

Item # 17
6-22-15

STATE OF TEXAS ◊ COUNTY OF WEBB
OPERATIONAL GENERAL ORDER
FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015

This Operational General Order will establish policies for the implementation of the County budget for Fiscal Year 2014-2015, the payment of the salaries for county employees, and the payment of claims and expenses. This Order was duly passed and entered on the record after the unanimous supporting vote of the County Commissioners Court at its regular meeting of September 22, 2014.

THEREFORE, it is ordered that the salaries of elected officials, appointed officials, and all other employees be paid in accordance with the adopted budget and that the policies and procedures herein adopted be adhered to in the administration of the budget.

PAYMENT OF SALARIES for the fiscal year shall become effective the first day of October unless otherwise noted, and paid every two weeks on a Friday. A work week begins on a Friday and ends on a Thursday. Payroll is the responsibility of the County Treasurer. Departments will prepare and submit payroll reports to the Treasurer on a timely basis and in the manner mandated by County policy.

EMPLOYMENT for the majority of County employees is covered by a civil service system that was adopted by Commissioners Court and implemented by the Webb County Civil Service Commission. Other employees are excluded from civil service by operation of Texas Law or by Rule of the Civil Service Commission. The Civil Service Rules identify which employees are and are not covered by civil service. The Rules provide that a civil service employee may be terminated only for cause as more fully described therein. Employees not covered by civil service are "at-will" employees and may be terminated at any time, with or without cause. Neither this Operational General Order, the County Policies Manual nor the assurance of any County official or department or department head or employee constitutes an employment contract or promise of continued employment for any given length of time. Any Webb County employee may voluntarily resign at any time.

PURCHASES of goods, services, equipment, and repairs may only be made by the Webb County Purchasing Department According to Texas Local Government Code 262.011(d), purchases not made by the Webb County Purchasing Agent will be the personal responsibility of the employee, officer, or department head who made the purchase.

PAYMENTS for claims, bills, and accounts against the County will only be paid or considered for payment once the claim, bill, or account has been examined and approved as required by statute. The Court may approve and direct payment of a claim, bill, or account against the County only as a body at a regular meeting subject to the Open Meetings Act. The County Treasurer cannot issue a check for payment of a claim, bill, or account against the County prior to Commissioners Court approval in an open meeting under the Open Meetings Act as required by statute. The treasurer will provide claims, bills, accounts, and payroll to Commissioners Court for its approval and may not disburse checks, including payroll, prior to Commissioner's Court approval.

Purchases for less than \$75 may be paid via a *Request for Payment* and purchases that exceed \$75 will require a *Purchase Order* issued by the County's Purchasing Agent. Failure to get a *Purchase Order* for a purchase will require Commissioners Court approval before the claim is approved for payment.

SALARIES/WAGES are identified by slot number and amount in the adopted budget and the Condrey Scale and require approval by Commissioners Court before payment can be issued. The County is under a duty to approve the wages identified in the adopted budget UNLESS there is a question as to the underlying legality or validity of the payment. Payments for annual leave, sick leave, overtime, or compensatory time are not budgeted wages and cannot be paid by the County Treasurer without approval from the County staff.

The county maintains a classification plan, which assigns each class of positions to pay grade based on the principle of equity among positions requiring similar knowledge, skills and abilities and having similar levels of

responsibility. Classification of jobs is done for the position and not for the person currently filling or being considered for a job.

WEBB COUNTY WAGE PLAN POLICY:

EFFECTIVE PAY START DATE:

All new hires, promotions, demotions and transfer pay start dates are effective at the beginning of the next pay period following HR approval process and notification.

At Hire - Discretionary Steps:

On July 28, 2014 the Commissioners Court approved a Step Discretion as follows:

- ❖ Department Heads and Elected Officials have the discretion to hire above the minimum entry rate as follows:

GRADES		STEPS
5 - 20	Discretion to Hire 5 Steps into the Grade	A - E
21 - 28	Discretion to Hire 10 Steps into the Grade	A - J

For Attorneys Only (Public Defender, County Attorney, and District Attorney), the Department Head and Elected Official have the discretion to hire or promote above the minimum entry rate as follows:

GRADE	EXPERIENCE	STEPS
22	0 - 2 Years	K - M
	3 - 4 Years	N - P
	5 Years or more	Q - S
23	0 - 2 Years	N - P
	3 - 4 Years	Q - S
	5 Years or more	T - V
24 - 26	-	N - W

NEW FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES IN CIVIL SERVICE POSITIONS:

Department Heads and Elected Officials, after determining the pay step within their discretion as above, shall pay a probationary rate not to be lower than the at step A for the grade for which the employee was hired for a period not to exceed the first one hundred and eighty (180) days or six months of employment. This is deemed to be the probationary period.

PROMOTIONS:

An employee, excluding Attorneys, shall be promoted when:

- ❖ The employee moves to a position classified in a higher pay grade.
- ❖ Promotions may occur intra/interdepartmental (within and between departments).

At the time an employee is promoted to a previously established position in a classification with a higher pay grade,

the step within the pay grade will be based on the higher of:

- A. 5% percent above the employee's current grade and step (pre-promotion); *please note that when calculating the amount of the 5% percent pay, IF the proposed salary amount falls between steps on the scale, then the amount of pay will be rounded up to the next higher step on the scale.*

or

- B. The entry rate discretionary steps of the new pay grade.

DEMOTIONS:

A demotion is the movement of an employee from a higher pay grade to a lower pay grade. This occurs when an employee accepts a vacant position that is at a lower pay grade from his/her current position. The employee's salary must be reduced to be within the discretionary entry rates for that lower pay grade.

TRANSFERS:

Transfers can only occur within the same pay grade. A lateral transfer occurs when a full-time employee moves to another position within the same pay grade (whether in the same department or another). An employee who laterally transfers shall be paid the same step he/she received prior to transferring.

CONTRACTS for inter-local or inter-agency agreements, for procurement of goods or services, and lease or maintenance agreements shall be first submitted to the County Attorney for review as to form and legal content prior to being submitted for Commissioners Court approval.

REQUESTS FOR PAYMENT from the General Operating Expense Department budget must have the approval of the County Judge or of his Administrative Assistant except for utility and legal bills which will have the approval of the Purchasing Agent and County Attorney, respectively.

TRAVEL POLICY applies to County Officials and Full Time County employees, including those whose salary is funded by grants, unless there is a conflict with the grant's travel requirements. The County will provide a form to obtain the information necessary to process an advance for travel expenses. The form must be fully completed and signed by the Department Head to certify that the travel is necessary to conduct official County business. The employee must sign the form to certify the correctness of the information therein and to agree to repay the County for funds that were advanced but not officially spent.

A request for a travel advance will not be processed for anyone who has failed to provide proper documentation for a prior travel or who has failed to reimburse the County for any portion of a prior travel advance that exceeded actual travel expenses. Travel expenses that are advanced but not properly expended, or for which a County official or employee fails to provide proper documentation, must be repaid by the employee within five (5) business days of the date of return as specified on the travel advance form. All County officials and full time employees must authorize a salary deduction for any travel expense not so repaid.

Per Diem is all inclusive and may be claimed by employees traveling and conducting official Webb County business, depending on departure and arrival times as shown below. If a the cost of a meal exceeds the amount provided, the actual amount expended may be reimbursed if it is determined by the county staff to be necessary to conduct official Webb County business. Supporting documentation must provide the name of the person(s) for whom the meal was provided and a brief description of the official Webb County business discussed. The cost of alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed. When travel does not require an overnight stay, per diem payments are taxable according to the IRS Tax Code and will be processed through the payroll system.

Breakfast is paid at \$10 per day beginning with the day of departure if departure is before 7:30 A.M. and for every day of official travel including the day of return if arrival is after 10:00 A.M.

Lunch is paid at \$14 per day beginning with the day of departure if departure is before 11:00 A.M. and for every day of official travel including the day of return if arrival is after 1:00 P.M.

Dinner is paid at \$16 per day beginning with the day of departure if departure is before 6:00 P.M. and for every day of official travel including the day of return if arrival is after 6:00 P.M.

Mileage will be paid at the rate approved by the IRS effective on the day approved by the county staff (currently \$.555 per mile) directly to and from the destination when a personal vehicle is used, unless other requirements are dictated by a Grant Agency. Mileage will be calculated using the official map of The Texas Department of Transportation. An individual or department will not be allowed to receive County travel funds when funds for the same travel are provided by another source. Reimbursement will be allowed for travel within Webb County if such travel is necessary for the furtherance of County business. Verification of miles traveled and an explanation of the necessity for such travel will be required in order to obtain reimbursement.

Vehicle Rental requests shall be made to the Purchasing Agent by providing the names of people who will be using the rental vehicle and a statement of reasons why the vehicle rental is necessary. Mileage expenses will not be paid when a rental vehicle is used although reimbursement is available for fuel, road tolls, and other expenses associated with the vehicle rental.

Airfare Expenses will be paid by the County when documentation of the cost is provided along with verification of the travel. The cost of airline tickets advanced by the County will not be considered a county expense if not used and the funds advanced must be returned to the county.

Hotel Expenses will be paid at the rate of \$50 per night or at actual cost when the cost is verified with a lodging receipt. Reimbursement shall be only for the cost of lodging (room plus taxes) and not for personal expenses.

Parking Charges, road tolls, and charges for telephone calls and faxes related to County business are reimbursable only if they are supported with proper receipts.

DONATIONS of goods, services or public funds to an individual, association, or corporation are prohibited by Article 3, Section 52, of the Texas Constitution. Donations require approval of Commissioners Court if it is determined that the donation will serve a public purpose. The purchase of banquet tables for social functions is not allowed.

VACANT POSITIONS will be filled in accordance with the hiring procedures required by the Civil Service Rules and Regulations for civil service positions and in accordance with the Employee Policies manual for non-civil service employees, without exception.

TRANSFERS of employees will be made in accordance with the section(s) of the Civil Service Rules and Regulations and/or Employee Policies Manual, as applicable, governing employee transfers.

PROCESSING NEW PERSONNEL will require the following documentation to be filed with the department of Human Resources before a payroll check can be processed:

- C. Copy of the employment application form;
- D. Health insurance and retirement system enrollment forms;
- E. W-4 employee withholding allowance certificate;
- F. 1-9 employment eligibility verification form with official documents as required; and
- G. Copy of minutes approving the hiring and salary of the new employee, if applicable.

DATE OF EMPLOYMENT will begin on the day a pay-period begins unless a different date is approved by Commissioners Court.

DATES FOR TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT can be on any weekday unless that day is a holiday. Employees paid from grants or special funds that are expected to continue shall be paid at the beginning of the fiscal year when there is official written notice of the grant renewal even though the grant/special funds contract may not have been received.

OVERTIME is restricted for non-exempt or hourly paid employees. Overtime must be approved by the department head and will be paid by means of compensatory time and not overtime pay and must be properly documented as per County Policy. If a department has an overtime line item in their budget, overtime may be paid in accordance with County policy but only as may be restricted in the department's budget and approved by the county staff. Compensatory time will be paid in accordance with FLSA but requires the approval of the county staff and Commissioners Court. Funds in overtime line items in departments under the County Sheriff are restricted for members of the Collective Bargaining Unit and for nurses assigned to the County Jail. Civilians under the County Sheriff will be paid by means of compensatory time comparable to other county employees.

PART-TIME employees may be hired by departments that have a part-time line item and part-time funds in their adopted budgets. A part-time employee can be hired without Commissioners Court approval but must be processed and screened for acceptance by the department of Human Resources. Pay for part-time employees cannot exceed \$ 15 per hour and hours worked cannot be more than twenty five (25) per week unless approved by Commissioners Court.

CONTINUATION PAY FOR MILITARY ACTIVE DUTY was authorized by Commissioners Court on November 22, 2004, for employees who are members of a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States, including any appropriate part of the State military forces, called to active duty under the circumstances identified in Chapter 173, Local Government Code. Departments will be responsible for assuring that salary continuation funds are available for affected employees from within their own departmental funds. Employees called to active duty will not earn or accrue annual leave or sick leave while on active duty.

RESERVE DEPUTIES FOR SHERIFF AND CONSTABLES must be authorized by Commissioners Court and the number of reserve deputies appointed will be determined by Commissioners Court.

A DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING POLICY was adopted by Commissioners Court and provides for random drug testing of any County employee. To the extent that positions funded by grants or special revenue funds have differing policies, those policies will be followed for those positions.

AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNTY BUDGET may be authorized by Commissioners Court but only after certification by the county staff as to the availability of funds. There will be no budget amendments, except for grants or for emergency purposes, during the first six (6) months of the fiscal year. Commissioners Court can approve the transfer of funds from one budgeted line item to another budgeted line item but no amendments may be made which would result in exceeding the total expenditures under the budget nor may an amendment provide for expenditures not originally included in the budget unless there is an unforeseen emergency. With the exception of Grants, transfers from payroll line items will not be allowed for any purpose unless the transfer is to cover unforeseen shortfalls in payroll related expenses. Salaries in the adopted budget will not be increased for any reason regardless of whether they impact or not impact the department's total budget. Employee job titles in the adopted budget may not be changed and department reorganizations will not be allowed during the fiscal year.

PURCHASED, FORFEITED OR DONATED VEHICLES AND HEAVY EQUIPMENT assigned to a department must first be approved by Commissioners Court before being placed in the County's vehicle and heavy equipment inventory and before being used for County business. Vehicles and heavy equipment not approved by Commissioners Court for County use are not considered County property and are not protected by County insurance policies. When vehicles and heavy equipment are approved for use by a department, it becomes part of the County's vehicle and heavy equipment inventory. Documents evidencing County ownership must be filed with Administrative Services for insurance coverage and with the County Purchasing Agent for inventory tagging and recording. County owned vehicles and heavy equipment must be marked according to Transportation Code Section 721.004. All motor vehicles and heavy equipment shall have the name of the County and department printed on each side. County fuel and/or maintenance is not authorized for any vehicle or heavy equipment unless it has been approved for County use by Commissioners Court and properly marked as County owned. Vehicles and heavy equipment not properly approved in accordance with this policy cannot be used and must be turned in to the County Purchasing Agent.

COUNTY PROPERTY LOST, STOLEN, OR DAMAGED while entrusted to a County employee or department must be reported to the County Purchasing Agent and to Administrative Services. Department heads are responsible for ensuring that employees reimburse the County for the cost of repairing or replacing county property that is lost, stolen, or damaged by reason of neglect, carelessness, or unauthorized use.

SURPLUS OR OBSOLETE PROPERTY that is determined to be surplus or obsolete should be reported and turned in to the County Purchasing Agent for disposal in accordance with law. No employee or department has authority to sell, donate, or transfer County owned property to another employee or department.

GRANTS AND SPECIAL FUNDS applications must be reviewed by the county staff and presented to Commissioners Court or to the appropriate Administrative Board for approval before submission to the granting agency. The presentation to Commissioners Court or to an Administrative Board must include the grant name, purpose of the grant, funding source, the amount of any matching funds, the proposed annual budget, and the impact to the County budget, if any. The budget for the grant must show personnel expenditures listed by position. Budget amendments must be presented to and approved by the supervisory board and accepted by the county staff.

BANK SIGNATORIES for electronic fund transfers ("EFTs") and disbursements from bank accounts including trust accounts, election department accounts, forfeiture accounts, inmate trust accounts, commissary accounts, internal service accounts, enterprise fund accounts, capital projects accounts, and other accounts with financial institutions shall require a minimum of two (2) authorized signatures.