



County of Ventura

# General Services Agency

# Employee Handbook



**March 2017**



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## **GSA Vision, Mission, and Values**

### Vision

Our Vision is to be valued as a reliable strategic and innovative partner, trusted advisor, and public steward.

### Mission

We contribute to the quality of life in Ventura County by partnering with our customers to provide expertise and cost-effective service delivery, and foster the preservation of natural resources.

### Values

**1. Integrity**

*We fulfill the promise of our mission while holding ourselves accountable to the highest ethical and professional standards.*

**2. Stewardship**

*We are responsible stewards of all resources with which we have been entrusted. We are accountable for ensuring the proper use of public funds and take seriously our responsibility to both maximize efficiency in the delivery of quality services and protect our valued natural resources.*

**3. Customer Service**

*We utilize our expertise to effectively address the needs of our customers and the community and courteously and reliably respond to service requests.*

**4. Partnership**

*We proactively engage our customers and develop strong relationships to collaboratively understand their requirements and expectations.*

**5. Leadership and Innovation**

*We seek innovative approaches to challenges and foster a culture that encourages curiosity and resourcefulness. We are committed to personal growth and development at all levels.*

**6. Transparency and Open Communication**

*We conduct ourselves with openness and candor in all aspects of our work to build trust among our employees, partners, and the public.*

## **Director's Message**

Welcome to the County of Ventura, General Services Agency. You're joining a dynamic team committed to supporting our customers through strategic partnerships and "great service always." Each and every one of you, our employees, play an essential role in our efforts to serve our customers while working to improve the Agency. Working as a team, we provide vital direct support to other County agencies, patrons of the County parks, and each other.

The General Services Agency is fully committed to process improvement using the Lean Six Sigma framework – and we rely on each of you to help us follow through on that commitment. Together, we will look for and implement changes that help us continually improve how we serve our customers; provide an exciting, safe, and vibrant workplace where all employees thrive; and create value for all County residents. We encourage you to not only ask "why?" but "what can I do?" The best change starts with you: our employees.

I want to extend a warm and sincere welcome to all of our new employees. For those of you who are continuing your County career with us, thank you for your past and continued service. Stop by and say hello: my door is always open.

David J. Sasek, P.E.  
Director  
General Services Agency

## **Introduction**

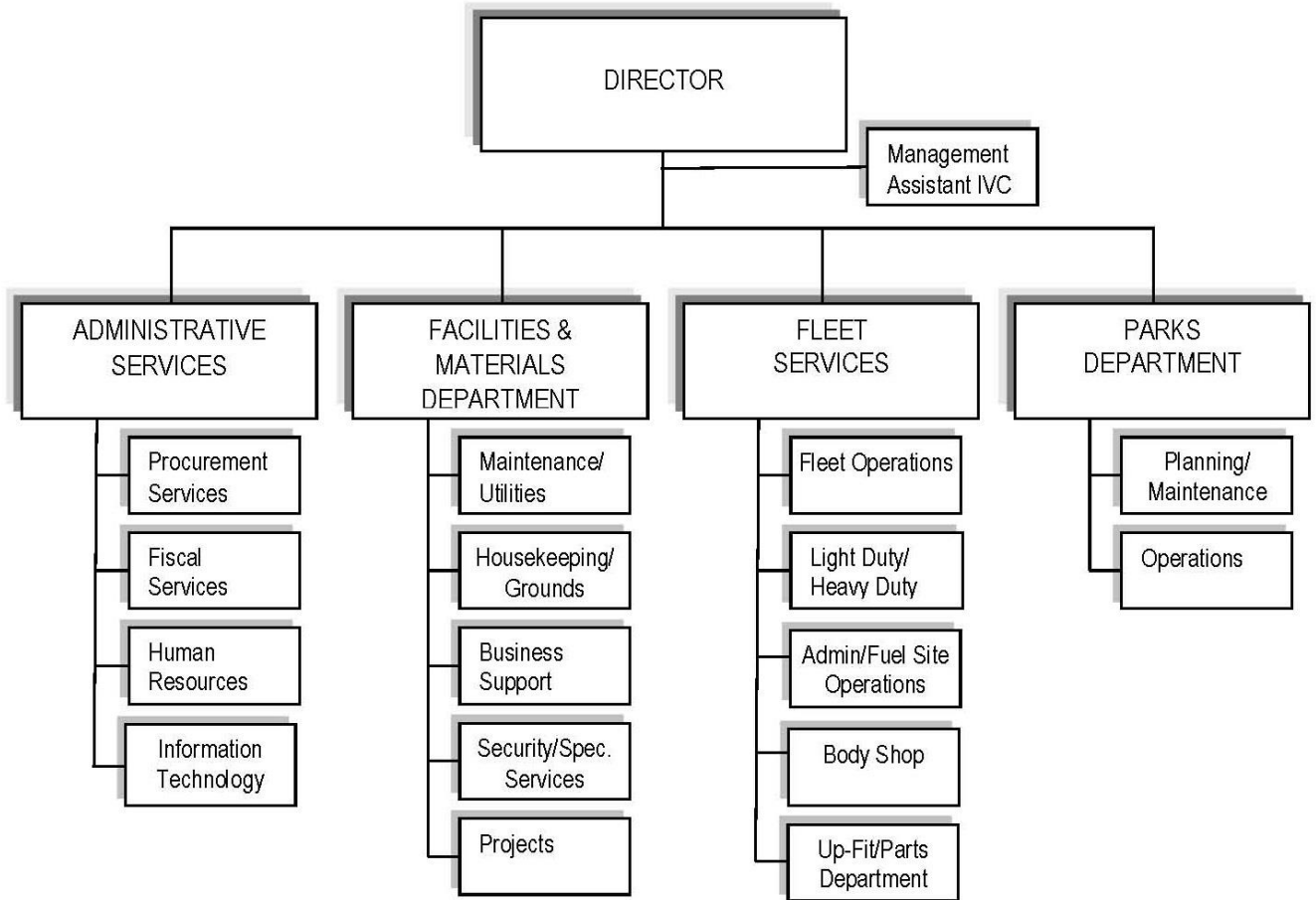
This handbook was developed to assist you in finding the answers to some of the questions that you may have regarding your employment with County of Ventura. This handbook outlines general Agency and County guidelines in force at the time the handbook was developed and/or revised. Please take the necessary time to read it. Many matters covered by this handbook, such as benefit plan descriptions, are described in detail in separate County documents. This handbook is subject to the terms of any applicable collective bargaining agreement. Neither this handbook nor any other verbal or written communication by a management representative is, nor should it be considered to be, an agreement, contract of employment expressed or implied, or a promise of treatment in any particular manner in any given situation.





# I. The General Services Agency

The General Services Agency (GSA) is responsible for County Facilities Management, Procurement, Automotive and Heavy Equipment Fleet Services, and County Parks. Our 270 employees ensure a safe, healthy, and productive business environment for the County, and oversee world-class park and camping facilities for the public's enjoyment. For more information, see the GSA Intranet Website at: <http://vcweb/gsa/index.htm>.



## **II. Governing Principles of Employment**

### ***2-1. Code of Ethics***

Each employee has an obligation to the citizens, the people's elected representatives, fellow employees, and the administration to cooperate in accomplishing the County's goals, expose corruption wherever discovered, refrain from disclosing any confidential information, preserve and safeguard the County's assets, and uphold these principles, ever conscious that public employment is a public trust. Employees have the ethical duty to refrain from discrimination in any County activity because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or functional limitation.

As representatives of the County of Ventura and stewards of taxpayer resources, employees are expected to be conscientious of public perception and make the most cost-effective, conservative financial decisions possible that impact agency or County operations. Employees must also refrain from accepting gratuities (fee, compensation, gift, payment of expense, or any other item of monetary value) in circumstances that may result in, or create the appearance of resulting in, the use of public office for private gain; preferential treatment of any person, impeding governmental efficiency or economy; any loss of complete independence or impartiality; the making of a County decision outside official channels; of any adverse effect on the confidence of the public in the integrity of County government. (County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Policy No. Chapter I-3; Article 25, Personnel Rules and Regulations)

### ***2-2. Equal Employment Opportunity***

County of Ventura is an Equal Opportunity Employer. It is the policy of the County of Ventura to assure equal employment opportunity to its employees and applicants for employment on the basis of fitness and merit without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, disability, sex or age. The County of Ventura adheres to this policy with respect to recruitment, hiring, and promotion into all classifications and with respect to matters of compensation, benefits, transfers, assignments, tours of duty, shifts, layoffs, returns from layoffs, demotions, terminations, training, education leave, social and recreational programs, and the use of County facilities. (County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Policy No. Chapter VIII (A)-2)

To this end, employees who are not able to perform the essential functions of their job after a disability occurs will be considered for reasonable accommodation, which may, in part, involve disability reassignment, including other County job openings for which they are qualified and which they can perform. This policy shall not be construed to either expand rights or obligations required by law or to guarantee the employment of any person who, with or without reasonable accommodation, cannot perform the essential duties/responsibilities of the position to which they are assigned. It should be noted that nothing in this policy is to be construed as requiring the creation of a position to accommodate the permanent limitations of a disabled employee.

The County will make reasonable accommodations to the known physical or mental limitations of qualified employees with disabilities unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of County business (County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Policy No. Chapter VIII (A)-10). In keeping with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the

County also accommodates sincere religious beliefs of its employees when such accommodation does not pose an undue hardship on the Agency's operations.

Any employee with questions or concerns about equal employment opportunity can speak with their supervisor, the GSA Personnel Manager (654-3943), or the County's Equal Employment Officer (654-2568). The Agency will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who engage in good faith disclosure of alleged wrongful conduct pertaining to issues of equal employment opportunity.

### ***2-3. Discrimination and Harassment***

The County of Ventura intends to be impartial in the treatment of employees and job applicants without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, medical condition, gender, sexual orientation, age (over 40), marital status, or disability. The workplace is to be free of racial, ethnic, sexual, and religious harassment. Discrimination Prevention training is required every 2 years for all regular County employees. Adherence to this policy is a condition of employment for all employees. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal. (Ventura County Employees Handbook, January 2015)

If you believe that you have been subjected to, or know of, conduct which violates this policy or any other policy, you should report the matter as soon as possible to one of the following individuals: Your supervisor, the GSA Personnel Manager, the GSA CEO-HR Personnel Analyst, the County EEO Officer, or the Human Resources Director.

### ***2-4. Sexual Harassment/Hostile Work Environment***

All County employees will maintain a workplace that is free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other offensive verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: 1) Submission to sexual advances is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; 2) Submission or rejection by an employee is used as the basis of an employment decision (tangible job benefits, promotion, retention, performance appraisal, etc.); or 3) When the conduct unreasonably interferes with the affected person's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Department managers and supervisors will take all reasonable steps necessary to prevent sexual harassment from occurring. Any employee who believes he or she has been the subject of sexual harassment/hostile work environment should report the alleged improper act or omission immediately to his/her Agency Personnel Officer, Department Head, CEO-HR Personnel Analyst, the EEO Officer, or the Human Resources Director. An investigation of all complaints will be undertaken immediately. Any supervisor, agent, or employee who is found by the County, after appropriate investigation, to have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal. (Administrative Policy Manual, Policy No. Chapter VIII (A)-3)

### ***2-5. Substance Abuse-Free Workplace***

The General Services Agency maintains a workplace free of substance abuse in accordance with the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988. The unlawful or unauthorized manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance by an individual anywhere

on County premises, while on Agency business (whether or not on County premises) or while representing the Agency, is strictly prohibited. Employees and other individuals who work for the Agency also are prohibited from reporting to work or working while they are using or under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substances, except when the use is pursuant to a licensed medical practitioner's instructions and the licensed medical practitioner authorized the employee or individual to report to work. (Drug-Free Workplace policy adopted by the Board of Supervisors, 5/16/1989)

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action. The County Personnel Rules and Regulations state "...drunkenness on duty, intemperance, addiction to use of narcotics or habit-forming drugs...or other failure or good behavior or acts which are incompatible with the public service, are grounds for demotion, suspension, reduction in pay, or dismissal." (Personnel Rules and Regulations Sec. 2105; Ventura County Ordinance Code, Section 1345.1.4.13.1; County of Ventura Employee Handbook)

When the medical condition of an employee is believed to hamper the ability to perform his or her normal duties or where impairment may be hazardous to him or his fellow employees, the appointing authority may require the employee to undergo a medical examination. (Personnel Rules and Regulations, Section 610)

## ***2-6. Customer Service Expectations***

Customer service is the responsibility of every member in the General Services Agency. We consider each customer's satisfaction to be our responsibility. A customer is not an interruption to our work, but rather the purpose of our work. We recognize that every interaction with a customer – personal meeting, phone call, email, or letter – represents an opportunity to make a positive impression. We at GSA ultimately serve the citizens of Ventura County, who deserve our very best efforts. We are in a position of public trust, and must earn that trust every day by adhering to the highest standards of ethical, personal, and professional behavior. GSA's customer service standards are detailed in the GSA Customer Service Policy (August 2008 [under review]).

# **III. Operational Policies**

## ***3-1. Job Appointments***

Job appointments impact an employee's eligibility for benefits and eligibility for overtime pay. County employees may be appointed to positions in the following types of positions:

**Regular Employees** – Employees who hold an allocated full time (32+ hours per week/64 hours biweekly) or part time (less than 32 hours per week/less than 64 hours biweekly) position in the County budget, excluding but not limited to extra-help, fixed-term, intermittent employees, or enrollees in training programs. (Personnel Rules and Regulations, Sec. 251) Regular employees are generally eligible for all benefits (pro-rated for part-time employees).

**Intermittent Employee** – A person employed for intermittent/temporary work on a day-to-day basis who is compensated on an hourly basis. (Personnel Rules and Regulations, Sec. 234) Intermittent employees are ineligible for all but statutory benefits.

**Extra-Help Employees** – Employees who were hired for a specific short-term project, or on a short-term basis. (Personnel Rules and Regulations, Sec. 229) Extra-help employees are ineligible for all but statutory benefits.

**Fixed-Term Employees** – Employees who hold an appointment in a fixed-term position, either full or part time. Such appointments are made from appropriate eligible lists and subject to conditions set forth for regular classified employees. (Personnel Rules and Regulations, Sec. 231) Fixed-term employees are generally eligible for all benefits (prorated for part-time employees).

**Exempt and Non-Exempt Positions** – For purposes of Federal and State labor laws, job classifications are categorized as either “exempt” or “non-exempt.” Exempt employees do not receive overtime pay and receive the same biweekly salary regardless of hours worked. Non-exempt employees are eligible for overtime pay. Job postings generally state whether a position is exempt or non-exempt from overtime. When you start work with GSA, you will be informed of your Fair Labor Standard Act status. If you have any questions, please contact GSA Personnel.

### ***3-2. Probationary Period***

Regular full-time and part-time permanent employees are subject to a probationary period, as well as intermittent full-time or part-time employees. This time period gives the Agency the opportunity to evaluate the performance of new or promoted employees. Most non-management positions have a 1040-hour probationary period; however, some non-management professional and technical classifications have a 2080-hour (approximately 12-months for full-time) probationary period. (Personnel Rules and Regulations, section 246.) Please refer to the applicable Memorandum of Agreement regarding the probationary period for your specific job classification.

### ***3-3. Continuous Service Hours***

“Continuous Service Hours,” as defined in the Ventura County Human Resources Payroll System (VCHRP), are the hours for which an employee has been compensated up to 80 hours per pay period. This value updates each pay period and only resets and starts over when certain transactions occur, like an Employee Class change from Extra Help to Regular. Continuous service hours are used to determine certain employee benefits, such as vacation, annual leave, and seniority. Overtime does not count toward Continuous Service Hours. Leave without pay also reduces the number of continuous service hours accrued by an employee.

### ***3-4. Performance Review***

Performance Reports are periodic evaluations of an employee’s work. (Personnel Rules and Regulations, section 239.) Supervisors are asked to review and document employee performance as per the appropriate Memorandum of Agreement.

### ***3-5. Employee Records – Personal Data***

It is your responsibility to keep your personnel record up to date by using Ventura County Human Resources/Payroll system (“VCHRP”) to update personal information. You are to keep

your address and phone numbers up to date. Inaccurate emergency contact numbers or an incorrect address would make it impossible to reach you in an emergency. Report changes of marital status to your payroll representative to insure appropriate benefit coverage.

### **3-6. *Verification of County Employment and Income***

The County of Ventura uses an automated service to provide employment and income verification for County employees. "The Work Number" is an automated service that provides proof of employment and/or income. You can reach them at [www.theworknumber.com](http://www.theworknumber.com) or 1-800-367-2884. The Employer Code for the County of Ventura is 13009 and the default Pin for employees is the last four digits of their social security number and the birthday MMDD. "The Work Number" program eliminates the need to contact the County and reduces delays. In most cases, verification can be done while the employee is sitting in the lender's office. However, there is a charge to the verifying entity requesting verification.

Please contact GSA Payroll if you need verification and the verifying entity is not enrolled in "The Work Number" program.

### **3-7. *Working Hours and Schedule***

Employees are assigned a work schedule and expected to begin and end work according to the schedule. Your supervisor may allow you to take a rest period of up to fifteen (15) minutes in the first and second half of your shift, if scheduling and workload permit. It is not intended that breaks are to be used to arrive to work late, leave work early, or extend lunch/meal periods. Your supervisor will advise you of the time of your breaks. You are expected to return to work promptly at the end of any break. (Administrative Policy Manual, Policy No. Chapter VIII (B)-1.)

To accommodate the needs of the County, the Agency may need to change individual work schedules on either a short-term or long-term basis. Please refer to the appropriate Memorandum of Agreement.

### **3-8. *Timekeeping Procedures***

GSA employees record their time in the Ventura County Human Resources Payroll system (VCHRP). Your supervisor will show you how to log on and report time. If you have any questions, please call GSA Payroll at 654-2357 or 654-2356.

Altering, falsifying, or tampering with time records is prohibited and is considered as altering a public document for personal financial gain. Any such act subjects the employee to discipline, up to, and including discharge, and may result in criminal prosecution.

Exempt employees are required to record their daily work attendance and report full days of absence from work for reasons such as leaves of absence, sick leave, or personal business.

Non-exempt employees record actual hours worked each day.

### **3-9. Overtime**

You must refer to the appropriate Memorandum of Agreement for your job classification for details regarding overtime pay. Nonexempt employees may work overtime only with management authorization.

Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime pay.

### **3-10. Your Paycheck**

County employees are paid biweekly. Generally, there are 26 pay periods per year. Your payroll stub itemizes deductions and differentiates between regular pay and other types of pay received, such as overtime, sick pay, vacation and incentive pay.

If you believe there is an error in your pay, bring the matter to the attention of GSA Payroll. If you opt for a paper paycheck and cannot pick it up, you must request that it be mailed or designate in writing the person to whom GSA Payroll can release your paycheck. An email designation originating from your County of Ventura email account is acceptable.

### **3-11. Direct Deposit**

The easiest and most effective method for enrolling in direct deposit is to set it up through Self Service in VCHRP. You can designate to have your entire pay check go to one financial institution or you can have it split up to deposit into no more than two different financial institutions. Alternative to online direct deposit enrollment, you may complete the Direct Deposit Program Authorization Form (located on the Auditor-Controller's intranet website), attach a voided check or savings deposit ticket and submit it directly to the Auditor-Controller.

Note: It will take one full pay period to verify the financial banking information whether you enroll online or submit the completed form; therefore, you may receive a hard check initially before the direct deposit takes place. This also holds true if you have a direct deposit account established and are changing financial banking institutions. Contact GSA Payroll for more information.

Employees with direct deposit can insure the confidentiality of their pay stub information by electing to suppress their pay advice in VCHRP. Employees who opt for direct deposit can view their pay advices in VCHRP and print them out. Contact GSA Payroll for instructions about how to suppress your pay stub.

### **3-12. GSA Safety Program**

GSA provides a healthful and safe work environment. We rely upon employees to ensure that work areas are kept safe and free of hazardous conditions. Employees are required to be conscientious about workplace safety, including proper operating methods, and recognize dangerous conditions or hazards. GSA will, to the best of its ability, make certain you are properly trained and know the safety rules for your job. Each employee must report all unsafe or unhealthy work conditions to their supervisor. Any suspicion of a concealed danger present on the Agency's premises, or in a product, facility, piece of equipment, process or Agency business practice shall be brought to the attention of management immediately.



Periodically, the Agency may issue rules and guidelines governing workplace safety and health. The Agency may also issue rules and guidelines regarding the handling and disposal of hazardous substances and waste. All employees should familiarize themselves with these rules and guidelines, as strict compliance will be expected.

Any workplace injury, accident, or illness must be reported to the employee's supervisor as soon as possible, regardless of the severity of the injury or accident.

### **Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP)**

The GSA Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) was developed to promote the health and safety of its employees and worksite. The IIPP handbook outlines policies and procedures designed to reduce job related injuries and illnesses and to inform and educate employees in areas of preventive safety and health.

Program activities include occupational health and safety training, hazard inspections, accident investigations, communication on health and safety issues, and measures to ensure employee compliance with safe and healthful work practices. The IIPP manual is provided to each new employee and can be viewed on our Agency's Health & Safety intranet site, <http://myvcweb/index.php/health-policies-procedures>

If you have an occupational health or safety concern report it to your supervisor immediately. If you still have questions or concerns or desire additional information on the safety program please contact the GSA Safety Officer.

### **Building Emergency Plan**

GSA has developed Building Emergency Plans (BEP) for all GSA facilities. These plans contain the site-specific information you will need in order to be safe and prepared in the event of an emergency. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring every employee is familiar with the BEP, workplace evacuation routes, emergency assembly area, and the locations of first-aid supplies and fire extinguishers.

Building evacuation diagrams are posted throughout County facilities located at the base of stairways, elevator landings, and inside public doors to ensure all employees and guests can safely exit during an emergency.

Refer to the BEP for detailed information on site-specific emergency response to fire, earthquakes, civil disturbance, bomb threats, and other emergency situations. For further information on the BEP contact your supervisor or call the GSA Safety Officer.

### ***3-13. Reporting Workplace Injuries***

Job-related work injuries are covered by Workers' Compensation insurance. If you are injured on the job, no matter how slightly, report the incident immediately to your supervisor. Your supervisor must give you a copy of the Employee's Claim for Workers' Compensation Benefits, RM135/DWC-1(Rev. 01/16), to report your injury. Return this form to your supervisor as soon as possible. Failure to report a work-related injury in a timely manner may affect your eligibility for Workers' Compensation benefits. In addition, supervisors are to complete the Employer's Report of Occupational Injury or Illness (RM75-3/03) and send it to GSA Personnel immediately.

Please refer to the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Policy No. Chapter IX -11 for more detailed information.

### **3-14. Traveling on County Business**

In some instances GSA employees may be required to travel for training, conferences, or special meetings. It is expected that employees traveling on County business will conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the County of Ventura. The County reimburses employees for actual, reasonable, and necessary expenses. However, the County will not reimburse for expenses related to flight upgrades, including “early bird” or priority boarding, nor are such upgrades considered a necessary, covered expense. Any such upgrades are the financial responsibility of the employee.

Non-exempt employees (hourly) will only be compensated for overtime if attendance at conferences and seminars is required by the appointing authority and is in excess of their normal, scheduled work hours.

For details regarding allowable expenses and other aspects of business travel for the County, refer to the Administrative Policy Manual, Chapter VII (C) - 1.

### **3-15. Business Expense Reimbursement**

Employees may be reimbursed for reasonable approved expenses incurred in the course of business. These expenses must be authorized and approved by GSA management, and may include air travel, accommodations, meals, cab fare, rental vehicles, or gas and car mileage for personal vehicles. (Administrative Policy Manual, Chapter VII (C) – 1)

All expenses must be detailed on the appropriate claim form (travel or mileage claims), signed by your supervisor, and forwarded to GSA Fiscal, along with the receipts, in a timely manner.

### **3-16. Energy Conservation/Sustainability**

GSA is committed to energy conservation and sustainability. The GSA Energy Action Plan states that GSA shall strive to:

1. Minimize the energy intensity in GSA-maintained buildings through the identification and implementation of energy efficiency projects;
2. Ensure that projects whose primary purpose may not be energy savings, such as upgrades to the HVAC, electrical, or water fixtures, consider reducing energy use and maximizing operational efficiency during the design phase;
3. Reduce the use of electricity, natural gas, and water by a minimum of 15% over the next five years through targeted energy projects, management of building operating schedules, use of peak shifting operating strategies, management of utility rate structures, and the installation of low-flow water fixtures. Minimize project costs by taking advantage of available utility incentives;
4. Pursue United States Green Building Council’s (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building certification and/or the Environmental Protection Agency’s ENERGY STAR certification for appropriate GSA-maintained buildings;

5. Influence employee behavioral changes through an education program consisting of articles in the GSA newsletter and other publications, targeted emails, seminars, information kiosks, and responding to employee concerns about energy use.

### **3-17. Security**

The County is dedicated to providing a safe and secure workplace. Chapter IV (B) of the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual details County policies and procedures regarding a variety of security issues. Formal Workplace Security training is required every four years for regular County employees. The main policies are summarized here. Please refer to the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual for more details.

#### **Workplace Violence**

The County of Ventura is dedicated to the prevention of all levels of violence and is committed to reduce the occurrence and impact of violence throughout the community as well as the workplace. "Violence" is defined as any use of physical force, harassment or intimidation, or abuse of power or authority, where the intended impact is to control by causing pain, fear, or hurt. (County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual Policy No. Chapter IV (B) – 3)

Physical, written, or verbal threats or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward or by any Agency employee *will not be tolerated*. GSA employees are prohibited from carrying weapons onto Agency or County premises.

All potentially dangerous situations, including threats by coworkers, should be reported immediately to GSA Security and/or any member of management.

#### **Bomb Threats**

Bomb threats must be handled in a consistent manner to protect lives and property. If a bomb threat is received: 1) Call 911 immediately, 2) report the threat to your supervisor, 3) report the threat to Security at 654-2931, 4) Complete the bomb threat card, which is located in the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual Policy No. Chapter IV (B) – 4, 5) give the completed card to the first law enforcement officer that arrives, 6) do not open any suspicious letter or package. If the threat is imminent, the building will be immediately evacuated following proper evacuation routes and procedure. Please refer to the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual Policy No. Chapter IV (B) – 4 for details.

#### **Identification Badge/Digital Access Cards**

Identification Badges are issued to all County employees and are to be worn at all times when working on County premises. The identification badges also integrate digital access cards that allow employees access to County facilities. Badges are issued at the time of employment as well as when access changes need to be made due to reassignments, promotion, or job changes. You will be given an ID Badge requisition at the time of employment. GSA security will require this form and a valid Driver's License to obtain, replace, or update your badge.

Badges are issued by GSA Security Operations located at the GSA Service Building at the Ventura County Government Center. If your badge is lost, stolen, or misplaced, immediately notify GSA Security at (805) 477-4079 and your supervisor. Your supervisor will contact GSA Personnel to arrange to have a replacement badge/access card issued. Upon termination of employment, you are to return your badge to your supervisor.

For more information regarding ID Badges and Electronic Access, refer to the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual Policy No. Chapter IV (B)-5 and Chapter IV (B) - 8.

### **Key and Lock Control**

If you are issued any County key, you are not to share or loan it to anyone. Lost keys of any type shall be reported immediately to your supervisor and the GSA Security Office at (805) 654-2931. Details regarding this policy are found in the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual Policy No. Chapter IV (B)-7.

### **Additional Security Policies**

Additional security policies detailed in the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual are: Communication on Significant Events (Policy No Chapter IV(B) – 1); Security Awareness Training (Policy No Chapter IV(B) – 2); After-Hours Access to Hall of Administration and Hall of Justice (Policy No Chapter IV(B) – 6); Emergency Call-Back List (Policy No Chapter IV(B) –9); Critical Incident Stress Debriefing for Employees (Policy No Chapter IV(B) –10); Business Continuity Planning (Policy No Chapter IV(B) –11); and Emergency Preparedness (Policy No Chapter IV(B) –11).

### ***3-18. Ride Sharing***

As a viable means to reduce air pollution within Ventura County, it is the policy of the Board of Supervisors to educate employees about the benefits of ride sharing, to encourage the use of ridesharing on a regular basis, and to assist them in meeting their rideshare desires. Employee ridesharing is supported through the following core elements: Preferential carpool parking, bicycle lockers, and a guaranteed ride home. If you are interested in more information about ride sharing, bicycle lockers, and the ride home program, please refer to the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Policy No. Chapter IV (A)-6. Information about carpool permits can be obtained by calling GSA Special Services/Security at (805) 654-3797.

### ***3-19. County Employees as Disaster Service Workers***

In the event of a local, state, and/or federal declaration of an emergency, all public employees are deemed disaster service workers. As such, employees: 1) Are provided the immunities, protections, and benefits under California Labor Code, Division 4, Chapter 1, Section 3211.92, 2) and must remain on their jobs until authorized to leave, 3) may be required to remain on their jobs after their shift ends, 4) are expected to report to their normal work locations if at all possible or may report to the labor pool area in the County facility nearest their home, 5) may be reassigned to other departments/facilities, or to do work that they do not normally perform, 6) may be asked to cancel vacations that were approved before the disaster occurred, and 7) may be pre-identified, trained, and deployed to disaster areas, with the concurrence of their supervisors or managers. (County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Policy No. Chapter VIII (A) – 18)

The GSA Recall Policy provides details on the various methods of communication that the Agency will use to communicate and direct County employees in the event of an emergency. The policy describes the phone contact methods (call-back tree, hierarchy, non-systematic, and simultaneous call systems) that may be employed as well as communication via commercial radio stations, email, and social networking sites. The policy can be viewed in its entirety at: [myvcweb/index.php/policies-and-procedures](http://myvcweb/index.php/policies-and-procedures).

### **3-20. Driving County and Personal Vehicles on County Business**

The County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Chapter III, contains a variety of policies regarding vehicles, travel, and transportation. Two of these policies are highlighted here, as is the GSA policy on cell-phone usage while driving on County business.

#### **Use of County and Private Vehicles for County Business**

All persons driving a County vehicle or a personal vehicle on County business must have a valid Driver's license and must obey all traffic laws, including seatbelt use. Persons driving a personal vehicle on County business must have proof of automobile liability insurance in the vehicle at all times. Only persons who are conducting County business are permitted to drive or ride in County vehicles. (County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Policy No. Chapter III-2)

#### **Storage of County Vehicles**

Vehicles assigned to departments must be stationed at the principal worksite. Vehicles assigned to individuals shall be stationed at the principal worksite, except those needed on 24-hour call. Vehicles assigned to individuals on 24-hour call may be stationed at the County facility nearest the employee's home (County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Policy No. Chapter III – 3).

#### **Operation of County Vehicles**

The County of Ventura Vehicle Operator's Handbook is found in the glove box of all County vehicles. Refer to your handbook for complete details. If you have any questions regarding operating a County vehicle, or procedures involving your vehicle, please feel free to contact GSA Fleet Services at 672-2060.

A Vehicle Operation Daily Checklist is included in the Vehicle Operator's Handbook. Please refer to this section of the handbook. Vehicle operators who need assistance in checking these items should visit any of the repair and services listed in this handbook.

#### **Accident Reporting**

Accident Reporting Procedures are detailed in the Accident Reporting Kit in the glove box of each vehicle. Any vehicles involved in an accident or damaged, are considered out of service until they are brought to Fleet Operations and are inspected. This must be completed before the vehicle is put back into service. Please follow the procedures in the Accident Reporting Kit in the vehicle. If the vehicle you are driving does not have an

accident reporting kit, call Fleet Services at 672-2060 to arrange to have one sent to you. If you are using a County Motor Pool vehicle and do not see an Accident Reporting Kit in the glove box, please email Fleet at [motorpool@ventura.org](mailto:motorpool@ventura.org). You can find the accident reporting form online at <http://vcweb/gsa/Fleet/pages/Forms.asp> – click on “GSA Fleet Forms.”

## **Central Motor Pool Vehicles**

All County employees and other authorized persons are eligible to use vehicles from the Central Motor Pool, provided they have a valid driver's license and have been authorized by their Agency management to use a pool vehicle. To get information as to how to register in the system and reserve online, go to <https://fleet.invers.com/vec/>. For questions, call 672-2001 Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, except holidays and weekends. (County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Chapter III-2)

## **Cellular Phone Usage When Driving**

The County Cellular Telephone Acquisition and Use Policy (June 9, 2004) states cellular telephones may be used while actively driving if they are equipped with a “hands-free” system, i.e., voice-activated dialing. Therefore, if acceptance of a call while driving a County vehicle is necessary, the employee must use a hands-free “blue tooth” option. (County of Ventura General Services Agency, Driving Safety Program Cellular Phone Usage, March 1, 2006) Even though it is authorized, GSA employees are encouraged to keep phone use while operating a vehicle to a minimum and are reminded that they must comply with all applicable laws while doing so.

## **Department of Motor Vehicles Employee Pull Notice (EPN) Program**

GSA participates in the Department of Motor Vehicles Employer Pull Notice (EPN) Program. The EPN Program is a means to promote driver safety through the ongoing review of driver records. The EPN program allows the Agency to monitor driving records of employees who drive on behalf of the County. For more information, refer to the GSA DMV Employee Pull Notice Program – Non-Mandated Enrollment (Class C, no hazardous waste or special endorsements) Policy.

### ***3-21. Outside Employment***

Article 19 of the Personnel Rules and Regulations details the rules governing outside employment of County employees. In general, County employees are prohibited from holding employment outside the County service when the employment interferes with satisfactory service due to physical or mental fatigue; or, a conflict of interest exists which is deemed to be detrimental to the County service. Please refer to Article 19 of the Personnel Rules and Regulations for details. Employees are expected to inform their supervisors if they have outside employment and insure the appropriate form is completed and on file.

### ***3-22. Political Activity of County Employees***

Article 24 of the Personnel Rules and Regulations details the rules governing political activity of County employees. No employee of the County shall solicit political contributions from other

employees of the County or permit the services of his/her Department/Agency to be utilized to solicit, or process any political contribution, from other employees of the County.

Outside of regular working hours, employees are not prevented from soliciting or receiving political funds or contributions to promote the passage or defeat of a ballot measure which would affect the rate of pay, hours of work, retirement, civil service, or other working conditions of employees of the County.

County employees are prohibited from participating in political activities of any kind while they are in uniform. County property, its buildings, appurtenances or resources may not be used for the solicitations of political assessments or contributions.

County elected officials or those seeking election to any office in the County shall not use, promise, threaten or attempt to use, any office, authority or influence to give or secure for any person, or to aid or prevent any person in securing, any position, nomination, confirmation, promotion, change in compensation or position, within the County in exchange for the vote or political influence or action of such person. Please refer to PRR Article 24 for detailed information regarding Political Activity of County employees.

## **IV. Benefits**

### ***4-1. Benefits Overview/Disclaimer***

The County of Ventura provides a combination of benefits to all eligible employees. In general, employees are entitled to paid vacations, holidays, sick leave, health, and retirement plans. Detailed benefits information is available on the Benefit's website at <http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/index.htm>

Employees can access information regarding their specific benefit plans by logging onto the Ventura County Human Resource and Payroll System (VCHRP), going to the Employee Self-Service Benefits menu item, and clicking on the "My Benefits" button. In addition, each year employees are provided with detailed Benefit Plans Handbooks at Open Enrollment.

### ***4-2. Paid Vacations***

For details on vacation accrual, please refer to the appropriate Memorandum of Agreement for your job classification. Every effort will be made to grant your vacation preference, consistent with our operating schedule. However, the Agency reserves the right to choose who may take vacation in keeping with the business needs of the department. Vacation requests should be submitted to your manager at least two (2) weeks or more in advance of your requested vacation dates.

Accrued, unused vacation is paid out at the time of separation from County service.

### ***4-3. Annual Leave***

Annual leave is granted in lieu of vacation and sick leave to GSA employees in GSA job classifications represented by the Ventura Employees Association or covered by the

Management, Confidential Clerical, and Other Unrepresented Employee's resolution. Please refer to the VEA Memorandum of Agreement or Management Resolution for details.

#### **4-4. Sick Leave**

For current details on sick leave, please refer to the appropriate Memorandum of Agreement. If you will be out of work due to illness, you must call in and notify your supervisor as early as possible, prior to the start of your workday. If you call in sick for three or more consecutive days due to your own or a family member's illness, you will need to complete a leave of absence request form and provide medical documentation for the leave. Please refer to the Leave of Absence Handbook at [http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Leave\\_of\\_Absence.htm](http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Leave_of_Absence.htm).

You may use a limited amount of accrued hours per year for family sick leave to care for an ill child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, spouse, or a registered domestic partner. Refer to the appropriate Memorandum of Agreement for detailed information and amount of authorized hours.

GSA may require you to provide a certification from a medical professional when you are absent from work due to illness and your sick leave or annual leave balance is less than 24 hours.

Refer to the appropriate Memorandum of Agreement to determine if you are eligible for a payout of accrued, unused sick leave at the time of separation and for the rate that will be applied.

#### **4-5. Jury Duty**

County of Ventura employees are allowed paid time off to perform jury duty. Employees must provide the Agency with proper notice of the request to perform jury duty and verification of service. You are expected to keep management informed of the expected length of your jury duty service and to report to work for the balance of the day if you are not required by the court. Please refer to the appropriate Memorandum of Agreement or the Management, Confidential Clerical and Other Unrepresented Employees Resolution.

#### **4-6. Serving as a Witness**

No deductions shall be made from the salary of an employee for an absence from work when subpoenaed to appear in court as a witness, other than as a litigant. Any fee or compensation for the service itself must be returned to the County for any days of absence for which the employee received salary as for a day worked, except if such service occurred during the employee's vacation or other authorized leave of absence. Please refer to the appropriate Memorandum of Agreement for details.

#### **4-7. Bereavement Leave**

If you are a full-time or part-time employee you will be allowed paid time off of up to three (3) days for the death of a member of your immediate family. Please refer to the current Memorandum of Agreement governing your job classification for specific details. In general, "immediate family" means the husband, wife, registered domestic partner, parent, brother, sister, child, stepchild, grandchild, grandparent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or stepparent of an employee. In administering this policy, the Agency may require verification of death.



You may be required to furnish documentation to substantiate the use of bereavement leave.

#### **4-8. Voting Leave**

In the event an employee does not have sufficient time outside of working hours to vote in a statewide election, the employee may take off sufficient working time to vote. Voting hours are from 7am to 8pm. An employee will be allowed a maximum of two (2) hours of voting leave on Election Day without loss of pay. Where possible, the supervisor should be notified of the need for leave at least three (3) working days prior to the Election Day. (California Elections Code, section 14001.)

#### **4-9. Employee Assistance Program**

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides confidential, professional mental health counseling support to you and your family when it is needed. The EAP is available to assist with personal crisis, marriage- or family-related problems, substance-abuse problems, or troubling challenges at work. EAP representatives are licensed mental health professionals who can provide up to 5 visits at no cost to you and/or family members. If you prefer, you can also contact the EAP to talk with a representative regarding community resources and referrals.

Services are confidential, guided by both legal and ethical policies that are designed to carefully protect your privacy. The EAP office is located at 950 County Square Drive, Suite 200, Ventura, CA 93003. You can contact the EAP for additional information at (805) 654-4EAP (327).

#### **4-10. Retirement**

##### **Ventura County Employees' Retirement**

Membership in Ventura County Employees' Retirement Association (VCERA) is mandatory for all regular employees of the County of Ventura that are scheduled to work for 64 or more hours biweekly. Generally, extra-help and part-time employees (a work schedule of less than 64 hours biweekly) are excluded from membership in the retirement system. Excluded employees are covered under the County of Ventura Supplemental Retirement Plan, also known as the "Safe Harbor" Plan. For detailed information regarding Ventura County Retirement, please refer to the VCERA Member Handbook available online at: <http://www.ventura.org/vcera>. VCERA Members also contribute to Social Security.

##### **Safe Harbor**

The County of Ventura Safe Harbor Retirement Plan, part of the Supplemental Retirement Plan (SRP), is a defined benefit pension plan that provides employees with an additional source of income upon retirement in compliance with the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1990 (OBRA '90). Eligible extra-help, intermittent, or part-time employees not covered under another County retirement system, and for whom the County is not paying Social Security taxes, are required to contribute 3% of their pay to the Plan beginning with their first pay period of eligible employment.

Contributions cannot be transferred to another retirement system and are not refunded to you when you terminate service with the County of Ventura. Your contributions will remain in the Plan until you are eligible for a retirement benefit. For more information contact your Safe Harbor Administrator at [safe.harbor@ventura.org](mailto:safe.harbor@ventura.org) or by phone at (805) 654-2921. Information is also available on the County Intranet at: [http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Safe\\_Harbor.htm](http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Safe_Harbor.htm)

Employees covered by Safe Harbor do not pay into Social Security.

## **Deferred Compensation**

The County offers regular eligible employees the ability to save for retirement on a tax-deferred basis through the 401(k) and 457 Plans. Tax-deferred means you don't pay income taxes on the amount you contribute to the Plans – or earnings on those contributions – until you withdraw those funds after you separate from service. County contribution rates are detailed in the appropriate Memorandum of Agreement or Management Resolution. To find out if you're eligible to participate in the Plans and to find out the amount of your County-matching contributions, or to request an enrollment kit, contact GSA's Personnel representative or the Deferred Compensation Program by e-mailing to [deferred.compensation@ventura.org](mailto:deferred.compensation@ventura.org). Information is also available on the County Intranet at [http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Deferred\\_Comp.htm](http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Deferred_Comp.htm)

### **4-11. Wellness Program**

The Ventura County Wellness Program is a nationally recognized, award-winning worksite health-promotion program. All Regular County employees and their spouses are eligible and encouraged to participate. Be sure to take advantage of the annual Wellness Profile and wide variety of Wellness Program classes on topics such as diabetes, weight loss, stress management, parenting, fitness, and more.

You can register for classes using your employee ID number and VCHRP password. You can also contact the Wellness office at (805) 654-2628. For more information or to register online, go to: <http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Wellness.htm>

### **4-12. Textbook and Tuition Program**

Some County employees are eligible for textbook and tuition reimbursement for courses taken on their own time to enhance their skills to take advantage of promotional opportunities within County service. Please refer to the appropriate Memorandum of Agreement for details. Applications must be completed and approved as indicated on the application and submitted to GSA Personnel prior to the start of the class. You will be notified if your application has been approved. Once you have completed the course or courses, you will submit a claim for payment. If you have questions, contact GSA Personnel.

## **V. Leaves of Absence and Disability Income Benefits**

The County of Ventura Personnel Rules and Regulations defines a leave of absence as an "authorized absence from duties with or without pay." The County's Leave of Absence Program applies to all regular employees and is described in detail in the Leave of Absence Handbook.

For other than pre-approved vacations, an employee should apply for a leave of absence when absent from work for **over 3 consecutive days**.

In many instances there are disability income programs for eligible employees that will provide income during all or part of an approved health-related leave of absence. For details regarding leaves of absence and coordination of benefits, please read the County Leave of Absence handbook.

The Leave of Absence Handbook is available at: <http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/index.htm>. The complete Leave of Absence Request packet is available from GSA Personnel.

### ***5-1. Health/Medical Leave of Absence***

If an employee suffers from a non-work related illness or injury and needs to take time off from work, the leave of absence is deemed to be Health/Medical Leave. Prior to returning to work, you will need to submit the Physician's Notice of Return to Work or Temporary Medical Restrictions. If returning to work with restrictions, the County's ability to provide workplace accommodation will depend on the nature of your physical activity restrictions and your ability to perform the essential duties of your position.

#### **Intermittent/Reduced Schedule Leave – Serious Medical Condition**

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) permits employees to take leave on an intermittent basis or to work a reduced schedule under certain circumstances. (CFR Title 29 Section 825.203) Intermittent/reduced schedule leave may be taken when medically necessary because of the employee's serious health condition, as certified by a physician.

Employees must work with their employers to schedule the leave so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. The employer may transfer the employee temporarily to an alternative job with equivalent pay and benefits.

### ***5-2. Industrial Leave of Absence***

If an employee suffered from a work-related injury or illness, which is approved by the County's Workers' Compensation Carrier, the leave is deemed to be Industrial Leave. In the case of GSA employees, the employee is approved for such leave if they are receiving Temporary Disability Benefits.

Prior to returning to work, you will need to submit the Physician's Notice of Return to Work or Temporary Medical Restriction. If returning to work with restrictions, your supervisor will make every effort to modify your duties or provide other work that is medically appropriate. The ability to provide workplace accommodation will depend on the nature of your physical activity restrictions.

Please contact GSA Personnel to obtain a Leave of Absence packet.

### ***5-3. Family Member Medical/Family Care Leave***

In general, the Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the California Family Rights Act (CFRA) allow eligible employees to take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid family/medical leave

within any 12-month period. Employees who qualify for such leave must provide medical certification of the medical necessity of their presence to care for the ill family member. Eligible employees must have worked for the Agency for at least 12 months with a total of at least 1,250 hours worked in the last twelve 12 months. Such leave is considered Family Leave. For more information on this type of leave refer to the Employee Benefits Handbook. Please contact GSA Personnel for a Leave of Absence packet.

To apply for paid Family Disability Leave benefits, go to <http://www.edd.ca.gov/> to request a claim form. Paid Family Leave brochures are available at GSA Personnel. Only employees who pay into and are eligible for State Disability Insurance are eligible for paid family disability leave.

### **Intermittent/Reduced Schedule Leave – Seriously Ill Family Member**

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) permits employees to take leave on an intermittent basis or to work a reduced schedule under certain circumstances. (CFR Title 29 Section 825.203) Intermittent/reduced schedule leave may be taken when medically necessary to care for a seriously ill family member.

Employees must work with their employers to schedule the leave so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. The employer may transfer the employee temporarily to an alternative job with equivalent pay and benefits.

### **5-4. *Pregnancy/Maternity/Family Care of Newborn Leave***

If an employee is on leave prior to and after the delivery of a newborn, the leave is deemed Maternity Leave. For employees who take leave beyond the recovery period immediately following delivery, the leave is considered to be Family Care Leave.

Under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA), if you are disabled by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, you are eligible to take a Pregnancy Disability Leave (PDL). PDL is for any period(s) of actual disability caused by your pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition up to four (4) months and does not need to be taken in one continuous period of time, but can be taken on an as-needed basis. Please refer to the Leave of Absence Handbook for details: [http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Leave\\_of\\_Absence.htm](http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Leave_of_Absence.htm)

### **Intermittent/Reduced Schedule Leave**

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) permits employees to take leave on an intermittent basis or to work a reduced schedule under certain circumstances. (CFR Title 29 Section 825.203) Intermittent/reduced schedule leave may be taken to care for a newborn or newly placed adopted or foster care child only with the employer's approval.

Employees must work with their employers to schedule the leave so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. The employer may transfer the employee temporarily to an alternative job with equivalent pay and benefits.

### **5-5. *Personal Leave***

The County of Ventura, under certain circumstances, may grant you a personal leave of absence without pay. A written request for a personal leave should be presented to management at least two (2) weeks before the anticipated start of the leave. If the leave is requested for medical reasons and you are not eligible for FMLA and CFRA, medical certification must be submitted as well. Please contact GSA Personnel to obtain a Leave of Absence packet.

## **5-6. Military Leave**

Section 395.01 of the Military and Veterans Code provides that employees with one year or more of County service, including recognized military service, are eligible to receive their regular salary for a period not to exceed 30 days. However, the County of Ventura Board of Supervisors has the authority to provide benefits in excess of those provided in the Military and Veterans Code; therefore, per Ventura County Resolution No. 17-052, and notwithstanding any provision of the County Administrative Manual, any regular County employee [in an unrepresented classification] with at least one year of County service who is called to active military duty in combat, preparation for combat, or for the war on terrorism resulting in deployment with the armed forces to a foreign country, and after receiving his/her regular salary as required by law, effective on the 31<sup>st</sup> day of the aforementioned leave, and for a period of up to 11 additional months of eligible deployment, the County will supplement the employee's full gross military salary to maintain the employee at the same assigned daily rate of pay as the date of deployment. Additionally, half-time (50%) holiday, sick, vacation, and annual leave accruals are also granted. The 11 months do not have to be consecutive. Refer to your applicable Memorandum of Understanding and Policy No. Chapter VIII (B) – 2 of the County Administrative Policy Manual for details.

The Military Service Notification and Request for Military Leave Pay is available at: [http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Leave\\_of\\_Absence.htm](http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Leave_of_Absence.htm)

## **5-7. Leave to Run for Elective Office**

“An employee who is a candidate for an elective County office shall be required to take a leave of absence.” Said leave of absence shall commence at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of election and shall include the privilege of using “earned vacation and compensatory time credits.” (Personnel Rules and Regulations, Article 17)

## **5-8. Disability Income Benefits**

Programs to assist disabled employees are briefly described below. Disability Income Benefits can be coordinated with an employee's leave balances to ensure compensation equal to the employee's regular salary during the period of disability. Please refer to the County Leave of Absence handbook for details regarding coordination of benefits.

### **State Disability Insurance (SDI)**

The State Disability Insurance (SDI) program was established for workers who suffer a loss of wages when they are unable to work due to a non-work-related illness or injury, or a medically disabling condition from pregnancy or childbirth. If your job is covered by a union contract that includes SDI benefits, you are automatically enrolled and premiums will be deducted from your pay. While you are disabled and unable to work, SDI pays you a

benefit based on your salary. You are eligible to file an SDI claim once you have made SDI contributions for at least six months. SDI is not a County-provided benefit. Contact the State Disability Insurance Program at (800) 480-3287. You can draw benefits from both the County's Wage Supplement Plan and SDI concurrently. Please refer to your Benefits Handbook available at: [http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Leave\\_of\\_Absence.htm](http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Leave_of_Absence.htm)

## **Workers' Compensation Benefits**

Employees that suffer from a work-related injury or illness are eligible to receive workers' compensation benefits. Workers' compensation will pay medical bills and provide compensation for lost income until you can return to work. Details are available at <http://www.dir.ca.gov/dwc>. Workers' compensation temporary disability benefits may be supplemented with sick leave, vacation, annual leave, and comp time hours in amounts less than or equal to the your full pay, LESS benefit payments.

### **Temporary Total Disability Benefits (TTD)**

Employees who are injured on the job and unable to return to work within three days are entitled to TTD benefits. These benefits partially replace wages lost as a result of the injury. These benefits are generally two-thirds of your actual wages and subject to a minimum and maximum amount set by the state. The payments are tax-free and there are no deductions. (Division of Workers' Compensation fact sheet C – Answers to your questions about temporary disability benefits.)

### **Temporary Partial Disability Benefits (TPD)**

Your doctor may return you to work on a part-time work schedule. In this case, you will be eligible to receive partial temporary disability or wage loss benefits subject to the same minimum and maximum limits. (Division of Workers' Compensation fact sheet C – Answers to your questions about temporary disability benefits.)

## **Wage Supplement Plan (WSP)**

The WSP supplements an enrolled employee's income during short *non-work*-related illness or injury if you are employed at least 40 hours a pay period and you are a regular employee. If you wish to enroll, you must complete and turn in an enrollment form within the first 90 days of the start of regular employment. Depending on the option you choose when you enroll, the plan pays you a benefit of \$45 per week to a maximum of 13 weeks, or \$80 per week to a maximum of 26 weeks. You pay the premiums through payroll deduction. Benefits will begin on the first day of your injury or hospitalization, or on the 8th day of an illness not requiring hospitalization. You can obtain a WSP brochure from GSA's Personnel Representative or from the self-serve rack in Human Resources on the Main Plaza, Hall of Administration. Information about WSP is available in the Benefit Plans Handbook at: [http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Flexible\\_Benefits.htm](http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Flexible_Benefits.htm)

## **County of Ventura Supplemental Paid Industrial Leave**

An application for Paid Industrial Leave for employees injured in the workplace may be submitted by an employee absent from work due to a work-related illness to receive full compensation for up to the first 24 working hours. Applications for Paid Industrial Leave

are available at <http://vcweb/ceo/Risk/Forms.htm> or be requested from GSA Personnel. Determinations regarding applications for Industrial Leave are made by the Risk Management Department.

## **Long-Term Disability Insurance (LTD)**

Managers, Confidential Clerical staff, Unrepresented Other, or Professional Engineers do not pay into State Disability Insurance. They are covered by Long-Term Disability Insurance provided through a third-party administrator. To be eligible for benefits, you must be scheduled for and working at least 30 hours a week. Your LTD benefit protects you in the event of a disabling illness or injury that lasts more than 30 days. Benefits are integrated with other benefits, for which you may be eligible, to provide you with a benefit which is equivalent to 60% or 66% of your base salary, subject to plan maximums. Information is available in the Benefit Plans Handbook, [http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Flexible\\_Benefits.htm](http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Flexible_Benefits.htm). A copy of the third-party administrator LTD certificate is available at: [http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Automatic\\_Benefits.htm](http://vcweb/ceo/HR/Benefits/Automatic_Benefits.htm)

GSA Employees covered by LTD will not get their first disability payment until approximately 60 days after the onset of their disability. In some instances, the disability period can be calculated during a period of time when the employee is working under some type of accommodation, such as undergoing chemotherapy or working with accommodations pending surgery.

## **Paid Family Leave Benefit**

Employees who pay into the State Disability Insurance Program and need to take off work to care for a child, spouse, parent, or registered domestic partner with a serious health condition, or to bond with a new child, may be eligible to receive benefits through the California "Paid Family Leave" (PFL) program. For more information contact GSA Personnel and/or request an application from the EDD website, <http://www.edd.ca.gov/>.

# **VI. General Standards of Conduct**

## ***6-1. Workplace Conduct***

It is the expectation that employees will conduct themselves professionally and represent the County of Ventura in a positive manner.

Unacceptable conduct may subject an employee to disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal. Section 2105 of the Personnel Rules and Regulations and/or pertinent sections of the appropriate Memorandum of Agreement outlines causes for demotion, suspension, reduction in pay, or dismissal. Causes for disciplinary action are as follows: Fraud in securing appointment, incompetence, inefficiency, inexcusable neglect of duty, insubordination, dishonesty, drunkenness on duty, intemperance, addiction to the use of narcotics or habit-forming drugs, inexcusable absence without leave, conviction of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, immorality, discourteous treatment of the public or other employees, improper political activity in violation of Article 24 or Sections 1351 and 1351.1 of the Ventura County Ordinance Code, willful disobedience, violation of any provisions of Article IV of the Ventura County Ordinance Code, which among other things includes the corrupt use of official authority or influence, or any other failure of good behavior or acts which are incompatible with or inimical to the public service.



## **6-2. Attendance**

You will be informed by your supervisor of your work hours. Your actual schedule may vary if it helps the Department better serve the public. Hourly employees will be informed by their supervisor of their scheduled lunch break and work breaks. You can be disciplined for failure to adhere to your work schedule. Salaried employees generally work a regular schedule, usually from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. However, salaried employees are also expected to work the time necessary to complete required tasks.

It is recognized that there are times when absences and tardiness cannot be avoided. Your supervisor will tell you the specific notification procedures for your job. Regular and prompt attendance is an important part of your job. Excessive absence may be grounds for disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal.

[http://vcweb/ceo/HR/docs/Employee\\_Handbook\\_Rev2011.pdf](http://vcweb/ceo/HR/docs/Employee_Handbook_Rev2011.pdf).

## **6-3. Dress and Grooming Guidelines**

Each employee's dress, grooming, and hygiene should reflect GSA's dedication to professionalism. We want employees to be comfortable at work while still projecting a professional image. Employees are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate to their position and work environment. Employees who wear uniforms as part of their MOA are to wear uniforms. Supervisors are responsible for enforcing dress code guidelines, will include the guidelines as part of their orientation to new employees, and will review with current employees as necessary. The full policy is available at GSA Personnel (GSA Dress and Grooming Guidelines, September 27, 2013).

## **6-4. Technology Use Policies**

The County of Ventura Employee Technology Use Policy specifies the appropriate business and personal use of all County technologies. Per Administrative Policy V-1, all County employees are required to read the Technology policies and sign the Technology Use Policy acknowledgement on initial hire and each year thereafter. The Technology Use Policy also includes the sub-policies covering Electronic Mail Policy, Internet Access and Use Policy, Network Access and Use Policy, Cellular Telephone Acquisition and Use, and the GSA Cellular Telephone Use Policy. Please refer to the policies for specifics. The Electronic Mail and Telephone policies are described in more detail below.

### **Electronic Mail**

The electronic mail (e-mail) system is provided to employees at the County's expense to assist them in carrying out County business. Employees are required to read the County policy on an annual basis and acknowledge the fact in writing.

The e-mail system permits employees to communicate with each other internally and with selected outside individuals and organizations. The e-mail system is to be used for business-related purposes to transmit business information. Personal use of the e-mail system must be in compliance with the County's Employee Technology Use Policy. Ventura County management reserves the right to review an employee's electronic mail at any time.

No user of the County electronic mail system should have an expectation of privacy in its use. (Electronic Mail Policy, October 2008.)

## **County Telephone Use**

County employees are allowed limited personal use of phones. This must not result in loss of employee productivity or interference with official duties or incur more than a minimal additional expense to the County. Examples of minimal additional expenses include making occasional brief personal phone calls. Employees are expected to conduct themselves professionally in the workplace and to refrain from using County office equipment for activities that are inappropriate. Limited personal use is to occur only during an employee's non-work time, such as before or after scheduled work hours, lunch periods, weekends, or holidays. (Technology Use Policy, April 11, 2007)

### **6-5. Use of Cameras**

Private or commercial hidden/candid camera activities are not allowed at County facilities. (Administrative Policy Manual, Chapter IV (A) – 15, Filming and Photographing County Facilities-(rev 2005))

### **6-6. Smoking**

In accordance with Ventura County Ordinance No. 4502, Ventura County Comprehensive Smoke-Free Ordinance, the County shall enforce the California smoke-free workplace law (Labor Code section 6404.5), which prohibits smoking in enclosed places of employment (Ventura County Ordinance No. 4502, Section 6705). In addition in accordance with Ventura County Ordinance No. 4502, Section 6706, smoking and the use of tobacco products are prohibited in the unenclosed areas of the following places, with the exception of Designated Smoking Areas (as defined in Section 6703 d and 6707 b of Ventura County Ordinance No. 4502):

- a. Dining areas
- b. Entryways
- c. Public places
- d. Recreational areas
- e. Service areas
- f. Places of employment

(Ventura County Ordinance No. 4502, Section 6706)

Smoking and the use of tobacco products are prohibited in all vehicles leased, owned, or operated by the County, as well as all enclosed areas and unenclosed areas of a County campus, except in designated smoking areas (Ventura County Ordinance No. 4502 Section 6707).

### **6-7. Solicitation**

Non-County employees may solicit at County facilities only with prior approval by the Board of Supervisors. All requests will be referred to the appropriate Department for review prior to Board consideration. Requests to solicit insurance-related products or services should be referred to the County Executive Office, Human Resources Division.

Sale of food, merchandise, tickets, and similar goods by County employees is permissible with the approval of Agency management provided the proceeds are for County-related functions (i.e., retirement luncheons, department picnics, etc.) or for public or private non-profit groups (i.e., schools, youth groups, service clubs, etc.). Solicitation and sale must be confined to non-work areas during authorized rest and lunch periods only. Items for sale can be displayed only in non-work areas. Please refer to Administrative Policy Manual, Chapter IV (A) – 14 for details.

### **6-8. Equipment and Property**

Employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines. Immediately notify your supervisor if any equipment, machines, or tools appear to be damaged, defective, or need repair. Prompt reporting of loss, damages, defects, and the need for repairs is critical to prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others. Improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment can result in discipline.

Whenever a fixed asset of the County is lost, stolen or damaged, it shall be reported in writing to the Inventory Control Section of General Services Agency by the Agency or Department Head in whose custody the property resided at the time of the incident. (Administrative Policy Manual, Chapter VII (B) – 6))

### **6-9. Pest Control**

The Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM) describes the efforts at County facilities to control the population of pests that would otherwise overrun our offices. It is the stated goal of this policy to “promote environmentally sensitive pest management while preserving assets and protecting the health and safety of the public and our employees.” In order to support the effort to use chemicals as a last resort, it is important to observe the following:

- Don't store food in your work area.
- Wrap and place food trash in a covered trash container or an outside trash can.
- Don't place birdfeeders near the office or provide snacks for the squirrels, which provide a food source for rodents and insects.
- Report pest activity. If you see signs of rodents or insects, call in a report to GSA dispatch (650-4023) so that the area can be treated. Early treatment is most effective and can often be accomplished without chemicals.

### **6-10. Hiring Relatives / Employee Relationships**

No person shall be employed in a position directly or indirectly supervised by a member of his or her immediate family without the approval of the Board of Supervisors after a recommendation by the Director of Human Resources. (Personnel Rules and Regulations, Article 10, Sec 1005)

### **6-11. Employee Awards and Recognition**

#### **STAR and SEAward Award Programs**

The County has two employee award programs, the STAR Program (Special Thought and Action receives Recognition) and the SEAward Program (Service Excellence Award

Program). The STAR Program was established to encourage individual employees to develop suggestions that will save money, increase effectiveness, increase revenue, improve safety, and improve County operations. The SEAward Program was established to recognize team and individual projects and suggestions that result in monetary savings, increased effectiveness, increased revenue, improved safety or general improvement in County operations of service to the public. For details about the STAR program, refer to the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Policy No. Chapter II -18. For details about the SEAward Program, refer to the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Policy No. Chapter II -19.

## **GSA Employee Awards Program**

The General Services Agency has an award and recognition program to ensure its employees receive recognition for their one-time or continued exceptional achievement.

1. Recognition for sustained superior performance
2. Recognition of extraordinary performance or achievement
3. Recognition for achievement in strategic initiatives
4. Recognition of top performance
5. Director’s Award, Bravo Zulu

For details about the GSA-specific program, please refer to the GSA Employee Awards and Recognition Policy at <http://myvcweb/index.php/personnel-homepage> – click on “Award Policy.”

## **Retiring County Employee Gifts**

Retiring employees can be given mementos, awards or retirement gifts (including gift cards). Generally, the item must be an award of tangible personal property and cannot be cash or cash equivalents, gift cards (except gift cards for a tangible property item), stocks, bonds, vacations, meals, lodging or tickets to theater or sporting events. The total for all items presented to the retiree may not exceed the following limitations (County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, Chapter VII (C)):

Years of County Service	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	21+ years
Amount	\$50	\$100	\$250	\$400

## **6-12. Terminating Employment/Resignation**

Should you decide to leave the Agency, you should provide your supervisor with at least fourteen (14) days advance **written** notice.

Upon termination of County employment, you must return all County property including, but not limited to, keys, access cards, county ID cards, parking passes, laptop computers, fax machines, uniforms, etc. at separation. Employees also must return all of the Agency’s confidential information upon separation. To the extent permitted by law, employees will be required to repay the Agency (through payroll deduction, if lawful) for any lost or damaged Agency property.

Employees who resign or retire are requested to schedule an exit interview with GSA Personnel on or before their last day of employment. (GSA Termination Policy and Procedure, 01-08)

**Helpful Phone Numbers:**

GSA Main Reception	654-3700
GSA Payroll/HR/Benefits/Non-Industrial Leaves	654-2357 or 654-2356
GSA Personnel Officer	654-3943
GSA Safety Program/ Workers' Compensation	662-6506
GSA Security – I.D. Badge and Key Control	477-7189

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