FMLA has been received by Human Resources. Leave without pay may be granted during the time before and after childbirth or adoption when no actual disability is present. When an actual disability caused or contributed to by pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth, or recovery thereof exists, employees will use accumulated sick/vacation/petty/comp leave. Upon returning to duty after being on leave with or without pay, the employee shall be guaranteed a position of the same classification, seniority, and pay. Failure to report for duty at the expiration of the FMLA leave-with or without-pay, unless the Department Head has authorized a personal leave extension, shall be considered a voluntary resignation.

Paragraph 4. Military Leave

- a) An employee who is a member of the National Guard or the Armed Forces Reserve will be allowed ten (10) working days of military training leave annually, with partial compensation. If the compensation received while on military leave is less than the salary that would have been earned during this same period as an active employee, the employee shall receive partial compensation equal to the difference between the base salary

earned as a reservist and the salary that would have been earned during this same period as a county employee. The effect will be to maintain the employee's salary at the normal level during this period of ten (10) working days. If such military duty is required beyond this period of ten (10) working days, the employee shall be eligible to take accumulated annual leave or be placed on leave-without-pay status.

- b) While on military leave with partial pay or without pay, the employee's leave credits and other benefits shall continue to accrue as if the employee remained with the county during this period. Employees who are reservists have all job rights specified in the Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act.

MILITARY MEDICAL BENEFITS

Employees who are called to extended active duty and their dependents are covered by the Military Health Benefits Program may not continue in the County's Health Plan. Coverage ends on the last day of the month following the termination of county employment. The employee may wish to enroll in the continuation of medical coverage (COBRA) under the County Plan. In this case, the cost would be borne by the employee or dependents. Upon return from extended active duty, reinstatement is not automatic. The employee should re-enroll himself/herself and eligible dependents for coverage effective on the day of return. This should be done within thirty (30) days of return; otherwise, employees and their dependents will be subject to a waiting period for pre-existing conditions

Paragraph 5. Court Leave

A county employee called for jury duty or as a court witness for the federal or state government or subdivision thereof is entitled to a leave with pay for the period of absence required. If you are released from jury duty by 3:30 PM the employee is required to report to work. The employee is entitled to regular compensation plus fees received for jury duty.

Paragraph 6. Petty Leave

Each full-time permanent employee of the county shall be allowed fourteen (14) hours annual petty leave, with pay, over and above sick and annual leave. (Half-time employees shall be allowed seven (7) hours annual petty leave, with pay, over and above sick and annual leave.) Earned Petty leave may be granted for personal matters that cannot be transacted outside of office hours, time lost reporting to work, medical and dental appointments, and absences due to adverse weather conditions. Petty leave may be taken as it is earned within a 28-day pay cycle. Petty leave may be taken in increments of fifteen (15) minutes, up to a maximum of two (2) hours, with the permission of the supervisor or the department head. Any time taken above two (2) hours will be charged as annual leave, sick leave, or leave without pay, as appropriate. **Unused petty leave, at the end of the calendar year, will be forfeited.** New hires during the calendar year shall

receive petty leave pro-rated as to the number of months remaining in the calendar year. All petty leave must be used by the last day of the last payroll of the year.

Paragraph 7. Educational Leave with Pay

A leave of absence for an employee to take courses of study that will better equip the employee to perform his or her duties for the county at full or partial pay for a period not to exceed sixty (60) working days may be granted upon the recommendation of the department head and with the approval of the County Manager. A leave of absence at full or partial pay for a period not to exceed nine (9) months may be granted for the same purpose, but only upon the recommendation of the department head and the county manager with the approval of the Board of Commissioners. An employee on educational leave with full pay shall continue to earn leave credits and any other benefits to which county employees are entitled. An employee on educational leave with partial pay shall earn proportional leave credits.

SECTION VI VOLUNTARY SHARED LEAVE POLICY

Paragraph 1. Purpose

There are occurrences brought about by serious and prolonged medical conditions that cause employees to exhaust all available leave, and therefore, be placed on leave without pay for four consecutive weeks. Such employees forced to go on leave without pay could be without income during the most critical point in their life. It is recognized that fellow employees may wish to voluntarily donate some of their accumulated vacation leave so as to provide assistance to other Hoke County employees. This Policy intends to provide an opportunity for employees to assist another affected by a medical condition that requires absence from work for a prolonged period of time resulting in possible loss of income due to lack of accumulated leave.

Paragraph 2. Policy

In cases of prolonged medical condition, an employee may apply to become a recipient of leave transferred from the vacation leave account of another employee within County Government. Medical condition means, the medical condition of an employee child or other dependents living in the employee's household of such employee that is likely to require an employee's absence from work for a period of four workweeks or more, and to result in a substantial loss of income to the employee due to limited leave in the employee's account. The intent of this policy is to allow employees to assist one another in case of a crisis involving a serious or prolonged medical condition that qualifies for family medical leave. It is not the intent of this policy to apply to incidental, normal, short-term medical conditions or illnesses. The use of vacation leave on a shared basis for any purpose other than specified by this policy is prohibited.

Establishment of a leave “bank” for use by unnamed employees is expressly prohibited. Leave must be donated on a one-to-one personal basis. This policy does not apply to employees on workers compensation leave.

Individual leave records are confidential and only individual employees may reveal their donation or receipt of leave. The employee donating leave must sign a release form and cannot receive remuneration for leave donated. Any donation of vacation for sick leave purposes must be done on a voluntary basis. Solicitation on the part of department heads or supervisors is prohibited. An employee shall not directly or indirectly intimidate, threaten, or coerce any other employee for the purpose of interfering with any right an employee may have in donating, receiving or using annual leave under this program.

Such action by any employee will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal on the basis of personal conduct.

The Privacy Act makes medical information confidential; therefore, prior to making the employee’s status public for purpose of receiving shared leave, the employee must sign a release to allow the status to be known.

The County Manager, with the assistance of the Personnel Director, will make the final decision. Each case will be examined and decided based on its conformity to policy intent and must be handled consistently and equitably. Participation in this program shall be based on the applicant’s and donor’s past compliance with leave rules.

Paragraph 3. Administration

A. Qualifications

1. Applicant must be a permanent, full-time employee for at least twelve months.
2. At the time of request, applicant must have exhausted all sick, annual and compensatory leave to be eligible; the applicant’s sick leave and annual leave balance must be zero.
3. Applicant shall apply to the department head for participation; the department head shall review the request and forward to the Personnel Director the recommendation to approve or not approve.
4. The application shall include name, social security number, title, department, and description of medical condition, doctor’s statement, and estimated length of time needed to participate in program.
5. The amount of donated leave is not to reduce the donor’s vacation leave balance below 80 hours. The maximum amount of leave donated may be no more than eighty (80) hours per year, either continuously or, for the same condition on a recurring basis.
6. The minimum donation at one time is eight (8) hours.

B. Accounting and Usage Procedures

1. The Personnel Office, in conjunction with the Finance Office, shall establish a system of leave accountability, which will accurately record leave donations and recipient’s use. Such accounts shall provide a clear and accurate record of

financial and management audit purposes: maintaining file of donors and the amount of leave donated; notifying recipients and donors of when leave is granted and the amount granted.

2. Actual transfer of donated leave will occur at the end of each month, but will be retroactive to the days of the month where there is no leave balance. This will eliminate the possibility of the recipient having unused donated leave in his or her leave account after the approved need has ended. Approved recipients may start receiving shared leave as of the first of the month following the month in which they go into Leave Without Pay status.

3. At the expiration of the medical condition, any unused leave in the recipient's donated leave account shall be returned to the donor(s).

SECTION VII THE PAY PLAN

Paragraph 1. Adoption.

The schedule of salary ranges and class titles assigned to salary ranges, upon adoption, shall be set forth in Appendix B as the pay plan for the county.

Paragraph 2. Maintenance of the Pay Plan.

The Manager will be responsible for the administration and maintenance of the pay plan. The pay plan is intended to provide equitable compensation for all classes in the classification plan when considered in relationship to ranges of pay for other classes, general rates of pay for similar employment in private sector and in other public jurisdictions in the area, cost of living data, financial condition of the county and other factors. To this end, the County Manager will from time to time make comparative studies of all factors affecting the level of salary ranges and will recommend to the Commissioners such changes in salary ranges as appear to be warranted.

Paragraph 3. Use of Salary Ranges.

Salary ranges are intended to furnish administrative flexibility in recognizing individual performance and seniority differences among employees who hold positions in the same class, by rewarding employees for meritorious service. The following general provisions will govern the granting of within-the-range increments:

- (a) The minimum rate established for the class is the normal hiring rate, except in those cases where unusual circumstances appear to warrant appointment at a higher rate. Appointment above the minimum step may be made when the department head determines that it is necessary in the best interest of the county. Above-the-minimum appointments will be based on such factors as the qualifications of the applicant begin higher than the desirable education and training for the class, a shortage of qualified applicants available at the minimum step, and the refusal of qualified applicants to accept employment at the minimum step.

(b) The second through fifteenth steps are reserved to reward employees for meritorious service, for loyalty, and for continued years of service. Each year, the Manager may require department heads to consider the eligibility of employees to receive increments and to recommend such advancement or retention at the same rate. Department heads are to standard all factors affecting employee's performance and will submit their recommendations in writing, giving the reasons whether to advance or retain the employee at the same rate. All such advancements and retentions must be approved by the Manager.

(c) Employees who reach the upper limit (last step) of their salary range shall be reviewed on a case by case basis prior to receiving any salary adjustment above the upper limit.

(d) An employee's years of service shall be calculated based on original hire date into a permanent position. In the event of advancement into a position with a high classification, the employee's creditable years of service shall be applied toward his or her placement within the new salary range.

Paragraph 4. Payment at a Listed Rate.

All employees covered by the salary plan shall be paid at a listed rate within the salary ranges established for their respective job classifications, except employees in a "trainee" status, or employees whose present salaries are above the established maximum rate following transition to a new pay plan. Classification, the employee's creditable years of service shall be applied toward his or her placement within the new salary range.

Paragraph 5. Salary of Trainee.

An applicant hired or an employee promoted to a position in a higher classification that does not meet all the established requirements of the position, may be appointed at a rate in the pay plan below the minimum established for the position. An employee will remain on the trainee step until the department head certifies that the trainee is qualified to assume the full responsibilities of the position and the County Manager approves the certification.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the HOKE COUNTY Employee Benefits Handbook, and I do commit to read and follow these policies.

I am aware that if, at any time, I have questions regarding HOKE COUNTY Employee Benefits I should direct them to the Human Resources Department.

I know that HOKE COUNTY Employment Benefits and other related documents do not form a contract of employment and are not a guarantee by HOKE COUNTY of the conditions and benefits that are described within them. Nevertheless, the provisions of such HOKE COUNTY Employee Benefits are incorporated into the acknowledgment, and I agree that I shall abide by its provisions.

I also am aware that HOKE COUNTY, at any time, may with or without prior notice, change, add to, or delete from the provisions of the company benefits.

Employee's Printed Name

Position

Employee's Signature

Date

