
*A summary of
employment benefits,
services and policies for
Kings County employees.*



Human Resources Department

1400 West Lacey Boulevard
Hanford California 93230

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Welcome to Kings County

A Message from the County Administrative Officer

Congratulations on your appointment as an employee of the County of Kings. You've just joined a staff of over 1,200 employees whose goal is to provide a wide range of vital services, efficiently and courteously, to all of our citizens. In this team effort, County employees are guided by the following principles:

- The people of Kings County are our customers and first priority.
- Each citizen shall be treated with courtesy and respect.
- The keys to our success are the talent, honesty, and professionalism of County employees.
- Every County job is important, and each one of us is responsible for the success of the entire organization.

Kings County has a long and proud history. Its citizens are active and involved in the operations of the County and its government. The result is a great community in which to live and work.

Good luck in your job. We look forward to your unique contribution and service to Kings County.



Larry Spikes
County Administrative Officer

Handbook Introduction

This handbook summarizes the major employee benefits, services and employment policies of Kings County. You are strongly encouraged to read this booklet fully.

This handbook is not intended to be and does not constitute an employment contract between the County and its employees and does not create any rights of employment. Such rights are governed by the various bargaining agreements and, where applicable, the rules and ordinances as approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Many departments have additional policies and procedures which are necessary for their internal operations. It is your responsibility to become familiar and to comply with your department's specific policies and procedures.

Additionally, sometimes programs or benefits apply to only one employee group and therefore may not be discussed here.

This handbook is based upon federal and state laws, County ordinances or

resolutions, administrative policies, or agreements with employee organizations. It summarizes those source documents; it does not amend or replace them. Consequently, the County reserves the right to amend, supplement or rescind any provisions of the source documents and this handbook without prior notice. It is your responsibility to review the source document on any issue that becomes important to you. Contact the Human Resources Office for more information.

This handbook contains the policies and practices in effect at the time of publication. All previously issued handbooks and any inconsistent policies or benefit statements or memorandums are superseded. You will learn about any important future changes through administrative or departmental memorandums or newsletters.

If you have questions, or if you have suggestions for improving this handbook, please feel free to address them to your supervisor or to the Human Resources Office.



The County Government

The Board of Supervisors is the governing body for Kings County and many County special districts. Each of the five members is elected to a four-year term. Board members begin their terms at the first meeting in January, at which time they choose a new chairperson.

The Board performs legislative, administrative, and appellate functions prescribed to it by the California State Constitution and Statutes.

Among its responsibilities are enacting ordinances and resolutions, approving formal contracts and agreements, setting employee salaries, adopting budgets, and levying taxes.

The County Administrative Officer, appointed by the Board, is responsible for the general conduct and administration of all County business. The chart below shows the County departments or agencies, and their principal functions.

Administrative Office

General County Administration
Minor's Advocacy
Risk Management/Workers' Compensation/Liability
Workplace Safety Programs
Budget Administration
Health Insurance
Other County Insurance Policies

Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures

Agricultural Protection and Enforcement
Weights and Measures Enforcement

Agricultural Cooperative Extension

Research and Education
4-H Programs

Assessor/Clerk-Recorder

Property Tax Assessment
County Maps
Vital Statistics
Elections/Voter Registration
Passports
Recording of real estate documents
Other legal documents
Marriage Licenses and Ceremonies

Behavioral Health

Mental Health Programs
Alcohol and Other Drug Programs

Board of Supervisors

Board and Commission member applications
Clerk of the Board
Conflict of interest statements
Filing of petitions
Property assessment appeals

Child Support Services

Child Support Establishment and Enforcement

County Counsel

Attorney for County in all civil matters
Counsel to the Grand Jury

Community Development/Building Inspection

General and Long Range Planning
Zoning and Land Division Application Processing
Zoning and Building Code Compliance/Enforcement
Building Permit and Inspection Services
Community Development Block Grant Administration
Staff Services for:
Kings County Local Agency Formation Commission
GIS Services

District Attorney

Criminal Prosecutions
Child Abduction Unit
Sexual Assault Unit
Insurance Fraud Unit
Welfare Fraud Unit
Narcotics Unit
Prison Unit

Finance

Accounting
Distribution & Reporting of Property Tax Collections
Cash Management/Banking
Collection of Taxes/Fees/License
Debt Management
Internal Audits
Investments
Payroll
Prepare the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report
Treasury Operations for School and Special Districts

Fire and Emergency Management

Fire Prevention
Fire Code Enforcement
Fire Investigation
Fire Suppression
Office of Emergency Management:
Planning
Training
Response Management

First 5 Children and Families Commission

Proposition 10 Implementation
Grants/Contracts Administration

Health

AIDS/HIV Program
California Children's Services
Child Health and Disability Prevention
Communicable Disease Control
Environmental Health
Reproductive Health/Family Planning Clinics
Immunizations
Public Health Clinics
Public Health Laboratory
Tobacco Control Program
Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Nutrition Program
Maternal and Child Health Program
Public Health Nursing Services
Preventative Health Care for Aging
Child Passenger Car Seat Safety Classes
Vital Records (Birth and Death Registration)

Human Resources

Employer Relations/Labor negotiations
Classification and Pay Studies
Employee Benefits
Equal Employment Opportunity
Payroll/Personnel Records
Recruitments and Examinations
Training

Human Services

Children's Services:
Emergency Response (ER)
Family Maintenance
Family Reunification
Permanent Placement
Independent Living Program (ILP)
Foster Parent Recruitment and Training
Adoption Services
Family Preservation/Support Board
Adult Services:
Adult Protective Services (APS)
In Home Supportive Services (IHSS)
Benefit & Employment Training Services:
California Work Opportunity & Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs)
Medi-Cal Services
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
General Assistance
County Medical Services Program (CMSP)
Welfare Fraud Investigations

Job Training Office

Job Development
Vocational Training
Summer Youth Employment
Career Counseling
Vocational Assessment
Hiring Incentives
Economic Development

Law Library

Law Library Collection
Small Claims Advisor

Library

Checkout Books, DVDs, and CDs
Adult, Teen and Children Reading Programs
Community Information and Referral
Free computer and internet access
Reference Service
Central Library (Hanford)
Branches:
Armona
Avenal
Corcoran
Kettleman City
Lemoore
Stratford

Office of Information Technology

Information Technology and
Telecommunications Systems
Automated Office Systems
Systems Implementation, Support, Training & Service
Central Microfilm/Records
Central Services (Print Shop and Mail Services)
Purchasing

Probation

Juvenile Detention Centers
Adult and Juvenile Field Supervision Services
Adult and Juvenile Court Services
Victim Witness Assistance Program

Public Guardian/Veterans' Services

Estate Guardianship/Conservatorship
Payee Services
Veterans' Assistance

Public Works

Roads and Bridges
Building Maintenance and Central Plant Operations
Fleet Services
Parks and Grounds
County Engineer
Museums

Sheriff/Coroner

Sheriff Services
Adult Jail Facilities
Court Bailiffs
Coroner Investigations
Public Administrator
Communications Dispatch - 911
Alternative Sentencing Program
Animal Control
Civil Division

Kings County Code of Ethics

Kings County is committed to maintaining the highest standards of conduct by elected and appointed officials and employees in the performance of their public duties. Adherence to high ethical standards and

proper conduct is central to the maintenance of the public trust and confidence in government. All County officials and employees are expected to adhere to the following code of ethics:

CODE OF ETHICS

All County officers and employees should:

- Promote public confidence in County government.
- Keep safe all funds and other properties of the County.
- Conduct and perform the duties of the position diligently, and promptly conduct the business of the County.
- Maintain a positive image which passes constant public scrutiny.
- Evaluate all decisions so that the best service or product is obtained at a minimal cost without sacrificing quality and fiscal responsibility.
- Inject the importance of the public trust into everyday dealings with fellow public employees and associates.
- Maintain a respectful attitude toward the public, other public officials, employees and associates.
- Work with governmental agencies, political subdivisions and other organizations in order to effectively and efficiently further the interest of the County.
- Faithfully comply with all laws and regulations applicable to the County and impartially apply them to everyone.

All County officers and employees should refrain from:

- Engaging in outside interests that are not compatible with the impartial and objective performance of their duties.
- Improperly influencing or attempting to influence other officials to act in their personal benefit.
- Accepting anything of value from any source which is offered to secure their act or decision, or vote as a public official.

You and Your Job

Your Role in Public Service

The citizens of Kings County have entrusted you to provide an important public service. Your contact with the public, whether in person, by telephone, by mail, or electronically from a County computer or fax machine, is important in establishing trust and confidence in local government.

Members of the community form their opinions largely from the treatment they receive by those who officially represent the County. As public employees, we must be responsive to the needs of the public and the community with whom we interact.

It is expected that County employees will carry out their official duties efficiently and with courtesy and discretion. Often citizens are mistaken or confused about the services provided by the County or have difficulty communicating their needs. As a County employee in the public service, you are expected to be sensitive to the needs of the public and to be familiar with County services to the extent that you can direct citizen inquiries appropriately and assist the public in accessing these services.

Merit System

Kings County operates under a merit system of employment, meaning that hiring and promotions are based on a competitive, non-biased evaluation of each person's qualifications for the position. The County's merit personnel system ensures equal opportunity for qualified persons to enter and progress through County service.

Appointments and promotions are made by regular competitive selection processes. Examinations may consist of written, oral, screening, performance, physical tests, background investigations, education and/or experience evaluations, or a combination of these or any other process which impartially measures which candidates have the qualifications the County needs. Positions are filled by those most qualified. Job knowledge, skill and ability are the keys to both appointments and promotions.

Position Classification

Your position has been given a specific title and is classified according to the type of work and the assigned job duties and responsibilities. Similar jobs are grouped to ensure that they receive equal pay even though they may be in different departments.

Jobs are further arranged into series of classes or occupational groups to provide a logical framework for promotional opportunities. A written description, called a job specification, of each type of job is available in Human Resources and on the County website. It includes examples of the typical duties, and the education, experience, knowledge and abilities needed, as well as any special requirements. It is not, however, an all-inclusive document.

Salary Resolution

The Salary Resolution, adopted by the Board of Supervisors and updated periodically, consists of a listing of all the County's job classifications with the assigned salary range for each classification. In determining salaries, consideration is given to a number of factors, including prevailing rates for comparable work in other public and private employment, current costs of living, and the County's financial condition and policies. Salaries and benefits are reviewed regularly with employee representatives in the meet and confer process.

The basic salary schedule consists of numbered salary ranges, each having five steps of approximately 5 percent each. These steps provide the basis for merit salary increases. Most new employees start at the first step and after six months of actual and continuous satisfactory service are eligible to advance to the second step. However, it is important to remember that step increases are not granted automatically. Your department head must certify that your overall performance--which includes attendance and work habits--has been satisfactory or better. Annually thereafter, employees may advance one step until reaching the fifth step, provided their performance meets department standards. A change in job classification due to promotion could provide additional opportunities for salary increases.

Quick Facts

The County of Kings encompasses an area of 1,391 square miles at an altitude of 248 feet above sea level. The highest point in the county is King Mountain at 3,473 feet above sea level.

Probationary Period

In order to become permanent in a new position, all newly hired employees in the classified service must serve an initial probationary period. The length of a probationary period depends on the job classification but will be either approximately six months (1040 service hours for a typical fulltime employee) or approximately twelve months (2080 service hours for a typical fulltime employee).

This period is regarded as the final step of the recruitment and selection process--a working test of the employee's ability to competently perform the duties of the position. During this period, you may be released from employment with or without cause and no explanation is required. Employees who are released from employment during the initial probationary period do not have rights to appeal the dismissal. However, limited appeal rights may be available if the employee adequately demonstrates that the probationary release was based on unlawful employment discrimination.

The probationary period can be extended under certain circumstances for an additional period of up to six months to further assess an employee's performance. Upon successful completion of probation, your status will change to permanent. Employees with permanent status may be terminated for cause. The benefits of permanent status include vacation privileges and appeal rights.

Any period of leave without pay during a probationary period will automatically extend the probationary period. The length of time the probationary period is extended is determined by the amount of time in leave-without-pay status.

Performance Evaluation

When you begin your new job, you and your supervisor will discuss your duties and responsibilities. Employees serving a six-month probationary period will be formally evaluated at least once prior to the end of the first six months of employment. Employees serving a one-year probationary period generally will be evaluated at six months and again at 12 months of employment. The results of the performance evaluation conducted at the end of the probationary period will determine whether you have passed probation and are granted permanent employee status. If you have not passed your probationary period, your probationary period may be extended or employment may be terminated.

Following the successful completion of the probationary period, employees will receive an annual evaluation. Employees at Step 5 of their salary range are evaluated annually on the anniversary of their attainment of Step 5. If you are eligible for a merit step increase, the results of your performance evaluation will be considered in recommending an increase. An overall rating of satisfactory or above is necessary in order to receive a merit step increase.

Promotion

Kings County encourages employees to seek advancement within the County. Qualified employees will be granted appropriate release time with pay for examinations and interviews for County positions. Time for qualifying or promotional examinations administered during other than normal working hours will not be compensated.

Promotional examinations can be one of two types: “Departmental”, which are limited to qualified employees within the hiring department, or “County-wide”, which are open to qualified County employees, but not to members of the general public. Employees can also apply during “Open” recruitments for vacancies which are open to anyone.

Notices of recruitments are distributed to departments, posted on the County website and are available in the Human Resources Office. If you believe you are qualified for one, apply online within the time limit indicated on the recruitment flyer. You'll need to file a separate application for each vacancy for which you wish to be considered.

Promotions into a new position require completion of an additional probationary period. Merit step increases in a new position begin from the effective date of the promotion and will follow the merit step progression for the new position.

Transfers

Transfers within or between classification series may be made for a variety of reasons, including the desire to change to a series which might offer better career advancement opportunities, or because of personal reasons. Transfers are not automatic; employees must meet the minimum qualifications of the new position sought, and must have the approval of the hiring department head and the Human Resources Director.

Transfers can be one of three types:

- To another position in the same classification in another department.
- To a different classification which has the same salary range in the same or another department.
- To a different classification which has a different salary range in the same or another department. The salary range of the new position sought cannot exceed the employee's old salary range by more than 5%.

An employee who transfers from one classification to another must serve a new probationary period. If the employee does not pass probation in the new position, he/she may return to the former position provided he or she had attained permanent status in the former position.

A department head may at any time reassign an employee from one assignment to another assignment in the same classification within the same department. For more information about transfer rules and the approval process, contact the Human Resources Office.

Voluntary Demotions

Any employee may request to voluntarily demote to a vacant position in another classification which has a lower salary range if he/she meets the minimum qualifications for the position sought. Employees who demote may be required to serve a new probationary period at the department head's discretion. If a new probationary period is required and the employee is unsuccessful in the probationary period, the employee will not have any rights to return to the previous permanent position, and will be terminated from employment. For complete information about voluntary demotions, contact the Human Resources Office.

Disciplinary Action

County employees are expected to effectively perform the duties of their positions, and to display courtesy, consideration and professionalism in dealing with the public, department management, co-workers and other County employees. Employees who do not meet such standards, or whose conduct is detrimental to the County, may be subject to disciplinary action.

The types of conduct which can be considered for disciplinary action may include, but are not limited to, incompetence, inefficiency, insubordination, neglect of duty, unauthorized absence, dishonesty, concealing or misrepresenting information on an employment application, discourteous conduct toward a member of the public or another County employee, or violation of any County code or lawful department or County rule, regulation or policy. For the most part, few employees have to be disciplined. An employee who is performing poorly or behaving improperly is usually warned by the supervisor. If the warning is not heeded, disciplinary action may be taken. Discipline can vary with each case but usually follows a pattern of progressive action involving one of the following: oral reprimand, written reprimand, suspension without pay, reduction in pay, demotion, or dismissal.

If the disciplinary action involves loss of pay, suspension, or dismissal, County policy allows the employee to request a review of the charges before the penalty is implemented. This is called the "Skelly" procedure. The request for a Skelly review must be made within five days of the notice of discipline. The department head will review the employee's oral and/or written response, if any, and make a determination whether to uphold, modify or rescind the charges and/or the discipline imposed. A complete description of the disciplinary process is contained in the Personnel Rules, Chapter 10.

Grievance Procedure

The County realizes that conditions may arise which create employee dissatisfaction. As a result, a grievance procedure has been established to give employees an opportunity to remedy the situation. A grievance is a complaint by an employee regarding his or her employment or working conditions, except where a remedy is otherwise provided for by state law, County ordinance, bargaining agreement, or the Personnel Rules. Employees have the right to consult with their employee organization for assistance.

Appendix A in this handbook describes the steps and deadlines involved in the Grievance Procedure.

Ideally, most problems can be resolved informally between you and your supervisor. If you have a problem or grievance, first go to your immediate supervisor and make every effort to resolve it. If you believe higher level review is appropriate, use the formal Grievance Procedure.

[NOTE: In the case of a complaint of harassment, including sexual harassment, the chain of command need not be followed. You can complain directly to your department head or to the Human Resources Office. See Appendix B for more information about the County's Harassment Policy.]

It is important to note that for a grievance to be formally considered, it must be presented within 5 working days from the date you knew, or by reasonable diligence could have known, of the basis for the grievance. If the grievance is not resolved at the departmental level, it may be heard by the Personnel Appeals Board, a three-member panel of impartial hearing officers appointed by the County which includes applicable employee organization representatives. You may have a representative present with you during the hearing process. This representative may be an official of your employee organization, or a co-worker familiar with the matter being grieved. You are entitled to a reasonable amount of work time off to process the grievance.

Separation from Employment

Resignation is the most common type of separation. To resign properly, give your department head or supervisor written notice at least two weeks in advance, stating the effective date and your reason for leaving. This will help the County arrange for your replacement. Failure to give such notice may affect your good standing for re-employment purposes. When you separate from employment, you will be required to return all County property, materials, keys, equipment, identification badges, etc.

Separation due to layoffs may be necessary due to lack of work or funds. When layoffs are necessary, they are based on either seniority, or employee performance and seniority.

Other types of separation include retirement and dismissal. Both are discussed elsewhere in this handbook.

Reinstatement Rights

Employees who separate in good standing due to voluntary termination or layoffs from a class in which they held permanent status are eligible to request reinstatement to their last permanent position.

Reinstatement must be requested within two years from the date of separation. If approved, the employee's name will be placed on a reinstatement list for one year from the date approved. No extension of this period is permitted.

Personnel Records

Information about you as an employee, such as performance evaluations, salary changes, promotions and transfers, is part of your personnel file.

All changes of address and telephone number must be reported to your supervisor immediately in order to maintain accurate records. Such information is confidential and is used for County insurance, income tax purposes, emergency contacts, etc. You should update your insurance and beneficiary records if there is a change in family status, such as births, adoptions, marriage, divorce or death.

You have the right to review your personnel file during regular business hours. If you wish to do so, you will need to make an appointment by contacting Human Resources.

As public agency employees, information about our compensation is considered public information and must be provided if appropriately requested.

Quick Facts

Approximately 79% of the County's annual budget is mandated by state or federal laws or regulations and the County has very little or no discretion in how these funds are used in our county.

Money Matters

Pay Period/Pay Days

The County has a bi-weekly pay plan which means employees are paid every two weeks. There are 26 pay periods during the calendar year. Pay periods begin at 12:01 a.m. every other Monday. Paychecks are issued within five working days after the close of each pay period.

A statement of your earnings and applicable deductions is provided each pay period. The County is careful to ensure that paychecks are accurate, but mistakes may occur. Review your paycheck upon receipt to make sure that it is correct. If it is not, please inform your supervisor or the Finance Department.

Direct Deposit

The County sponsors a direct deposit plan of your paycheck into your bank or credit union checking or savings account. Employees in job classifications in the following employee groups hired after the date reflected are required to enroll in the direct deposit plan:

- General Bargaining Unit (1/05)
- Kings County Prosecutors' Unit (1/05)
- Deputy Sheriff's Association (12/05)
- Detentions Deputy Association (1/06)
- Management Groups I and II and Confidential Management (12/05)

All other employees are encouraged to consider enrolling in the direct deposit program. If you participate in direct deposit you will receive your pay stub in your department on payday. Paychecks or pay stubs are not mailed to employees' homes.

Overtime

Overtime is only used in unusual or emergency situations and must be pre-authorized by your supervisor. Overtime rules differ within various bargaining units, and the federal Fair Labor Standards Act or California labor laws may take precedence in some situations.

In general, employees receive time-and-one-half pay or time-and-one-half compensatory time off (comp time) for hours actually worked which exceed the maximum designated for the classification and bargaining unit. The maximum hours of compensatory time which an employee may accumulate vary by bargaining unit.

Some overtime work is available on a voluntary basis. However, the County may occasionally require you to work overtime. Such assignments cannot ordinarily be refused.

Payroll Deductions

There are two types of payroll deductions: mandatory and optional. In general, mandatory deductions are for federal and state income tax, State Disability Insurance, Social Security/Medicare, and the Public Employees' Retirement System, depending on your bargaining unit agreement. The mandatory tax deductions are based on the choices you make when completing the W-4 form. You may change your W-4 information by contacting the Finance Department.

You may authorize payroll deductions such as:

- Credit Union
- Employee association dues
- Health insurance plan contributions
- Deferred compensation
- Flexible Benefits Program
- PERS Service Credit purchase, if eligible (i.e. military buy-back, etc.)

Bilingual Pay

Certain public contact positions which require the use of bilingual translation skills may qualify for Bilingual Pay, depending on the employee's bargaining unit MOU. Authorization for bilingual pay must come from your department head and the Human Resources Office. The amount of compensation for those who qualify is \$20 per pay period. Depending on your bargaining unit, you may qualify to be tested and certified for Advanced Bilingual Pay of \$40 per pay period.

If you use bilingual translation skills at least 50% of your work time, contact your supervisor or the Human Resources Office for more information.

Standby or Call Back Duty

Standby duty is any time other than your normal work schedule when you are required to be ready to immediately report for duty. Call back duty is any time you are called back to report to work outside of your scheduled work shift.

Compensation for standby and call back duty is outlined in the applicable Memorandum of Understanding for each of the bargaining units.

Temporary Assignment Travel Pay

Employees who are temporarily assigned to County work sites other than their regular duty station which requires additional travel outside working hours and in their own vehicles may be eligible for an additional 5% of their regular rate of pay for each day or shift assignment, up to a maximum of 90 calendar days.

Insurance Benefits and Retirement

The County provides a wide range of insurance benefits and a retirement program for employees. Eligibility requirements must be met and enrollment forms must be completed in a timely manner. This handbook provides only a brief description of these benefits and coverage. For more information, contact Human Resources or the County Administrative Office which oversees the health insurance program.

Medical, Dental and Vision Insurance

The County provides medical, dental, vision, prescription drug, mental health and chiropractic care coverage. You may have to pay a portion of the monthly premium for coverage depending on your employee bargaining agreement. Booklets explaining details of each plan are available from the County Administrative Office or Human Resources.

Insurance Enrollment Restrictions

There is a waiting period before you can begin using your health plan benefits. Coverage begins on the first day of the month following 30 calendar days of employment in paid status.

If you do not enroll in the health insurance program within 30 calendar days of your date of hire, you (and any eligible dependents) must wait until the next open enrollment period to enroll.

Insurance Changes – Plans Selections, New Eligible Dependents, etc.

Each year during open enrollment in the month of May you may make changes to your selections under the County's health insurance program, such as new enrollment, changes to flex 125 plan and voluntary benefits (i.e. accidental, cancer, disability and supplemental life insurance), or adding or removing eligible dependents to your coverage.

Otherwise, new eligible dependents may only be added to your coverage within 30 days of a qualifying event (i.e. marriage, the birth/adoption of a child, spouse's loss of insurance). Eligible dependents may be dropped from the plan at any time if you are not pre-taxing the premium. Employees who do pre-tax their premium can only drop a dependent due to a qualifying event, such as a dependent's death, divorce, marriage or acquisition of other health coverage.

Ineligible dependents (i.e. students who are no longer in college or carrying less than 12 college units, or a spouse no longer eligible due to a divorce, etc.) must be dropped within 30 days of the event.

COBRA Health Benefit Continuation

If you lose health coverage eligibility due to reduction in work hours, termination of employment, or leave of absence, you may be able to continue participation in the County's health insurance program, based on the rules, regulations and restrictions of the federal COBRA Act. The employee is responsible for full payment of all premiums.

Covered dependents are also eligible for COBRA continuation of coverage should they lose eligibility due to the employee's death; the dependent reaches age 19 if not a full-time student, or reaches age 25 as a full-time student; or due to the parent's legal separation of marriage or divorce. In these cases, coverage for your dependents may be continued under COBRA provided payment of all premiums is made by the employee.

For more information about COBRA, contact the Finance Department.

Insurance While On Leave of Absence

Consult the Finance Department regarding your responsibility to pay for continuation of benefits while on an approved leave of absence without pay.

State Disability Insurance (SDI)

This is a program operated by the State of California to protect you against loss of wages when you are unable to perform your usual work because of illness or injury that is not work-related. You pay for SDI through payroll deduction based on a percent of your annual wages. (NOTE: Certain "safety" employees are not eligible for SDI benefits because they do not pay into the State Disability Insurance fund.)

If you are unable to work because of illness or injury that is not work-related, you may apply for SDI through the California Employment Development Department (EDD). There is a 7-calendar day waiting period during which time no benefits are paid. If you are approved for SDI benefits by the state, your available sick leave will be coordinated with the SDI payments in order to maintain your same bi-weekly salary. You may also request to have your vacation and comp time coordinated.

Quick Facts

The County Clerk's Office issues about 1,100 marriage licenses each year in Kings County. Employees in the Clerk's Office are deputized to perform civil marriage ceremonies. The Clerk's Office has a specially-decorated "wedding room" available for brides and grooms to say their "I do's." More than 250 ceremonies are performed in the Clerk's Office each year.

Retirement

The County belongs to the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS). Participation in this retirement plan is mandatory beginning on the first day of employment.

If you wish to retire and are eligible, notify CalPERS and your department head at least 90 days before you are planning retirement to allow sufficient time to process the necessary paperwork. This will help to ensure that you receive your first retirement check in a timely manner. It is recommended by CalPERS that employees attend a retirement workshop for planning purposes prior to retirement.

For further information, consult your CalPERS information booklet or contact Human Resources. You may also contact CalPERS by calling toll free (888) 225-7377 or check their web site: www.calpers.ca.gov

Retiree Health Insurance

Employees who retire, who have County health insurance at the time of their retirement, may continue on the County's health insurance until they become eligible for Medicare. The retiree is responsible for full payment of all premiums. For more information regarding this program, please contact the Finance Department.

Depending on your bargaining unit and date of hire, eligible employees who retire in good standing from CalPERS may have a percentage of the dollar value of sick leave accrued at the time of separation and retirement from the County placed in an "account" to be used toward the payment of health insurance premiums. For eligible long term employees, you may elect to either cash out a percentage of sick leave accrued at separation from County employment, or receive the retiree health insurance benefit described. Check your current bargaining unit agreement for specific eligibility criteria.

Time Off

Any time you will be absent from work for any reason other than a County holiday, you must follow your department's procedures for properly requesting time away from work. Absence without approval or absence without notifying your supervisor may be cause for disciplinary action.

Vacation Leave

All employees are encouraged to take periodic vacations. In Kings County, employees earn from two to four weeks of vacation per year, depending on their length of service and bargaining unit agreement. For complete information about vacation leave, refer to the appropriate MOU for your bargaining unit or contact Human Resources.

You are eligible to begin using vacation leave after successfully completing your initial probationary period. Certain employees serving a one year probationary period may be authorized to use up to 40 hours of vacation leave after six months (1040 service hours) of satisfactory work performance, depending on bargaining unit agreements. Employees on leave without pay stop accruing vacation hours until they actively return to work. Extra-help employees do not accrue vacation.

There is a cap on the maximum amount of vacation hours an employee can accrue. Once the appropriate accrual maximum has been reached, employees stop earning additional vacation hours until the accumulation level drops below the established limits.

Donations of Vacation Leave

The County has a program which allows employees to donate accrued vacation leave to co-workers who have exhausted all available paid leave, but need time off due to serious illness or injury of the employee or a member of his/her immediate family. The vacation donation is converted to sick leave for the recipient employee on an hour-for-hour basis. For complete information, contact your supervisor or the Human Resources Office.

Examination Leave to Qualify for County Positions

Employees are entitled to necessary time off with pay for the purpose of taking qualifying or promotional examinations (such as written or oral exams) administered during the normal working hours for positions within County service. The time away from your work site for examination leave must be cleared through your supervisor.

Jury Duty

If you are called for jury duty, notify your supervisor at once. You will receive your regular pay during the time you are completing jury duty service. However, you must submit any jury duty compensation, other than mileage allowance, to your department.

While on jury duty, if you are excused from service or if on any day while on jury duty you are excused early, you must return to work to complete your work day or shift. Your department may require that you submit proof of the requirement to appear.

Witness Leave

If you are subpoenaed to appear in a court of law as a non-party witness you will receive your regular pay for any regularly scheduled work time spent answering the subpoena. This rule does not apply if you are a party in a civil action, a defendant in a criminal matter, or in any action brought about as a result of your own misconduct. Any witness fees received, other than mileage reimbursement, must be submitted to your department, and if you are released from witness duty during your normal working hours you must report back to work immediately. Your department may require that you submit proof of the requirement to appear.

Military Leave

Federal and state laws authorize leave for employees ordered to military service, including annual reserve duty. Employees who serve in the Armed Forces will be granted leaves of absence in accordance with the laws governing such leaves. Documentation of military orders must be submitted to your department.

Sick Leave

Regular full-time and part-time employees earn sick leave from the beginning of employment. Sick leave accrual rates vary depending on your bargaining unit and date of hire. The amount of sick leave which can be accrued is unlimited. Refer to the MOU for your bargaining unit for complete information.

Appropriate Uses of Sick Leave

Sick leave may be used for your own illness or injury or for medical or dental appointments. Employees are encouraged to make such appointments during non-working hours whenever possible. Your department may request proof of adequate reason for any employee's sick leave absence. The department head may require submission of a doctor's note or certification.

Family Illness Sick Leave

Employees are permitted to use in any calendar year the employee's accrued and available sick leave entitlement, in an amount not less than the sick leave that would be accrued during six months at the employee's current rate of entitlement, to attend to an illness of their child, parent, registered domestic partner or spouse. All conditions and restrictions placed on the employee's use of sick leave shall also apply to their sick leave use to attend to an eligible family member.

Rev. 6/2011

Bereavement Leave

Regular full-time employees may request to use up to 40 hours of accrued sick leave (Fire Unit - 72 hours) due to the death of an immediate family member. For purposes of this section, immediate family is defined as follows: Children, parents, grandchildren, grandparents, brothers, sisters, spouse (whether by blood, marriage, or adoption). Regular part-time employees are eligible for a pro-rated amount of bereavement leave.

Rev. 6/2011

Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)

In accordance with the state and federal Family and Medical Leave Acts, eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of leave in a defined 12 month period for a serious illness or injury of their own or of a child, parent, spouse or registered domestic partner, or for the birth, adoption or foster care placement of a child. During the leave period, employees must continue to pay their portion of the health benefit premiums in order to keep the insurance in effect. Medical certification will be required. Certain eligibility and notification requirements must be met before leave is approved. Employees whose military spouse, parent, son or daughter is in covered active duty status, or call to active duty status may qualify for up to 12 weeks FMLA exigency leave. Under some circumstances employees may qualify for up to 26 weeks FMLA to care for their spouse, parent, son, daughter or next of kin servicemember or veteran. Contact your supervisor or Human Resources for complete information.

Pregnancy Disability Leave (PDL)

A female employee may take leave (up to four months, depending on medical certification) when she is disabled by pregnancy, childbirth, or a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth. This leave is separate and distinct from the provisions of Family and Medical Leave. Certification from the employee's medical provider is required.

When no longer disabled following the birth of the child or when pregnancy disability leave has been exhausted, the employee, if eligible, may request to take Family and Medical Leave for up to 12 work weeks for bonding with a new child.

Paid Family Leave (PFL)

In accordance with California law, eligible employees may apply for and receive up to six weeks of State Disability Insurance benefits in a 12-month period for wage loss when they take authorized leave to care for a seriously ill parent, child, registered domestic partner, or to bond with a new child. If the employee is otherwise eligible for FMLA leave, any time off for PFL shall run concurrent with an approved FMLA leave. Medical certification will be required. More complete information is contained in the County's Paid Family Leave Policy.

Attendance at Child's School (Pursuant to Education Code §48900.1)

An employee who is the parent or guardian of a pupil who has been suspended will be granted leave without pay to appear in the school of the pupil to attend a portion of a school day in the pupil's classroom, pursuant to a request made under Section 48900.1 of the California Education Code. The employee must give at least two working days advance written notice to his or her supervisor of the need for such leave. The department head or designee may require documentation from the child's school of the need to appear. Employees may be authorized to use available paid leave for such absences at the department's discretion.

Remedial Action by Victims of Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault

An employee who is a victim of domestic violence or a victim of sexual assault is entitled to time off from work without pay for the following purposes:

- To obtain or attempt to obtain a temporary restraining order, a restraining order, or other injunctive relief.
- To seek medical attention for injuries.
- To obtain services from a domestic violence shelter, program or rape crisis center.
- To obtain psychological counseling related to the experience.
- To participate in safety planning and take other actions to increase safety from future domestic violence or sexual assaults.
- To ensure the health, safety or welfare of the employee or his/her child.

Reasonable notice to the employee's supervisor is required as soon as possible. When an unscheduled absence occurs the employee must provide a certification to the employer within a reasonable amount of time after the absence. Acceptable certification may be a police report, court order, or documentation from a medical professional, domestic violence advocate or counselor. Employees may be authorized to use available paid leave for such absences at the department's discretion.

Visitation to Child's School or Day Care Facility

An employee who is a parent, legal guardian, or custodial grandparent of a child in kindergarten through grade 12 or attending a licensed child day care facility will be granted up to 40 hours per calendar year (not exceeding 8 hours in any calendar month) to participate in activities of the school or day care of the child.

Requests for such leave must be given in writing at least two working days in advance of the requested day off. If both parents of a child are employed at the same work site, the leave will be granted to the parent who first gives written notice to his or her supervisor. The other parent may be granted leave simultaneously for the same child only with the advance approval of the department head.

The employee must use accrued vacation leave (or comp time, if available) for such leave. If no vacation or comp time is available the leave will be recorded as leave without pay.

The department head may require that the employee provide valid documentation from the school or licensed day care facility that he or she participated in school or facility activities on a specific date and at a particular time.

Volunteer Emergency Response Leave

Employees may be granted leave without pay for performance of emergency duties as a volunteer firefighter, a volunteer reserve peace officer, or volunteer emergency rescue personnel. This leave will not be approved for any public safety or emergency medical services employees when the department head determines that such absence would hinder the availability of the public safety or emergency medical services provided by the County.

Advance notice must be provided to the department head of the employee's status as a volunteer firefighter, reserve peace officer, or emergency rescue personnel. An employee who is a volunteer firefighter will be permitted to take temporary leaves of absence not to exceed an aggregate of 14 days per calendar year for the purpose of engaging in fire or law enforcement training.

Voting

An employee who gives his or her supervisor not less than two working days written notice that time off for voting is needed due to insufficient time outside of working hours to vote at a statewide election will be entitled up to two hours off without loss of pay which when added to the voting time available outside of working hours will enable the employee to vote.

Holidays

The County recognizes these paid holidays:

New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Third Monday in January
Presidents' Day	Third Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Veteran's Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Day After Thanksgiving	The Friday after Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Eve	December 24, Half day beginning at Noon
Christmas Day	December 25
New Year's Eve	December 31, Half day beginning at Noon

The Board of Supervisors may declare by resolution other one-time or on-going holidays in addition to those listed.

When a holiday falls on a Saturday, the proceeding Friday will be the designated holiday. When a holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday will be the designated holiday.

Some departments, such as Fire, Sheriff and Probation, are required to be open on holidays. Employees required to work on holidays will be compensated up to a maximum of eight hours for holiday pay according to the terms of their bargaining agreement.

Part-time employees will earn holiday benefits on a pro-rata basis according to their regular work schedule. Extra-help employees are not eligible for holiday pay.

Employees must be in paid status either the work day preceding or the work day following a holiday in order to receive holiday pay.

Quick Facts

Since 1993, the Kings County Gang Task Force (GTF) has worked to address serious, violent crimes being committed by local street gangs. GTF serves the community by gathering intelligence through field interviews with local street gang members, works with neighboring county task forces and local law enforcement agencies to remove dangerous gang members from the streets, and investigates violent gang related crimes.

County Policies

Equal Employment Opportunity

The County's Equal Employment Opportunity Program provides employment opportunities for all persons and prohibits discrimination of employees or applicants based on gender, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, medical condition, age (over 40), marital status or sexual orientation, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws.

The County is committed to the concept of equal employment opportunity as a necessary element of basic merit system principles. The County works to ensure that unfair barriers do not exist which would adversely affect the recruitment, appointment, training and promotion of women, minorities and the disabled.

Harassment Policy

All employees are to be treated with respect and dignity. Harassment on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, medical condition, age, marital status or sexual orientation by another employee or supervisor or manager will not be tolerated under any circumstances, and can lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

A Discrimination Complaint Procedure is available to employees or applicants for employment who allege unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, medical condition, age, marital status or sexual orientation. For more information, contact the Human Resources Office.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Kings County policy prohibits sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It can also be off-color jokes, pin-ups, posters or cartoons, or any unwelcome behavior which is directed at a person simply because of his/her gender. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is illegal. Any incident of harassment should be reported immediately to your supervisor, department head, or to the Human Resources Office. Any employee found to be in violation of the sexual harassment policy may face disciplinary action, including termination of employment. Appendix B in this handbook contains more information about the County's Sexual Harassment Policy.

Discrimination Complaint Procedure

A Discrimination Complaint Procedure is available to employees of Kings County or applicants for employment who allege unlawful discrimination in the employment or hiring process based on race, color, religion, national origin, age (over 40), sex (gender), marital status, sexual orientation, medical condition, or disability. The complainant may use an informal process of pre-complaint counseling, or may file a formal complaint within 30 calendar days from the date of the alleged discriminatory act(s), or 30 days from completion of the informal resolution process, whichever is later. The Discrimination Complaint Procedure is available to all employees regardless of employment or probationary status.

Public Employee Oath

The California State Constitution requires all public employees take an oath or affirmation upon appointment. In doing so, you swear to support, defend, and bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitutions of the United States and the State of California.

California law also requires that all public employees be declared disaster service workers in the event of a local or state disaster, and as such, you may be required to perform disaster service activities during natural, man-made, or war-caused emergencies.

Drug Free Workplace

The County supports and complies with the Drug Free Workplace Acts. The Drug Free Workplace Acts apply to employees whose positions are funded by state and/or federal grants, and forbid unlawful use or possession of controlled substances or alcohol in the workplace. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance (alcohol or drugs, either legal or illegal) is prohibited in or on any County facility or work site and in any vehicle being used for County business.

Employees covered by the Drug-Free Workplace Acts must inform their supervisors within five days of any conviction for violating a criminal drug statute while in the workplace. The County is required to impose sanctions on convicted employees within 30 days of receiving notice of their conviction, or, may require participation in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Substance Abuse Policy

All Kings County employees must comply with the Substance Abuse Policy. See Appendix C in this handbook for a more complete description of the policy. If an employee is reasonably suspected of violating the policy, the County reserves the right to search County property and/or require the employee to submit to an immediate alcohol and/or drug test.

Certain bargaining units may have additional written agreements regarding drug and/or alcohol testing which apply to members of their units. Copies of these agreements are available from the Human Resources Office.

Drug and/or Alcohol Testing

The County may require pre-employment drug testing of individuals in certain classifications who have received an offer of employment. Final hiring arrangements cannot be made until a confirmed negative drug test is received.

Employees in specific job classifications who are required to hold a commercial driver's license must undergo pre-employment drug testing as required by the federal Department of Transportation (DOT). An offer of employment is contingent upon passing the drug screening. On-going random drug and alcohol testing is also required of these employees as a condition of employment. You will be notified if these requirements apply to you.

Certain other employees may have bargaining agreements which require employees in that unit undergo on-going random drug testing. Currently, employees in the Firefighters' Association have a pre-employment and on-going random drug testing agreement in effect.

Americans With Disabilities Act

It is the goal of the County to comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing reasonable accommodation for applicants and employees who may qualify under the Act. Employees with a qualified disability which inhibits their ability to perform the essential duties of their job should contact their supervisor to discuss accommodations which might be appropriate.

Quick Facts

The two most prevalent types of County employee accidents are slips/trips/falls and hitting or being hit by an object. The reason? Most employees say it's because they weren't paying attention.

Political Activities

Participation in political activity is a sign of good citizenship, but certain guidelines must be observed when you are an employee in public service.

You may not say or publish anything which implies County endorsement of any candidate. You may not engage in political activities, including soliciting for funds or being solicited for funds, during working hours, on County premises, or while wearing a County uniform. County officials and employees are prohibited from participating in political campaigning while on County time, including distribution of campaign literature, either during work hours or on County premises. This prohibition includes the displaying of campaign materials on County property, including walls, bulletin boards, doors and County-owned vehicles or equipment.

Conflict of Interest

County employees are generally prohibited from entering into contracts in which they have a financial interest and the County is a party. In addition, certain County employees must regularly report on specified investments, real property and/or sources of income which may be in conflict with their positions. If you have a question on the conflict of interest rules, contact your department head.

Gifts and Gratuities

Employees must devote their time to County business, and may not engage in private activities for profit during working hours. Any fees, commissions, or mileage received by an employee by virtue or function of his or her County position are the property of the County and must be turned over to the department head. Whether on duty or off duty, no employee or officer may accept any gift or favorable treatment which could reasonably be perceived as potentially influencing any decision or action of the officer or employee in his or her official capacity or any decision or action of the department which he or she represents.

Travel While on County Business

Employees who are required to travel in the performance of duties will be reimbursed for the actual and necessary expenses, up to the maximum per diem rate authorized by the Board of Supervisors. Reimbursable expenses include transportation, lodging, meals, and other necessary and incidental charges. You must obtain prior approval from your department head or supervisor for any travel or travel-related reimbursement prior to the expense being incurred. Certain types of travel also require prior approval by the County Administrator or the Board of Supervisors.

Rules and Regulations

In addition to the specific areas covered in this section, it is important that County employees adhere to generally accepted standards of workplace conduct. The County organization is here to serve Kings County citizens, and we must all remember that the public, our managers, supervisors, and co-workers judge us, in large part, on basic qualities such as courtesy, integrity, and reliability.

Attendance

All Kings County employees are expected to be at work on time and to establish and maintain patterns of regular attendance. The taxpayers, the public and those we serve expect County operations that are productive, efficiently run and responsive to their needs. In order to serve the public, supervisors, managers and co-workers count on each employee's attendance and punctuality.

The County recognizes that employees will need time off from work periodically for medical appointments, illness or injury, to care for covered family members, or for unforeseen emergencies. For that reason, the County provides paid leave benefits, such as sick leave, family illness sick leave, and vacation leave.

However, a department head may determine that absences, including tardiness, are excessive if the level of absenteeism is disruptive or harmful to department operations, unduly burdens supervisors or co-workers, or negatively impacts the department's ability to provide expected levels of service.

Excessive absenteeism may include some or all of the following when an employee:

- Is continually or consistently late to work;
- Is frequently or continually absent in excess of sick leave accruals;
- Demonstrates a pattern of absences, such as surrounding weekends or holidays;
- Repeatedly requests the use of vacation leave for sick leave events due to lack of adequate sick leave balances; or
- Frequently or repeatedly calls in sick, arrives late or leaves work early with unplanned or unexplained "emergencies" or "appointments".

The department may initiate progressive disciplinary action if sustained improvement in attendance patterns is not achieved after warnings or counseling.

Working Hours

Working hours are determined by the requirements of each department. Most departments operate on a Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. schedule.

Public safety positions in the Fire Department, Sheriff's Office and Probation Department maintain various shifts over a 24-hour period. Some departments, such as Library and Public Works, have day, evening or weekend schedules.

Some departments may have approved flextime schedules, such as a 9/80 or 4/10 work schedule. Your supervisor will advise you of the work schedule and/or schedules pertaining to your job and department. Employees and departments must have pre-authorization to alter regular work schedules or to "flex" their work shifts or regular work schedules.

Meal Period and Rest Breaks

Most employees normally receive a 30- or 60-minute meal period, depending on the work assignment. However, the meal period may be canceled or rescheduled due to operational requirements. The meal period includes travel to and from the break site. Typical employees are allowed a 10-minute rest break near the mid-point of every 4-hour work period. Meal periods and breaks may not be saved for time off, and are scheduled by your department to ensure that services to the public are not impaired. Meals should be scheduled in the middle of the work period to the extent feasible.

No Smoking Policy

Smoking is not permitted inside any County building or facility.

In addition, California law prohibits smoking within 20 feet of entrances, exits and operable windows of any building owned, leased, and occupied by the County.

Dress Code

Although there is no official Countywide dress code, some departments do have dress regulations which will be discussed with you. Employees are expected to wear clothing appropriate to their job and work site. Clothing and appearance should be neat, clean, in good business taste, and not constitute a safety hazard.

Confidentiality of Information

As a County employee, you may have access to confidential information, legal records, medical records, or data about County business, the public or other employees. It is the responsibility of all employees to maintain strict confidentiality of information obtained directly or indirectly through County employment. Employees are not to divulge or disclose to unauthorized parties confidential information available to them through the direct or indirect course of their employment, or use such information for personal gain, either for themselves or for others. Failure to comply with this policy may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Compliance with HIPAA Regulations

HIPAA, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, is a federal law which applies to medical professionals and those involved in the delivery of health care services. Certain employees, primarily those employed in the Health Department, may be required to comply with HIPAA laws concerning medical patient information, billing, and records. If this law and its requirements apply to you, you will receive training and more information at your work site.

Public Statements and News Media Interviews

As an employer in the public arena, County officials and department representatives are often called upon to speak in the community and to issue news releases or provide information to news organizations about County policies, actions, incidents or events. Elected officials and department heads, or their designees, are the only County representatives who are authorized to speak or write about County issues in an official capacity. If you voice your opinions as an individual about County or other matters, you must make it clear to your audience that you are doing so as a private citizen and not as an authorized representative of the County.

Quick Facts

The Environmental Health Division of the Health Department awards "Food Safety All Star" awards to give positive recognition to food establishments within Kings County that have consistently exceeded requirements in terms of protecting the public from food borne illness risks. Copies of recent inspection reports for all retail food facilities in the county are available at:
<http://www.countyofkings.com/Health/ehs/reports.html>

Computer Usage and Security

The computers and computer systems in the County and in each department are the sole property of the County. Employees authorized to use computers must follow all County and departmental policies and procedures for acceptable use. Any employee who illegally accesses or misuses any County computer hardware or software program, or who assists someone else in illegally accessing or misusing the computer system, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from County employment. In addition, a suspected misuse or an illegal access incident may also be referred to the District Attorney for investigation and possible criminal prosecution.

Many County employees may be authorized to use the electronic mail (e-mail) and/or may have Internet/Intranet access through the County's computer system. Improper use of e-mail or the Internet, such as sending or storing messages that are derogatory, defamatory or obscene, or otherwise inappropriate or unrelated to County business, is prohibited, and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. The County reserves the right to monitor the computer system based on legitimate business needs, including the right to review, audit and disclose all matters sent over and/or stored in the system.

Appendix E of this handbook contains more information about the County's Computer and Electronic Technology Usage Policy. In addition to the Countywide policy, each department has adopted its own policy concerning standards and procedures for the proper and authorized use of department computers. Be sure you are aware of the requirements of these policies if you are assigned usage of a County computer.

"Inside Kings" County Intranet Access for Employees

The County's web site at www.countyofkings.com is available to anyone seeking information about County services, programs, events or activities.

For employees, there is also access to a wide array of County employment information and forms through "Inside Kings." This Intranet service can be accessed from a County computer through the Internet by typing *insidekings* on the address line at the top of the Microsoft Internet Explorer page.

The site is updated regularly and new forms and information are added or activated on an on-going basis.

Use of County Property

Employees may not use or take, nor authorize anyone else to use or take, County supplies, material, vehicles, keys, equipment or property for unauthorized use, including unauthorized personal use. This includes things such as computers, fax machines, telephones, pagers, postage or postage meters, copy machines and the County mail system. Employees found to be in violation of this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees may request to use County business machine equipment during non-working hours for non-compensated, non-commercial, non-political private use providing that they have received express, discretionary approval from the department head. Approval may be made if it is determined that benefits flow to the County from the additional training and experience gained by operating the business machine equipment for private use. The department head may withdraw approval at any time.

Identification Badges

Some departments require that you wear an employee identification badge with your photograph on it while on duty. This badge identifies you when dealing with the public. If your ID badge is lost or stolen, or if you change your name, report it immediately to your supervisor and you will receive a replacement. Upon separation from employment or during periods of leave of absence, you must return your ID badge to your department.

County Uniforms

You may be required to wear a uniform in the performance of your duties. The uniform is to be worn during regular working hours and may include wearing the uniform to and from work, but it is not to be worn at other times. The County provides the uniform or a uniform allowance, but it is your responsibility in most cases to maintain the uniform in a neat and clean condition.

Parking

Vehicle parking is provided in several designated areas at each work site. Your supervisor will instruct you about any parking requirements or restrictions at your site.

The County is not responsible for fire, theft or damage to employee vehicles or their contents.

County or Personal Vehicle Use

If your job requires you to drive on County business, you may be authorized by your department to check out a County vehicle. Departments may also authorize the use of a rental vehicle or you may drive your own personal vehicle on County business. Follow your department's procedures for checking out a County vehicle or requesting a rental car.

The use of County vehicles for anything other than County business is strictly prohibited.

If you use your own personal vehicle for authorized County business you may submit a claim for reimbursement at the current IRS rate based on the actual number of miles driven. No other reimbursement for expenses, accidents or injuries, or personal vehicle damage (including insurance deductibles) incurred in driving your own vehicle is allowed for you or any passengers.

If you are driving on County business and are involved in a collision, however minor it may be, you must file a police or highway patrol report. You must also notify your department immediately and may be required to complete a separate department report.

Personal Property Security

The County does not insure and cannot guarantee the security of your personal property on the premises. The County is not responsible for theft of or damage to personal property brought or stored on County premises. Keep purses, packages or other personal items out of sight in secure locations. Take personal items with you when you leave for the day.

Personal Telephone Calls

Personal telephone calls are not to be made on County time if at all avoidable. If you must make or receive occasional personal calls at work, keep them to an absolute minimum in terms of frequency and length. Personal toll and long-distance calls must be charged to your home telephone or credit card.

Many employees carry privately owned cellular phones, pagers or other electronic devices. The wide availability of these devices can lead to problems in the workplace when their use becomes disruptive to the work environment or unnecessarily or inappropriately affects the quality of services provided to the public. Therefore, your department may restrict the personal use of cell phones, pagers or other electronic devices in County offices or facilities during working hours.

Selling on County Premises

Selling or solicitations on County property is restricted to approved charitable, non-profit organizations or County-affiliated non-profit organizations. Authorization for eligible non-profit groups to conduct sales or solicitations on County property must be obtained in advance through the County Administrative Office. Only the County Administrator is authorized by the Board of Supervisors to approve or deny sales or solicitations on County property.

Employment of Relatives

County policy does not allow employment of relatives when employment would result in a supervisor-subordinate relationship. Department heads and elected officials are prohibited from hiring their own relative to a position within their department. The County retains the right to refuse to place employees who are relatives in the same department, division or facility when it would create an adverse impact on supervision, safety, security or morale, or involves conflicts of interest. The County's policy applies to all employment appointments, including extra help positions.

Outside Employment or Activities

Employees may not engage in any employment, activity or enterprise for compensation which is inconsistent, incompatible, in conflict with or harmful to the duties, functions or responsibility of the employees' position or department.

Prohibited employment, activity or enterprise includes:

- The use for private gain or advantage of County time, funds, facilities, equipment or supplies, or the badge, uniform, prestige, or influence of a County office, position or equipment.
- Receipt or acceptance of any money or other consideration from anyone than the County for performing or failure to perform duties or acts which would be required during the regular course of employment.
- Performance of an act in a capacity other than an officer or employee of the County which may later be subject directly or indirectly to the control, inspection, review, audit, or enforcement of another officer or employee.
- Involves time demands that would render performance of the employee's duties less efficient.

Please check with your supervisor if you are involved in outside employment to verify that such employment is not in conflict with County or department regulations.

Employee Services

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Depending on the bargaining unit, the County offers an assistance program to employees and their immediate families. This licensed, limited-term counseling service provides assistance and referrals for marriage and family problems, eating disorders, treatment for drug and alcohol addiction, depression, grief issues, anxiety, or other personal, family, or emotional problems.

All counseling services are confidential, and unless you are referred to the employee assistance program by your supervisor, the County will not know you have used the service. The cost for counseling sessions is paid by the County. If further referral or treatment for a particular need is required, the employee is responsible for any cost. For those enrolled in the County's health insurance plan, additional mental health counseling services may be available and may be coordinated with the EAP benefit. For more information, contact Human Resources or your supervisor.

Deferred Compensation

The County offers a deferred compensation plan with several investment options. This is a voluntary program which can supplement your retirement income. Your contributions are not taxable until receipt, which typically occurs after separation from County employment. Contact Human Resources for more information.

Flexible Benefits Program

Employees may enroll in the County's Flexible Benefits Program. This program allows you to pay for certain qualified benefits with pre-tax salary, possibly increasing your spendable income and making the benefits more affordable.

Benefits which qualify for a Flexible Benefits Program are: payment of group health or certain other insurance premiums, dependent care of children or dependent adults, or out-of-pocket medical expenses not covered by insurance plans. In addition, employees have the option of purchasing private insurance coverage, such as life insurance, cancer insurance or short-term disability insurance. The premiums for these plans can be automatically deducted from your paycheck on a pre-tax basis.

Contact the Administrative Office for more information. An appointment can be scheduled for you to meet with an insurance representative.

Credit Union

Employees and certain members of their families may join the Kings Federal Credit Union, which offers a number of financial services including direct payroll deposit. It is located across from the main government offices on Lacey Boulevard.

Employee Recognition Programs

Employee of the Quarter Awards

Each quarter a nominated employee is selected for recognition of their superior job performance and commitment to public service. An advisory group of management and non-management employees reviews nominations and makes a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors who awards \$300 and a certificate.

Employee Service Awards

To recognize career employees, service awards are presented to employees annually by the Board of Supervisors. Service awards are presented to employees with continuous service at each five year milestone.

Public Employee Recognition Week

Annually in the spring, during Public Employee Recognition Week, a luncheon barbecue is hosted by the Board of Supervisors for all employees to acknowledge their service to the citizens of Kings County.

Employee Break Rooms

Rooms are available at the various work sites for rest breaks and meal periods. These facilities may also be used for employee meetings with approval from the department head.

Job Announcements

Job announcements about current openings are sent to every department through e-mail. The Human Resources Office also has a 24-hour recorded "Job Hotline" which provides a current list of jobs open to the general public (Telephone: 559-583-7631). Additionally, job announcements are available at the County web site: www.countyofkings.com.

Quick Facts

The Code Compliance Section of the Community Development Agency abates and removes up to 100 derelict or abandoned vehicles and several dangerous buildings and other nuisance properties in Kings County per year and resolves several hundred zoning or nuisance complaints per year.

Employee Organizations

Employee organizations serve many purposes for employees, and they work with the County toward common goals. A primary purpose of these organizations is to represent employees on matters such as pay, work hours, and grievances. State laws guarantee your right to join an employee organization.

At present the County formally recognizes five employee organizations:

Detentions Unit

Representative: Kings County Detention Deputy Association

Fire Unit

Representative: Kings County Firefighters' Association

General Employee Unit

Representative: CCAPE/SEIU

Law Enforcement Unit

Representative: Kings County Deputy Sheriffs' Association

Prosecutors Unit

Representative: Kings County Prosecutors' Association

Management employees are not represented. There are three categories of management employees: department heads (Group I), supervisory or middle management positions (Group II), and certain confidential employees (Group III) who assist department heads with employer-employee relations matters.

Suggestion Program

The Suggestion Program encourages employees to submit ideas on how to save the County time and money; eliminate waste, duplication of effort, or a safety hazard; or improve service to the public.

A complete description of the program's guidelines is described on the Suggestion Program Form, which is available in each department, at the County website and in the Human Resources Office. Suggestions can be submitted whenever you have an idea that you would like be considered. Suggestions can be sent directly to the Human Resources Office.

All valid suggestions will be reviewed by the Employee Recognition Committee. The Committee can recommend a cash award of up to 10% of the anticipated savings from an implemented suggestion, up to a maximum of \$1000. Non-cash awards may also be made for implemented suggestions which do not result in budgetary savings.

Safety and Security

Personal Security

Be alert and aware of suspicious or unusual occurrences that may indicate a threat of harm, theft, vandalism, or other damage to County employees, property, vehicles, landscape or buildings. Report incidents and details to your supervisor or the Sheriff's Department or other appropriate law enforcement personnel.

Driving Safety

County-owned vehicles must be used for official County business only and must be operated in a manner consistent with all safety and legal requirements of the County, state, and other jurisdictions in which the vehicles are being operated. Employees violating this provision are subject to disciplinary action and any financial obligation incurred. The use of seat belts is mandatory. It is the employee-driver's responsibility to ensure that all passengers are provided with and are utilizing seat belts. Use of a cell phone while driving is prohibited unless permitted by State law.

Unless specifically authorized by your department head or his/her designee, you may not transport non-authorized passengers in County vehicles, trucks or other motorized equipment. The County does not provide liability or insurance coverage for non-authorized passengers in County vehicles.

Workplace Safety

Kings County is vitally interested in the safety of each County employee. We are all responsible for helping to make the County a safe place to work.

Employees are expected to practice good safety habits at all times and are responsible for:

- observing safe work practices, including the use of protective equipment where required;
- immediately or as soon as possible reporting all on-the-job incidents of illness or injury to a supervisor (who should then submit appropriate paperwork to Risk staff in the Administrative Office); and,
- reporting any malfunctioning vehicles or equipment or any condition that might be hazardous to your safety or the safety of other County employees or the public.

Don't hesitate to ask your supervisor about any phase of your job that may seem hazardous or unfamiliar.

On-The-Job Injuries

County employees are provided statutory workers' compensation benefits for work-related injuries or illnesses. If you are injured due to an on-the-job accident, you are required to report it promptly to your supervisor.

Workers' compensation temporary disability benefits are coordinated with your sick leave accruals. This means if you have accrued sick leave, your sick leave will be coordinated with any workers' compensation temporary disability benefit payments. The combination of workers' compensation and your accrued sick leave pay cannot exceed your regular bi-weekly base salary earnings. Upon exhaustion of sick leave, other accumulated leave, such as vacation leave, may be coordinated with workers' compensation at the employee's discretion.

You have the right to see your personal physician or other licensed medical provider for an industrial injury. However, prior to an injury, your selection of a physician must be on file in the Administrative Office identifying the physician's name and address. The physician selected must be familiar with your medical history and/or have rendered medical treatment to you in the past, and must acknowledge in writing that he/she is willing to provide care for a workers' compensation injury or illness. Otherwise, the Administrative Office will automatically direct all medical treatment to a County recognized physician, medical group or facility. If you change physicians without prior authorization from the County, all medical bills incurred with any other physician(s) may be your own responsibility. The exception is if your own pre-authorized treating physician should refer you to another physician for care or treatment.

Certain employees in "safety" positions, (i.e. Fire and Law Enforcement), are covered by other legislated benefits if they are injured on-the-job.

Off-Duty Injuries

The County is not liable for injuries which may occur during your voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, athletic or social activities, including County or employee social events where participation is voluntary and not part of your assigned duties.

Driver's License Verification

If you are assigned to drive a County vehicle, a rental car, or your own vehicle on County business, you must have a valid, appropriate California driver's license. Periodically, you will be asked to verify this. If your driver's license is revoked, expired, or suspended, you must notify your supervisor immediately.

Workplace Violence Policy

California law requires that employers establish a policy to deal with acts of or threats of violence in the workplace, and employees must be made aware of their responsibilities to comply with the County's policy.

Kings County works to provide a safe and secure environment so that employees and those who use our services can be reasonably free from fear of violence, aggression, intimidation, harassment or retaliation. Acts or threats of violence against the life, health or well being of employees, members of their families, or their property, either in the workplace or in connection with County employment, will not be tolerated.

Any such acts by County employees toward others constitute grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from County employment, and could result in criminal prosecution. A threat may in and of itself constitute grounds for discipline, whether or not the perpetrator intended to carry out the threat.

All employees are encouraged to be alert to persons whose actions or presence appears to be suspicious in nature or who display behavior not typically expected of an ordinary employee, customer or visitor. If you have concerns about the intentions of any such persons, avoid them if possible and quickly but quietly notify others around you or a supervisor or manager.

Employees should be on the County's premises only during normal business hours or authorized hours of work. Individuals not employed by the County should be accompanied by a County employee when they are afforded access to areas normally restricted to employees only.

Appendix D in this handbook provides a summary of the County's policy, including the duty to report acts or threats of workplace violence. For a more complete description of the Workplace Violence Policy, contact the Human Resources Office or your supervisor.

Appendix A

KINGS COUNTY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Step One

When an employee has a grievable matter, he/she should discuss the matter informally with the immediate supervisor. Initial discussion should occur within five working days after the alleged incident or issue occurred or after the employee should have reasonably been aware of the incident causing the grievance.

Step Two

If, within five working days, a mutually acceptable solution has not been reached at the informal level, the employee may submit the grievance in writing to the supervisor's superior. At this point, the grievance process becomes formal and the employee may choose to be accompanied by a representative of his/her choice. The supervisor's superior will hold a formal hearing and will issue a written decision regarding the grievance within five working days.

Step Three

If the written decision is unsatisfactory to the employee, he/she may request in writing that the grievance be presented to the department head for review. This

request must be made within five working days of the receipt of the written decision. The department head will review the grievance and give a written decision within five working days.

Step Four

If the employee is dissatisfied with the decision of the department head, he/she may, within five working days of receipt of the department head's decision, request in writing that the grievance be presented to the Personnel Appeals Board for a formal hearing. A hearing will be scheduled within 30 working days from the filing of the appeal, unless extended for good cause.

Employees filing grievances shall not be subjected to reprisals of any nature. County management employees and the employee initiating the grievance must abide by all time limits at each step in the process, unless an extension of the time limits is mutually agreed to by all parties. All grievances will be treated as confidential.

Grievance Timetable

Step 1 Informal Discussion with Immediate Supervisor	Time Limit to File Within 5 days of grievable action	Decision Will Be Given Within: 5 days
Step 2 Formal written grievance to Supervisor's superior	Time Limit to File Within 5 days of decision by Immediate Supervisor	Decision Will Be Given Within: 5 days of formal conference
Step 3 Formal written request for Department Head review	Time Limit to File Within 5 days of decision by Supervisor's superior	Decision Will Be Given Within: 5 days of review by Department Head
Step 4 Formal written request for Personnel Appeals Board hearing	Time Limit to File Within 5 days of decision by Department Head	Appeals Board Hearing Within: 30 days of request, unless extended for good cause

Appendix B

KINGS COUNTY HARASSMENT POLICY

The County of Kings believes in the practice of Equal Employment Opportunity for all persons employed by and those seeking employment with the County. Discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, medical condition, age, or marital status, by another employee or supervisor, will not be tolerated under any circumstances, and can lead to discharge.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment is unacceptable conduct in the workplace and will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment constitutes unlawful gender discrimination and is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Sexual harassment refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally offensive, that fails to respect the rights of others, that lowers morale and that, therefore, interferes with work effectiveness. The victim of sexual harassment defines what is unwelcome. Behavior that constitutes sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to: unwanted sexual advances; favors such as offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors; making reprisals or threats or implied threats of reprisal for resisting sexual advances; leering or making sexual gestures; displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, magazines or other materials; making or using sexually derogatory comments, slurs, jokes or epithets; being verbally abuse or graphically commenting about someone in a sexual nature; or offensive or uninvited physical conduct, such as touching, brushing against, or impeding or blocking movement.

Complaints can include non-County employees such as vendors and the general public.

Employees who feel they have been discriminated against or sexually harassed should take the following steps:

- Notify the individual that the particular behavior is offensive and unwelcome and that it will be reported.
- Notify a supervisor, department head or the Human Resources Office as soon as practical. Employees need not follow the chain of command when reporting incidents of discrimination or sexual harassment.

It is the employee's responsibility to bring sexual harassment and/or discrimination complaints to the attention of a supervisor, department head or the Human Resources Office to ensure proper follow-up. The complaint will be fully and objectively investigated. No employee will be subject to retaliatory action or reprisal as a result of filing a complaint.

Appendix C

KINGS COUNTY SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Kings County and its employees recognize that behavior resulting from the misuse of alcohol and other drugs may detrimentally affect work performance, safety, and public confidence in the County's work force, and may present a risk to County employees and to the health and welfare of the citizens of Kings County.

This policy applies to alcohol and any other drug that could impair an employee's ability to do his/her job safely and effectively, and it applies to everyone who works for Kings County.

The County's basic policy is this:

Employees shall:

- Not report to work or be subject to duty while their ability to perform job duties is impaired due to on or off duty alcohol or drug use.
- Not possess, use, or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (illegal drugs and legal drugs without a prescription) during working hours, while on standby, during meal periods or breaks, while operating County equipment, while driving a County vehicle or using a personal vehicle on County authorized business, or at anytime while on County property. (This does not include sworn law enforcement personnel who may, while in the necessary performance of their duties, be in possession of legal or illegal drugs.)
- Not directly or through a third party sell or provide drugs or alcohol to any person, including any employee, while either or both employees are on duty or on standby.

If an employee is reasonably suspected of violating this policy, the County reserves the right to search, without employee consent, all areas of property over which the County maintains full control or joint control with any employee. In areas not under County control, the County may notify the appropriate law enforcement agency that an employee may be in violation of the County Substance Abuse Policy.

Employees must inform their supervisors before beginning work when they are taking any medication, prescription or non-prescription, which may interfere with the safe and effective performance of their duties or operation of County vehicles or equipment or their own personal vehicle when used for County business. Employees must submit immediately to an alcohol and/or drug test when under reasonable suspicion by a trained department supervisor, management representative or law enforcement representative.

Employees who think they may have an alcohol or drug abuse problem are urged to voluntarily seek assistance. Kings County provides all employees with the services of an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). While the County will be supportive of those who seek help voluntarily, any employee found to be in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Appendix D

KINGS COUNTY POLICY on WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

It is the policy of Kings County to endeavor to provide for employees a safe and secure working environment, reasonably free from fear of violence, aggression, intimidation, harassment or retaliation. Acts or threats of violence against the life, health or well being of employees, members of their families, or employee property, either in the workplace or in connection with County employment, will not be tolerated.

Any such acts by County employees toward others constitutes grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from County employment, and could result in criminal prosecution. A threat may in and of itself constitute grounds for discipline regardless of whether or not the perpetrator intended to carry out the threat.

For the purpose of this policy, violence is defined as:

Verbal Violence Threats, verbal abuse, or harassment involving language designed to threaten, intimidate or do harm.

Physical Violence Unwelcome physical contact between two parties. Physical violence includes assaults, sexual assaults, or property damage deliberately caused.

Written Violence Written threats including letters, notes, plans or drawings describing, detailing, warning or delivering threats.

Prohibited acts include intentionally damaging property owned, operated or leased by the County.

Violent Acts Defined

Acts constituting violent behavior will not be tolerated. Violent actions include but are not limited to the following:

- Striking, punching, slapping, spitting at or on, or otherwise assaulting another person.
- Fighting or challenging another person to fight.
- Grabbing, pinching or touching another in an unwanted way whether sexual or otherwise.
- Engaging in dangerous, threatening or unwanted horseplay.
- Possession of a firearm, replica firearm, explosive device, or incendiary device on County property, in County vehicles, in other County equipment, or while engaged in activities for the County in other locations, unless such possession or use is a requirement of the job or otherwise legally permitted or authorized.
- Use or threat of use, of any object intended as a weapon of aggression (i.e. as opposed to justifiable self-defense) while engaged in County business at any location or on County property, including parking lots, other exterior premises or while in or using County vehicles.
- Threatening harm or harming another person or any other action or conduct that implies the threat of bodily harm.

Episodes of workplace violence can be reduced only if employees are willing to report threats of violent behavior. Report any acts of violence or threats of violence to a supervisor, manager, department head or to Human Resources or Administration. In the event of an immediate threat, call the Sheriff's office or appropriate law enforcement personnel.

Appendix E

COMPUTER and ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY USAGE POLICY

Kings County has adopted a countywide policy regarding employee use of County computers or other electronic technology. This policy applies to all employees. It also applies to any others authorized to use County computers or electronic technology, such as work experience placements, trainees or interns, vendors, independent contractors, or volunteers.

The County's computer system and equipment and all County-owned, leased, or controlled computers and electronic technology, equipment or devices are the sole property of the County. The County reserves the right to control and monitor the use of its computers and computer systems.

PRIVACY AND MONITORING

Employee communications on the County's computer system are not private, and employees should never have an expectation that their messages, files, documents or computer use are or will be kept private. The County reserves the right to monitor employee usage of the computer system or other electronic technology or devices to ensure proper working order, appropriate and authorized use by employees or non-employees, the security of County data, or to retrieve the contents of any employee communications or other transmissions or use of the system.

UNAUTHORIZED USE

Unauthorized use by employees of a County computer or other electronic technology is strictly prohibited. Employees are not allowed to make or attempt to make unauthorized use of any County computer, the computer system, or other electronic technology or device(s).

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

The County's computer system cannot be used to solicit others for personal or commercial ventures or gain, religious activities, or political causes, campaigns or issues. In addition, the County expressly prohibits the use of computers, the computer system, or other electronic technology or devices in ways that are inappropriate, unauthorized, disruptive, illegal, and/or offensive to others.

For example, accessing, displaying, transmitting, downloading or printing sexually explicit images, messages, web sites, jokes or cartoons is strictly prohibited. Other such examples of misuse may include, but are not limited to, use of foul or demeaning language, threats, disparaging or insulting comments, personal or ethnic slurs, racial comments, off-color or offensive jokes or images, or anything that may reasonably be construed as harassing, intimidating, offensive, or retaliatory.

For a complete description of the County's computer use policy, contact the Human Resources Office or your supervisor.

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