

# EMPLOYEE POLICY & PROCEDURAL HANDBOOK

*Bourbon County, Kansas*



As Adopted by Resolution No. \_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

*This handbook is not meant to create, nor should it be construed as creating, a contract of employment with any employee, supervisor, manager, or a contract for benefits, procedures, or policies described herein. This handbook supersedes any prior handbooks or policy statements regarding the matters described. The Bourbon County Commission reserve the right to revise this handbook at any time.*

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## **Section 1**

### **Introduction & Welcome**

#### **1.1 Welcome to Bourbon County**

It is our pleasure to welcome you to Bourbon County. We value each one of our employees, and we hope that you find your work here rewarding and satisfying. We look forward to the opportunity of working together to create a more successful organization.

We are pleased to provide you with this Employee Handbook which outlines the personnel policies and practice currently in effect at Bourbon County. This handbook will be a helpful reference to you during your association with the County.

The Employee Handbook applies to all County employees, other than elected officials and independent contractors. In the event of a conflict between this document and any law, ordinance, or resolution, that the law, ordinance, or resolution shall supersede this document.

You have joined an organization that has established an outstanding reputation for quality. Credit for this goes to everyone in the organization. We hope you, too, will find satisfaction and take pride in your work with the County. As a member of Bourbon County's team, you will be expected to contribute your talents and energies to further improve the environment and quality of the County for our tax paying citizens.

#### **1.2 Bourbon County History**

The county was named Bourbon, after Bourbon County, KY. Bourbon County was named in honor of the Bourbon family of France, a prince of which family was at that time on the throne, and who had rendered valuable aid in men and money to the American colonies in their struggle for independence. The area containing the present Bourbon County was part of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. In 1806, Zebulon Pike was sent to survey the area and entered the present Bourbon County where the towns of Hammond, Fulton and Barnesville now stand.

During the early part of the 19th Century, the area was inhabited only by Native Americans, mostly the Osage. A six-mile strip across the southern portion of Bourbon County was Cherokee Neutral Lands. The remaining area was given to the Iroquois Tribes.

In 1837, the War Department ordered the laying out of a military road from Fort Coffey, Indian Territory, to Fort Leavenworth. Later in 1842, temporary buildings were erected at the site of Fort Scott, and within a few years, the quarters were among the finest and most commodious of any frontier post. The fort was named in honor of General-in-Chief of the Army, Winfield Scott. During the Civil War, Fort Scott was the base of supplies and the station of several regiments of Union Troops. Today, the Fort Scott National Historic Site is operated by the National Park Service. It contains many original and reconstructed buildings from the time. Reenactment activities are held at the fort commemorating its history.

Bourbon County was officially organized September 12, 1855, and the first election of county officers was held in the fall of 1856. In 1855, the county seat was located in Fort Scott, which was and is still, the largest city in Bourbon County.

Bourbon County is bordered on the north by Linn County, on the east by Missouri, on the south by Crawford County, and on the west by Neosho and Allen Counties. Bourbon County is comprised of 638 square miles with open prairie comprising 90% of the area and many different varieties of grasses can be found. The soil is deep and fertile and is underlain by limestone and sandstone at various depths throughout the county. The native forests comprise the remaining 10% and the timber belts contain hackberry, hickory, oak, pecan, and walnut trees. The Little Osage and the Marmaton are the principal streams in Bourbon County.

### **1.3 Purpose**

This Bourbon County (herein referred to as “the County”) handbook presents general guidelines to establish a professional atmosphere for you and to ensure fair and objective treatment. It will acquaint you with our mission, vision, benefits, and some important personnel policies and procedures. The handbook makes no attempt to address every situation encountered in the workplace or answer every question about your employment. You are encouraged to discuss situations that may not be covered in this handbook with management. This handbook is not intended to serve as your final guide in all situations; as, in many instances, it is only a summary of more detailed policies that are updated frequently with or without notice.

The County reserves the right to modify or discontinue the benefits, procedures, practices, and policies described herein from time to time, and without notice; however, we will attempt to inform you of such changes in a timely manner. Any changes must be approved by an affirmative vote of the Board of County Commissioners. The change will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the vote took place, be published in the format of this handbook, and will supersede the original policy it is intended to replace.

This handbook in part or total should not be construed in any fashion or manner to imply, directly or indirectly, an employment contract on the part of you and/or the County; nor does it guarantee any fixed terms and conditions of your employment. Your employment is not for any specific time and may be terminated at-will, with or without cause and without prior notice, by the County or you may resign for any reason at any time.

Please note that an elected or appointed official, or a supervisor under the supervision of such official, may formulate administrative or operational departmental regulations which supplement the provisions of this handbook, and which are pertinent to only that department.

Departmental regulations may enhance the provisions contained herein but may not conflict with these provisions or decrease the right and benefits established in the Employee Handbook. This handbook supersedes any departmental regulations in the event of a conflict.

#### **1.4 What you can expect from Bourbon County**

Bourbon County believes in creating a harmonious working relationship between all employees. In pursuit of this goal, Bourbon County has created the following employee relations' objectives.

1. Provide an exciting, challenging and rewarding workplace experience.
2. Select people based on skill, training, ability, attitude, and character without discrimination with regard to age, sex, color, race, creed, national origin, religious persuasion, marital status, political belief, or a disability that does not prohibit performance of essential job functions.
3. Provide time off and holidays to all eligible employees.
4. Provide eligible employees with health and welfare benefits.

5. Provide employees, after talking with their supervisor, an opportunity to discuss any issue or problem with the appropriate person at Bourbon County.
6. Take prompt and fair action of any complaint, which may arise in the everyday conduct of county business, to the extent that is practical.
7. Respect individual rights and treat all employees with courtesy and consideration.
8. Maintain mutual respect in our working relationship.
9. Provide buildings and offices that are comfortable, orderly, and safe.
10. Promote employees based on their ability and merit.
11. Make promotions or fill vacancies from within Bourbon County whenever practical.
12. Keep all employees informed of their status, the progress of Bourbon County, as well as the County's overall goals and objectives.
13. Promote awareness of the responsibilities of each elected or appointed official.
14. Promote an atmosphere in keeping with Bourbon County's vision, mission, and goals.

### **1.5 What Bourbon County expects from you**

1. Bourbon County needs your help in making each working day enjoyable and rewarding. Your first responsibility is to know your own duties and how to do them promptly, correctly, and pleasantly. Secondly, you are expected to cooperate with your supervisor and your fellow employees and to maintain a good team attitude.
2. How you interact with fellow employees and those whom the County serves and how you accept direction can affect the success of your department. In turn, the performance of one department can impact the entire service offered by Bourbon County. Consequently, whatever your position, you have an important assignment: perform every task to the very best of your ability.
3. You are encouraged to grasp opportunities for personal development offered to you. This handbook offers insight on how you can perform positively and to the best of your ability to meet and exceed Bourbon County employment expectations. We strongly believe you should have the right to make your own choices in matters that concern and control your success while employed by Bourbon County. We are dedicated to making Bourbon County an employer where you can approach your department head or supervisor to discuss any problem or question. We expect you to voice your opinions and contribute

your suggestions to improve the quality of Bourbon County, so please communicate with each other and with your supervisor.

Remember that you help create the pleasant and safe working conditions that Bourbon County intends for you. The result will be better performance for the County overall and personal satisfaction for you.

## **1.6 Open Communication Policy**

Bourbon County encourages you to discuss any issue you may have with a co-worker, directly with that person. If a resolution is not reached, please arrange a meeting with your supervisor to discuss any concern, problem, or issues that arise during your employment. Any information discussed in an open communication meeting is considered confidential. Retaliation against any employee for appropriate usage of open communication channels is unacceptable. Please remember it is counterproductive to a harmonious workplace for employees to create or repeat rumors of office gossip. It is more constructive for an employee to consult his or her supervisor immediately with any questions.

## **1.7 Employment References**

It is the policy of Bourbon County to limit the type and amount of employment information, which can be obtained about present and past employees of the County. Unless specifically requested otherwise in writing by a present or past employee, or prospective employer, only the following information will be provided in response to a request for employment reference and/or verification pursuant to K.S.A. 44-119a:

1. Date of employment,
2. Pay level,
3. Job description and duties (written copy of job description),
4. Wage history,
5. Written employee evaluations which are available to the employee, and
6. Whether the employee was voluntarily or involuntarily released from service and the reasons (we will only provide the written information found in the employee evaluation which should explain the release from service and never expand on the information.)

## 1.8 Notice

This employee handbook has been prepared to inform you of Bourbon County's history, philosophy, employment practices, and policies, as well as the benefits provided to you as a valued employee.

The policies in this employee handbook are to be considered as guidelines. They are intended to:

- Promote and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of County government,
- Develop a program of recruitment, advancement, and tenure which will make County services attractive as a career,
- Establish and promote high morale among County employees by providing good working relationships, uniform personnel policies, and an opportunity for advancement without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, national origin, or ancestry,
- Establish County employment and personnel policies (these rules and regulations do not create contractual employment rights)

The rules and regulations in this employee handbook shall apply to all employees in the service of the County with the exception of elected officials.

Each department may formulate in writing, policies, procedures, and regulations for conduct of their operations, such as safety or other operational procedures, which shall be available to all department employees. Such procedures shall not be in violation of, or in conflict with this employee handbook adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.

This handbook supersedes all previous statements of policy and procedure. In cases of a conflict between department regulations, policies, or procedures, this employee handbook prevails.

Bourbon County, at its option, may change, delete, suspend, or discontinue any part or parts of the policies in this employee handbook at any time without prior notice as county, employment legislation, and economic conditions dictate. Any such action shall apply to existing as well as to future employees.

Employees may not accrue eligibility for monetary benefits that they have not become eligible for through actual time spent at work.



Employees shall not accrue eligibility for any benefits, rights, or privileges beyond the last day worked.

No one other than the Board of County Commissioners may alter or modify any of the policies in this employee handbook. Any alteration or modification of the policies in this employee handbook must be in writing.

No statement or promise by a supervisor or department head, past or present, may be interpreted as a change in policy nor will it constitute an agreement with an employee.

Should any provision in this employee handbook be found to be unenforceable and invalid, such finding does not invalidate the entire employee handbook, but only that particular provision.

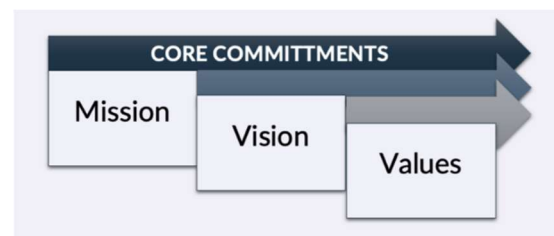
## 1.9 Mission Statement

### Mission Statements

The mission statement defines an organization's purpose or reason for being. In short, the mission statement paints a picture of who the company is and what the company does.

A good mission statement should only focus on what is most important to the organization. It should be brief, clear, informative, simple, and direct. It should avoid elaborate language, clichés, and generalizations and it should emphasize outcomes and the people the organization is serving.

- *What do we do today?*
- *Who do we serve?*
- *What are we trying to accomplish?*
- *What impact do we want to achieve?*



## 1.10 Vision Statement

The vision statement describes the future of the organization. It reveals what we aspire to be or hope to achieve in the long-term. It serves as a guide for choosing current and future courses of action. An effective vision statement should be concise, unambiguous, futuristic, realistic, aspirational, and inspirational.

- *Where are we going moving forward?*
- *What do we want to achieve in the future?*
- *What kind of future society do we envision?*