



RESOLUTION TITLE: TO APPROVE REVISIONS TO THE GASTON COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL RELATED TO POLICY 10, BEREAVEMENT LEAVE POLICY AND CAREGIVER POLICY

WHEREAS, Gaston County believes it is important to have a Personnel Policy Manual for employees and supervisors to follow; and,

WHEREAS, it is prudent to review and revise the policy manual periodically to make sure it is understandable, consistent, and up-to-date with current law, regulations and philosophy; and,

WHEREAS, the current personnel policy manual was approved effective July 1, 2010; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed revisions to the personnel policy are outlined in Exhibit A (attached); and,

WHEREAS, the Gaston County Board of Commissioners must adopt all changes to the Gaston County Personnel Policy Manual.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners adopts revisions to the Gaston County Personnel Policy to be effective January 1, 2025, as outlined in Exhibit A.

DO NOT TYPE BELOW THIS LINE

I, Donna S. Buff, Clerk to the County Commission, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of action taken by the Board of Commissioners as follows:

NO.	DATE	M1	M2	CBrown	CCloninger	AFraley	BHovis	KJohnson	TKeigher	RWorley	Vote
2024-396	11/12/2024	KJ	CC	A	A	AB	A	A	A	A	U

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EXHIBIT A

10.12 Maternity/Paternity

Gaston County is firmly committed to protecting the rights of expectant mothers and complying with Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act as amended by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978. Gaston County's policy is to treat women affected by pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions in the same manner as other employees unable to work because of their physical condition in all employment aspects, including recruitment, hiring, training, promotion and benefits.

Further, Gaston County fully recognizes eligible employees' rights and responsibilities under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), applicable state and local family leave laws, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Pregnant employees may continue to work until they are certified as unable to work by their physician. At that point, pregnant employees are entitled to receive benefits in accordance with FMLA and Gaston County's Maternity/Paternity Leave Policy.

10.12.1 Eligibility

Both, mothers and fathers, can take FMLA leave any time in the first 12 months after a child's arrival. However, employees must conclude their leave before the 12-month period ends. When both parents work for Gaston County, they are limited to a combined total for 12 workweeks of leave in a 12-month period. In this case, each parent would have the difference between 12 weeks and the amount of leave they took for the child to use for any other legitimate FMLA reason in that year.

Maternity/Paternity leave may be taken for the following FMLA-qualifying reasons:

- The birth of a son or daughter and bonding with the newborn child.
- The placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care and bonding with the newly-placed child.

10.12.2 Benefits

In addition to the provisions under FMLA, Gaston County offers the following Maternity/Paternity benefits:

- An additional 6 ~~2~~-weeks of paid leave following the birth or placement of a child. Maternity/Paternity Leave and FMLA leave will run concurrently.
- The ability to request ~~donated leave~~ Shared-Sick Leave in accordance with Gaston County policy.
- Five (5) additional days of sick leave upon return to work.

10.12.3 Return to Work

Employees will be considered to be on Unauthorized Leave if they do not return to their positions after their Maternity/Paternity Leave is exhausted. Unauthorized Leave is considered voluntary resignation and grounds for discharge.



Subject: Bereavement Leave

Effective Date: January 1, 2025

Policy Code Number: HR-11.3.5

County Manager: Matt Rhoten

Responsible Department: Human Resources

- 1. Purpose:** The Bereavement Leave Policy was established to provide support for employees during times of bereavement while maintaining a structured framework for organizational continuity.
- 2. Eligibility:** All full-time employees are eligible for bereavement leave, and the policy extends to cover the loss of immediate family members, as defined in Gaston County Personnel Policy 3.1.3.
- 3. Duration of Bereavement Leave:** Employees are entitled to a maximum of 24-business hours of fully paid bereavement leave upon the death of an immediate family member, per calendar year. Bereavement leave time must be taken within the calendar year and remaining time cannot be banked for the following calendar year. Bereavement leave time will not be paid out upon separation from employment.
- 4. Notification Process:** Employees are required to notify their immediate supervisor as soon as possible in the event of a bereavement situation. In the event an employee needs leave time extended beyond three days, the employee may use a paid leave benefit if it's available, in this order: compensatory time, sick leave, and annual leave. A written request for additional bereavement leave, beyond the initial 24 business hours, must be submitted to the department and the Director may approve the request. Leave without pay is also an option, which would require Director approval.
- 5. Documentation:** Supervisors may request appropriate documentation, as needed, to support the employee's bereavement leave request. This documentation will be handled with the utmost sensitivity and confidentiality.
- 6. Flexible Scheduling:** To accommodate the grieving process, employees may request flexible scheduling options during the bereavement period. These requests should be submitted to a supervisor for review and approval.
- 7. Confidentiality:** All information related to an employee's bereavement situation will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality. Supervisors and HR personnel are trained to handle such matters discreetly.
- 8. Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Gaston County encourages employees to utilize the Employee Assistance Program for additional support during challenging times. The EAP provides counseling services and resources to help employees cope with grief and loss.



Subject: Caregiver Policy

Effective Date: January 1, 2025

Policy Code Number: HR-11.8.4

County Manager: Matt Rhoten

Responsible Department: Human Resources

1. Policy Purpose

The Caregiver Policy is designed to create a compassionate and inclusive workplace that supports the caregiving responsibilities of county employees. This policy establishes guidelines and provisions to assist caregivers in balancing their professional and caregiving obligations.

2. Definition of Caregiver

A caregiver, for the purposes of this policy, refers to an employee who provides regular and substantial care to an immediate family member, as defined in Gaston County Personnel Policy 3.1.3, with a medical condition or disability.

3. Eligibility

Full-time and Part-time employees who serve as caregivers are eligible to benefit from the provisions outlined in this policy.

4. Confidentiality

The organization is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of employees' caregiving responsibilities.

5. Flexible Work Environment

To support caregivers, Gaston County acknowledges the need for a flexible work environment. Such an environment may include:

- Adjusted work hours
- Remote work
- Job-sharing arrangements
- Compressed workweeks

In the event flexible options are needed, the employee and supervisor will collaborate with Human Resources to create suitable adjustments. Adjustments are contingent on the operational needs of the department.

6. Leave Policies

Eligible employees may request:



- Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or other statutory leave benefits
- Use of paid leave benefit (vacation, sick, comp. In special cases time off without pay may be allowed)
- Use of the Donation of Leave Program (if eligible)

7. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Gaston County provides access to an Employee Assistance Program offering counseling/support services in efforts to manage stress and maintain overall well-being.



Gaston County

Gaston County
Board of Commissioners
www.gastongov.com

Human Resources

Board Action

File #: 24-555

Commissioner Johnson - Human Resources - To Approve Revisions to the Gaston County Personnel Policy Manual Related to Policy 10, Bereavement Leave Policy and Caregiver Policy

STAFF CONTACT

Amia Massey - Human Resources - 704-866-3160

BUDGET IMPACT

N/A

BACKGROUND

The current Personnel Policy was approved by the Board of Commissioners on July 1, 2010. The manual is reviewed periodically and updated and revised as necessary. All changes to the policy must be approved by the Board of Commissioners. Upon approval of this request, the Personnel Policy will incorporate the revision to Policy 10 and addition of Caregiver Policy and Bereavement Leave Policy.

POLICY IMPACT

See attached for full details of proposed policies.

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution; Exhibit A

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