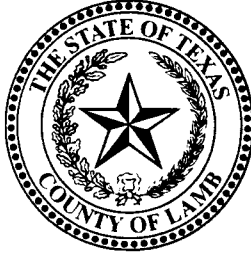


# **AMENDMENT TO LAMB COUNTY EMPLOYEE POLICY HANDBOOK**

Adopted by Lamb County Commissioners Court  
Effective May 22, 2023



**LAMB COUNTY**  
**ORDER OF THE COMMISSIONERS COURT**

**WHEREAS**, the Lamb County Commissioners Court desires to provide the employees of Lamb County with a uniform format for educating themselves regarding various employment-related issues; and

**WHEREAS**, the Lamb County Commissioners Court wishes to adequately and clearly communicate to employees the policies and procedures of the County:

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Lamb County Commissioners Court does hereby approve and adopt the amendments to the LAMB COUNTY EMPLOYEE POLICY HANDBOOK, as modified and approved by the Court on this day, to go into effect on May 22, 2023.

**ADOPTED THIS**, the 22nd day of May, 2023.

Sincerely,

James M. DeLoach  
County Judge

Cory DeBerry  
Commissioner, Pct. 1

Kent Lewis  
Commissioner, Pct. 2

Danny Short  
Commissioner, Pct. 3

Lee Logan  
Commissioner, Pct.

Witnessed and Attested by:

Tonya Ritchie  
Lamb County Clerk and Ex-Oficio Clerk of the  
Lamb County Commissioners Court



## **COMPENSATION & TRAVEL**

### **5.01 WAGES**

The personnel budgets for each Department are set each year by the Commissioners Court in Lamb County's adopted budget. Any new position must be approved by the Commissioners Court prior to the position being filled. The Commissioners Court will set the salary for any new position.

### **5.02 COMPENSATION**

- A. Lamb County Commissioners Court sets maximum compensation for each employee annually, in accordance with state law. Lamb County complies with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) as outlined in the Fair Labor Standards Safe Harbor policy.
- B. All non-exempt County employees will be paid an hourly wage.
- C. Temporary employees will be paid hourly, at least the minimum wage established by the FLSA.

### **5.03 PAYDAYS**

The County's pay period is bi-weekly. The pay date is every other Wednesday for the preceding pay period. If the pay day falls on a holiday, pay will be issued on the last working day preceding the holiday.

### **5.04 PAYROLL DELIVERY**

- A. Direct deposit is mandatory for all County employees, unless approved by the County Treasurer. Direct Deposit Authorization Forms are available from the County Treasurer.
- B. No salary advances or loans against future salary will be made to any employee for any reason.

### **5.05 PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

- A. Deductions will be made from each employee's paycheck for federal withholding, social security contribution, Medicare contribution, and any other deductions required by law. Employees eligible for membership in the Texas County and District Retirement System will have their contributions to that system deducted from each paycheck. Any optional deduction authorized by the Commissioners Court and approved by the employee will also be made from the employee's paycheck.
- B. No optional deduction will be made from an employee's paycheck unless the employee submits a written authorization for the deduction to the County Treasurer. Employees may authorize deductions for:
  - 1. Group health/medical, life, or dental premiums for the employee and the employee's dependents;
  - 2. Credit union;
  - 3. Deferred compensation;

4. Repayment of debt to Lamb County; County reimbursement for travel advances (if a Travel Report has not been timely completed); or
  5. Other deductions as may be authorized by the Commissioners Court.
- C. If an employee's family status, address, or other factor affecting payroll withholding changes, the employee is responsible for obtaining, completing, and returning appropriate forms reflecting and communicating the change(s) to the County Treasurer within one week of any change.

## **5.06 BUSINESS EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT**

- A. Employees are expected to exercise the same care in incurring business expenses as any prudent person traveling for personal reasons.
- B. Employees, Elected Officials, or Department Heads required to travel on County business will, according to availability and the discretion of the County Judge, have the option to use a County-owned vehicle for travel, in lieu of incurring authorized expenses for travel.
1. Use of County-owned vehicles is governed by the policies adopted by the Commissioners Court and further articulated in Section 9 of the Policy Handbook, "County Property."
  2. Employees utilizing a County-owned vehicle to travel on County business are prohibited from claiming mileage/travel reimbursement and travel advance requests.
- C. Employees required to travel or use their personal vehicles on County business will be advanced or reimbursed for authorized expenses only. Employees are responsible for submitting a Travel Advance/Reimbursement Form for travel advances or reimbursement.
- D. **Out of State Travel**
1. Commissioners Court must pre-approve all overnight, out of state travel.
  2. Transportation of prisoners and juvenile probationers does not require prior approval.
- E. **Travel Advance Requests**
1. If an employee requires a travel advance, the individual employee must submit a Travel Advance/Reimbursement Form signed by the employee's Elected Official prior to the travel. Employees are responsible for attaching supporting documentation to each request.
  2. Requests must be submitted to the County Auditor's Office according to the accounts payable payment schedule to ensure payment advance prior to travel.
- F. **Travel Reimbursement**
1. Within ten (10) working days of returning from travel, a Travel Report must be submitted to the County Auditor. Employees must attach supporting documentation for the expenditures the employee seeks to have reimbursed to

the Form. The Auditor will not approve expenditures determined to be unsupported or unreasonable. Proper documentation in support includes (but is not limited to) brochures, fliers, etc.

2. Receipts are required on the following authorized expenses:
  - a. Lodging;
  - b. Registration and seminar fees; and
  - c. Commercial airline tickets, rental vehicles, limousine service to and from airport(s), bus station or other transporting terminal, and parking and taxi fares.
3. Lodging upgrades or additions to accommodate family members will not be reimbursed by the County.
4. *Mileage Reimbursement*
  - a. Employees may be reimbursed for mileage for personal automobile usage for both in and out of County travel.
  - b. Mileage reimbursement will be calculated using either MapQuest or Google Maps websites, and is paid on the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rate. The mileage rate is subject to change during the fiscal cycle.
  - c. Mileage is not an allowable advancement expense.
  - d. Employees requesting mileage reimbursement must have a valid current Texas Driver's License.
  - e. Mileage reimbursement requests must be submitted monthly, on forms available in the County Auditor's Office. An accurate listing of mileage, dates, times, odometer readings, and location is required.
  - f. Only one employee is eligible for mileage reimbursement in the event more than one County employee travels in one personal vehicle.
  - g. Sharing mileage costs with a Texas County employee from another jurisdiction may be reimbursed up to one half (1/2) the total allowable mileage.
  - h. Auto rental is only authorized when used in conjunction with a related airline flight or when four or more County employees travel together in a single multi-passenger vehicle (e.g. vans or SUVs). Employees are encouraged to take advantage of governmental discounts or any other special rates offered by rental agencies. Rental vehicles are available for County-related business only. Employees are to share rental vehicles in lieu of renting separate vehicles.
5. *Compensation/Pay During Travel*
  - a. Hours worked will be paid at the regular rate of pay. Neither sleeping nor meal times will be compensated as work time.

- b. Employees subject to overtime provisions of the FLSA (non-exempt employees) who travel overnight on business (more than one day) will be paid for time spent traveling, except for meal periods and normal working hours on non-working days (such as Saturdays or holidays).
- c. Travel time spent as a passenger on an airplane, train, bus, or car outside of regular working hours is not considered work time.
- 6. Falsification of expense reimbursement is a violation of County policy and subjects an employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

#### G. Per Diem Payment

- 1. Per Diem rates are based on current General Services Administration (GSA) rates, and are calculated based on the location/are to which the employee is traveling. Current rates can be found at [www.gsa.gov/travel-resources](http://www.gsa.gov/travel-resources).
- a. Employees must be in travel status, away from Lamb County, for the following length of time to qualify for per diem pay for meals:

At least four (4) hours	One meal
At least nine (9) hours	Two meals
At least twelve (12) hours	Three meals

- b. County-issued credit cards are not authorized for meal purchases, except by law enforcement officers who are conducting prisoner transportation.

#### 5.07 LONGEVITY PAY

Assistant prosecutors shall be provided longevity pay in accordance with State law.

#### 5.08 APPROVING AUTHORITY

The Commissioners Court is the approving authority for all payrolls and for any pay increases, decreases, or payroll transfers granted under the terms of these policies and the annual budget

## **COUNTY PROPERTY**

### **9.01 COUNTY PROPERTY**

Each County employee is responsible for the care, maintenance, proper use, and upkeep of all County equipment issued to them. County employees will not use equipment, tools, and other County property for which no authorization to use has been given. Personal use of County equipment, tools, supplies, or property is prohibited and subjects employees to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Misuse of County property also subjects employees to criminal prosecution.

### **9.02 USE OF TOOLS, EQUIPMENT, PROPERTY, AND VEHICLES**

- A. Employees who are assigned tools, laptops, electronic devices, equipment, vehicles, or any other County property by their Departments are responsible for the property and its proper use and maintenance. Assigned tools, equipment, vehicles, or other County property must be returned immediately when the employee is instructed to do so by their Elected Official or Supervisor.
- B. No personal or political use of any County property, credit card, electronic device, material, supply, tool, or equipment is permitted. Vehicles owned by or leased to the County are for County business only.
- C. Elected Officials may impose additional restrictions on the use and possession of County property, materials, supplies, tools, or equipment. If an employee is in doubt regarding permissible use, they should confirm with their Elected Official before proceeding.
- D. Lost, damaged, or stolen County property must be reported to the County Auditor's Office by the Elected Official in charge of the property, in writing, immediately after loss/damage is discovered.
- E. Property purchased with state or federal grant monies must only be utilized by the County Department staff by whom the grant funds were acquired, only for the intended purpose of the grant. Once grant funds are exhausted, the funded Department/project may continue to use equipment. When the equipment is no longer needed, it may be used in other activities previously supported by a state or federal agency. To dispose of the equipment, County Departments must adhere to the Uniform Grants Management Standards. Before replacing equipment purchased with grant monies, Departments must trade in the used equipment to offset the cost of replacement. Approval from the awarding agency, if required, must be obtained in writing prior to purchasing replacement equipment.

### **9.03 COUNTY VEHICLES**

- A. Some County employees may be required to use County vehicles as a part of their job. Employees who are assigned County vehicles are responsible for the care, maintenance, proper use, and upkeep of these vehicles. Employees may only use County vehicles they have authorization to use. Employees may not allow other individuals to operate County vehicles assigned to them.

- B. If personal use of a County vehicle is permitted by an employee's Elected Official, the employee is required to keep a log of all personal miles driven (including to and from work). These personal miles logged will be subject to payroll taxes at the current Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rates in accordance with IRS rules and regulations.
- C. Any employee involved in an accident while operating County equipment or vehicles resulting in property damage and/or medical treatment for any party involved will be required to submit to testing for drugs or alcohol. If involved in an accident, the employee shall immediately report the accident to their Supervisor and to proper law enforcement authorities. (See more regarding accidents in County vehicles below in Sections 9.06 and 9.07.)
- D. Use of County vehicles for travel related to County business is permitted, at the discretion of the County Judge, appropriate Elected Official, and pursuant to the guidelines set out in this Policy.
1. County vehicles used for County business must be utilized for a reason which would otherwise authorize the employee(s) to seek mileage reimbursement. (See more regarding mileage reimbursement in in Section 5.06.)
  2. Any use of a County vehicle for travel on County business must be pre-scheduled with and pre-authorized by the County Judge's Office, as far ahead in advance of planned travel as possible. Elected Officials and employees are advised that failure to make a timely request to the County Judge's Office could result in unavailability of a County vehicle for otherwise permissible use.
  3. Smoking, vaping, or the inhaled use of any other tobacco product(s) is strictly prohibited in County-owned vehicles.
  4. Employees shall return the County vehicle in the same condition they received it: a full fuel tank, all trash removed, and any spills or messes cleaned. Any personal property which is left in the County vehicle will be discarded. The County is not responsible for the loss of or damage to personal property stored, left, or forgotten in a County vehicle.
  5. When it is returned and/or not in use, the County vehicle should be parked in the Courthouse – West parking lot, if space permits.
  6. Each County Vehicle contains and is associated with a Fleet Fuel card which may only be used to fuel that particular County vehicle. Employees who have received permission from the County Judge's Office to utilize a County vehicle to travel on County business are responsible for contacting the County Auditor, for the purpose of coordinating and establishing access to the Fleet Fuel card prior to travel. Employees with County-Issued credit cards should only use those cards to fuel a County vehicle as a last resort. Whether a Fleet Fuel card or a County-Issued credit card is used to fuel a County Vehicle, employees are responsible for keeping up with and providing each receipt for each fuel purchase to the County Judge or Auditor within 1 business day of their return.



7. Should a County vehicle require maintenance/repair during use by an employee, the employee must first obtain authorization for the maintenance/repair expense from the County Judge or their Elected Official. A County-Issued credit card should be used for the maintenance/repair expense unless otherwise indicated or instructed by the County Judge or Elected Official. Any receipt, invoice, or proof of purchase must be provided to the County Judge within 1 business day of the employee's return from travel.
8. Only one County vehicle will be authorized for use to travel to a single destination, unless the number of employees travelling for County business justifies or requires the use of more than one vehicle. Scheduling issues, convenience, and preferences will not justify the use of more than one County vehicle being driven to a single event.
9. Employees authorized to use a County vehicle to travel on County business must check out the vehicle keys from the County Judge's Office, and provide their signature prior to receiving the vehicle keys. Upon return from travel, the employee must return the keys to the County Judge's Office and provide their signature, indicating the keys have been returned. Employees who lose or misplace keys to a County vehicle are personally responsible for the cost of replacement.
10. Violation of this policy subjects an employee to disqualification from future use of a County vehicle.
11. Any employee who fail to provide requisite receipts, invoices, or documentation of expenditures made using a Fleet Fuel card or a County-Issued credit card, for expense(s) related to travel in or the fueling up of a County Vehicle during travel on County business, shall subject the employee to personal responsibility for reimbursement of any and all incurred cost(s) to the County.

#### **9.04 SEATBELT USE**

- A. Lamb County employees who operate or ride in motor vehicles, including construction equipment, should be as protected as possible from the hazards of motor vehicle accidents.
- B. This policy applies to the following persons/situations:
  1. All County employees operating and riding in/on County-owned or leased motor vehicles;
  2. All visitors riding in/on County-owned vehicles;
  3. All employees operating personal vehicles while engaged in County business; and
  4. All employees riding as a passenger in a vehicle while on County business.
- C. All County-owned vehicles will be equipped with seatbelts. This includes the vehicle cab or operator's compartment, passenger seating area, and jump seats.

- D. Operators of tractors or other off-road vehicles equipped with Roll-Over Protection Structures (ROPS) will use seatbelts.
- E. Vehicle passengers will only be permitted to ride in areas of vehicles which are designed for that purpose.
- F. Seatbelts shall be used by all employees riding in a vehicle, while the vehicle is in motion.
- G. There are no vehicle exemptions to this policy.
- H. Employees who have a medical condition which may preclude wearing a seatbelt must carry a physician's note indicating a waiver/exemption for medical reasons.
- I. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **9.05 VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE**

- A. All employees operating County vehicles, or employees operating personal vehicles on County business, are required to have a current eligible Texas Driver's License necessary for legal operation of the vehicle, and must inform their Supervisor of any change of status of their license.
- B. Employees required to have a valid Texas Driver's License are required to report all traffic violations involving a motor vehicle to their Supervisor.
- C. If at any time the Elected Official or Supervisor believes an employee does not meet minimum requirements for a required Driver's License, Lamb County has the right to have the employee evaluated for licensing requirements. Supervisors will periodically check the driving records of all employees who operate County vehicles or are required to drive personal vehicles on County business. (See Section 2.12 for more information regarding employee driving records.)
- D. An employee whose job involves operation of a vehicle or equipment requiring a license for its legal operation, but who is deemed uninsurable by the County's vehicle liability carrier shall be subject to possible job change, demotion, or termination (even if the employee's Driver's License status has not been revoked or suspended).
- E. Failure of an employee to maintain a safe driving record or required licensure may result in a demotion, reassignment, or termination.
- F. Suspension or revocation of the Driver's License of an employee who operates a County vehicle, or is required to drive a personal vehicle regularly on County business may result in demotion, reassignment, or termination.

### **9.06 VEHICLE INSURANCE**

Lamb County maintains insurance coverage on all vehicles owned by or leased to the County. Employees who drive a personal vehicle on County business are required to have automobile liability insurance coverage as required by the State of Texas, and to maintain said insurance coverage.

Each employee to whom this provision applies will furnish to their Elected Official the proof of appropriate insurance coverage at least once per year, annually, and at such time(s) as coverage changes occur. Failure to meet any of these requirements may result in demotion, reassignment, or termination.

#### **9.07 COUNTY VEHICLE ACCIDENT REPORTING (NON-LAW ENFORCEMENT EMPLOYEES)**

- A. Any employee operating County vehicles must report any vehicular accidents, property damage resulting therefrom, and personal injury or liability claims regardless of the amount of claim or damage, to the employee's Elected Official and to appropriate law enforcement authorities immediately. Employees should ensure that if an accident occurs, an official accident report can be filed if necessary.
- B. In any case of a vehicular accident, the employee involved in the accident will prepare a written statement describing the incident and identifying any witnesses to it. The written statement will be submitted the next business day to the employee's Elected Official, appropriate law enforcement authorities, and to the County Judge. A copy of this statement will be provided to the County Treasurer for placement in the employee's permanent personnel file.
- C. The employee's Elected Official must notify the County Judge of the accident on the day of the accident if it occurred on a business day, or on the first business day following the accident if it occurred after hours or on a non-workday.
- D. No County employee, Elected Official is authorized to accept responsibility for any damages on behalf of Lamb County. Employees involved in accidents should exchange insurance coverage information with all parties and refer all claims and calls regarding claims to the County Judge.
- E. A copy of any accident report involving County equipment or vehicles must be forwarded to the Elected Official as soon as the law enforcement investigation is completed. A copy of the accident report must also be provided to the County Treasurer for placement in the involved employee's permanent personnel file.
- F. Any employee involved in an accident shall immediately contact their Elected Official and submit to a professionally administered test to determine the presence or absence of drugs and alcohol.

#### **9.08 COUNTY VEHICLE ACCIDENT REPORTING (LAW ENFORCEMENT EMPLOYEES)**

- A. Any law enforcement officer whose vehicle has been involved in an accident will immediately notify dispatch of the accident, the location, and the need for assistance or medical attention for any persons who may be injured.
- B. The Texas Department of Public Safety or the local Police Department having jurisdiction over the scene of the accident shall be immediately notified and asked to investigate the accident and make a report.

- C. All law enforcement employees involved in an accident will be required to immediately undergo professionally administered drug and alcohol testing.
- D. The officer's Supervisor will be promptly notified of the accident by the officer involved, unless the officer is unable to do so due to injury. In that case, the dispatcher will notify the appropriate supervisor. The officer(s) involved or their supervisor will submit a report within twenty-four (24) hours, documenting the accident, through the chain of command to the Sheriff or the Sheriff's designee.

### **9.09 COUNTY CREDIT CARDS**

- A. Some employees may be issued a County credit card at the request of an Elected Official, and subject to approval by the County Auditor. The credit cards are for official County business use only, and personal use is strictly prohibited. Misuse of County credit cards will result in cancellation of the credit card and will subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Misuse of County credit cards also subjects the employee to criminal prosecution.
- B. Credit cards may be used for travel (to pay for airline tickets, registration fees, lodging, rental car, and fuel for the rental car);
- C. County Credit cards will not be used to purchase meals, except:
  - 1. Group meals purchased for County-sponsored training or meetings authorized by the Commissioners Court;
  - 2. To feed election workers on Election Day;
  - 3. To purchase meals when transporting prisoners; or
  - 4. Juror meals purchased outside normal business hours or during sequestration.
- D. County Credit cards will not be used to purchase fuel for personal vehicles.
- E. Each individual assigned a County credit card is personally responsible for their card. Any lost, stolen, or missing card must be reported immediately to the employee's Elected Official, and to the County Auditor.
- F. Elected Officials are responsible for monitoring and ensuring proper use of County credit cards.
- G. Detailed receipts must be provided to the employee's Elected Official each time a County credit card is used for a purchase. Failure to submit receipts may result in an employee being personally responsible for the purchase, and disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **9.10 BUILDINGS AND PREMISES**

- A. Use of County buildings, premises, and vehicles by employees shall be in compliance with state law and with County policies regarding authorized use.
- B. Because of the confidential nature of the work done by and records kept or generated in many County Departments, the County's policy is that video/audio recording in any manner (e.g., electronic, photographic, etc.) is expressly

prohibited. Each Elected Official maintains discretion to designate certain areas of work space or job site as being limited access, and may prohibit video/audio recording as necessary to comply with all state and federal laws, regulations, guidelines, and rules requiring confidentiality and protection of confidential records and information.

### **9.11 COUNTY-ISSUED UNIFORMS**

Some Departments may provide uniforms to their employees with the approval of Commissioners Court. Uniforms must be properly cared for by employees and will be returned when employment ceases. Upon separation, employees are responsible for the replacement costs of any uniforms issued that have become lost or irreparably damaged.



