
Deaf Smith 059

POLICIES OF OPERATION AND PERSONNEL RULES

POLICIES OF OPERATION

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POLICIES OF OPERATION AND PERSONNEL RULES
OF THE DEAF SMITH COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

POLICIES OF OPERATION

Creation:

The Texas Property Tax Code was created by Senate Bill 621 passed by the Texas Legislature in May of 1979. The "Property Tax Code" provides for an Appraisal District for each county in Texas. Each Appraisal District is governed by a Board of Directors selected by the voting taxing entities within the District. The Board of Directors employs the Chief Appraiser, who in turn employs the Appraisal District staff.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Appraisal District is to locate, identify, list and value any and all taxable property within the boundaries of the Deaf Smith County Appraisal District. The value thus produced should represent a fair and equitable estimate of market value. The Appraisal District will be responsible for all applicable exemptions and special use values. These exemptions and values will then be provided to the taxing entities within the District. Deaf Smith County Appraisal District is responsible for collecting the taxes for City of Hereford, Deaf Smith County, Hereford Regional Medical Center, Hereford I. S. D., Walcott I. S. D., High Plains Water District, Noxious Weed District and the CED.

Appraisal District Staff:

The Board of Directors should select a Chief Appraiser that will demonstrate moral character and be dedicated to an efficient and conscientious operation of the Appraisal District. The Chief Appraiser shall select the staff with these same qualities in mind. All employees of the Appraisal District will be expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times.

All employees of the Deaf Smith County Appraisal District are non-contract employees, and are employed for an indefinite term of service, and terminable at will, with or without cause. Termination may be, but is not required to be, preceded by a conference with the Chief Appraiser and may be, but is not required to be, preceded by a period of time to be determined by the Chief Appraiser in which the employee will be given a written statement of areas in which improvements are mandatory and an opportunity to improve in these areas. Termination may be immediate and without performance if in the sole judgment and discretion of the Chief Appraiser, the best interests of the Appraisal District are served by immediate termination of the employee. No part of the personnel policies is intended to create tenure, contract rights, or any expectation of continued employment.

All employees holding positions with the District which require professional registration or certification, such as appraisers and collectors, must maintain such registration or certification during their employment. Failure to do so can result in automatic termination of employment with the District.

Qualifications and Responsibilities:

Officers or employees of the Appraisal District shall not be indebted to the Appraisal District or to any taxing unit represented by the Appraisal District.

PERSONNEL RULES

Preamble:

It is considered impossible to address every situation with a specific rule. Let it be understood that any such situation should be governed by the logic of good conduct and the Board of Directors expects the Chief Appraiser to make determinations in the absence of specific rules.

A. Employment:

The District is an equal opportunity employer and does not consider race, color, creed, age or sex in matters of employment, promotion, discipline or termination.

Employment of any employee is contingent on availability of funds and need due to work load.

The District shall use the most practicable means in locating the best qualified personnel when any position is to be filled.

B. Employee Conduct:

Appraisal District employees are expected to maintain their dress, appearance, conduct and attitude at a high level of professionalism. Employees should work to promote good relations with taxpayers, customers and fellow employees at all times.

Employees are encouraged to participate in civic, religious, political and charitable activities to the betterment of their own character. However, since the Appraisal District is considered a political State agency, no employee is to make any statement, representation or action of a political nature on behalf of the Appraisal District.

“Outside Employment”

Outside employment by employees of the Appraisal District may present a conflict of interest. Employment that presents an actual or apparent conflict of interest or in any way interferes with the performance of duties and responsibilities of an employee of the Appraisal District is prohibited.

Outside employment by an employee of the Appraisal District must be immediately reported to the Chief Appraiser in writing. Failure to report such employment shall be grounds for disciplinary action or termination.

C. Hours:

The official hours of the Appraisal District are beginning at 8:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. Any exceptions to these hours will be the official holidays listed hereinafter, authorized leave or temporary changes authorized by the Chief Appraiser in advance.

After hours use of the Appraisal District offices is prohibited without prior approval from the Chief Appraiser.

D. Compensation:

Salaries for full-time employees will be paid on the 20th (Based on the last 15 days of the prior month and the first 15 days of the current month.) of employment. The level of salary for each employee will be subject to approval by the Chief Appraiser and based on provisions in the Appraisal District budget for each year as approved by the Board of Directors. No pay increase is to be considered automatic.

Considerations for increases in pay will include time in employment, experience, attitudes, skills and education with a major emphasis placed on merit.

Any additional expenses incurred by a District employee while in service for the District will be reimbursed subject to advance approval by the Chief Appraiser.

E. Travel:

Out-of-Town-Travel

“Out-of-town” travel shall be defined as travel by personal automobile in performance of duties of employment outside the boundaries of the District. Reimbursement for “out-of-town” travel shall be based on per mile payment as provided herein. The distance in miles that is subject to reimbursement shall be established by the Chief Appraiser in each case. Trip reports requesting reimbursement must be turned in to the Chief Appraiser within ten days of the completion of the trip in order to qualify for reimbursement. All such travel must be approved in advance by the Chief Appraiser.

Reasonable and prudent expenses for employees traveling on business for the District will be born by the District. Certain expenses are to be reimbursed as follows:

$$5/1/08 = \overset{505}{43.5} \text{¢/mile}$$

Mileage (personal automobile).....\$ 30 per mile

Meals: (without receipts)	Breakfast.....\$10.00 per meal
Lunch.....\$ 15.00 per meal	Dinner.....\$15.00 per meal

Other expenses will require paid ticket or receipt in order for the employee to receive reimbursement. Employees are cautioned not to assume reimbursement for expenses without advance approval from the Chief Appraiser.

F. Holidays:

The Deaf Smith County Appraisal District will observe the following list of holidays when the office will be closed and for which regular full-time employees will be paid:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
President's Day	Columbus Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	The Day after Thanksgiving
Independence Day	Christmas Eve
	Christmas Day

Holidays falling on a Saturday or Sunday shall be observed on Friday or Monday as determined by the Chief Appraiser guided by local custom.

Temporary or part-time employees are not eligible for pay for holidays.

G. Vacation or Annual Leave:

Annual leave will be accrued by regular, full-time employees for years of continuous service as follows:

VACATION – PERSONNEL EMPLOYED FOR TWELVE MONTHS

All full time employees will be given two weeks or ten (10) working days vacation each year after the first year of employment.

No claim or credit is granted until after one full year of employment.

All full time employees after 10 years service will be granted three (3) weeks or 15 working days vacation each year. Vacation time will accrue according to the months worked.

Vacation Amendment –Dated November 18, 1999

The Board of Directors voted to approve 20 working days vacation for Employees with 15 or more years service.

No vacations days can be carried over.

If an employee is unable to use all of their vacation days in 1 year, the district will buy back up to 1 week or 5 working days of unused vacation time.

Signed and dated November 18th, 1999. Signed Copy in the appendix.

All vacations must be approved and scheduled at least thirty days in advance with the Chief Appraiser. There will be times during the year, due to the work load that vacations will not be approved.

If any employee leaves the employment of the District, all claims for vacation time will be paid for at the time of departure.

There may be special circumstances where vacation time may be carried over to the following year. Any vacation time carried over must be approved in advance by the Chief Appraiser.

1 Free Day is given a year. (Free day does not accumulate)

Voted on and approved February 29, 1996

H. Sick Leave Policy:

FULL TIME PERSONNEL-SICK LEAVE-10 DAYS

All full-time employees will be allocated ten days per year for personal illness or illness or death in the "immediate family" or persons living in the same household as the employee.

"Immediate family" shall include the following:

Husband	Wife
Son	Daughter
Father	Mother
Brother	Sister
Grandparents	Grandchildren

LIMIT TO ACCUMULATION OF SICK LEAVE

Sick leave will accumulate up to 60 days for full-time employees.

APPLICATION

Employee receives 10 sick days annually beginning January 1st.

An employee who leaves the employ of the Deaf Smith County Appraisal District loses cumulative sick leave. If he returns as an employee at a later date, sick leave will begin the same as with a new employee. There is no provision in the district policy for employees to be paid for unused sick leave.

New Sick Leave policy was voted on and approved by Deaf Smith County Appraisal District Board of Directors on May 27, 1999.

Temporary or part-time employees are not eligible for accrual and pay for sick leave.

In the event of an absence due to illness an employee must notify the Chief Appraiser or the employee's immediate supervisor within the first hour (before 9:00 A. M.) of the date of the absence in order for the absence to be considered an authorized absence.

Any unauthorized use of sick leave will be charged to the employee as leave without pay and the employee will be subject to disciplinary action.

The Chief Appraiser may require a doctor's certification for confirmation at any time that sick leave is taken.

I. Funeral Leave:

With prior approval by the Chief Appraiser up to (2) days may be used for funeral leave for the employee's spouse, parents, children, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts and uncles and for the employee's spouse's family correspondingly related. The Chief appraiser may approve the use of annual leave for attendance at funerals for family or friends other than those listed above.

J. Health Insurance:

Health and Life insurance for each regular full-time employee is provided at no cost to the employee. Dependent coverage is available to the employee dependents. The Worker's Compensation Insurance Act provides coverage for employees injured while on the job.



BOARD OF TAX PROFESSIONAL EXAMINERS

333 Guadalupe Street, Tower 2, Suite 520 - Austin, Texas 78701-3942

Telephone: (512) 305-7300 - Fax: (512) 305-7304

Website: www.txbtpe.state.tx.us - email: btpe@txbtpe.state.tx.us

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

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Kristeen Roe, Vice-Chairperson
Jim Childers, Secretary
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Linda Hatchel

March 5, 2008

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

David E. Montoya

Chairperson of the Board of Directors
Deaf Smith C.A.D.
P. O. Box 2298
Hereford, Texas 79045

RE: Chief Appraiser Training Program for Newly Appointed Chief Appraisers

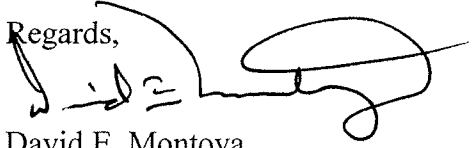
Dear Board Chairperson,

During the 79th Legislative Session, HB 2382 was passed. This bill mandates all newly appointed chief appraisers complete the Chief Appraiser Training Program within one year of being appointed. The mandate also includes anyone who has been a chief appraiser and is appointed as chief appraiser to a new appraisal district. I have provided a copy of the bill (see reverse side). Failure to comply with this mandate may jeopardize the appraisal role.

This letter is to remind you of this requirement in the event you have appointed a new chief appraiser after July 1, 2006, or will appoint a new chief appraiser. Currently, both professional associations, Texas Association of Appraisal Districts (www.taad.org) and Texas Association of Assessing Officers (www.taao.org), offer courses which comply with this requirement. Please contact them for more information on the availability of these courses.

If you have any questions in reference to the above requirement or the certification requirements for all property tax professionals, do not hesitate in contacting me.

Regards,



David E. Montoya
Executive Director
Board of Tax Professional Examiners

Cc: Chief Appraiser
Deaf Smith C.A.D.
P. O. Box 2298
Hereford, Texas 79045

K.

OUTLINE OF COVERAGE

FOR

DEAF SMITH COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT EMPLOYEE'S RETIREMENT PLAN

Effective Date: 5-1-82

Plan Formula: 14% of compensation as a plan contribution (7% by the District; 7% by the Employee)

Funding: All contributions are invested, according to the employee's instructions, in a selection of Kemper Funds

Eligibility: May 1st following 6 months of service

Normal Retirement Age: 65

Vesting: You are always 100% vested in your Employee Account. The vested percentage in your employer account is based on years of service:

Vesting Schedule	
Years of Service	Percentage
3	20%
4	40%
5	60%
6	80%
7	100%

OFFICE POLICY

All Employees are expected to be at work at 8:00 A. M. If you are going to be late, call the office. If tardiness persists employee will be given 2 warnings. Third warning could be grounds for dismissal.

Vacation or time off is to be approved first by Danny Jones and second by Mark Powers. You will need to remind them 1 or 2 days before the scheduled time off. If you persist in taking off without approval you'll be given one warning, after that, it could be grounds for dismissal.

Leaving the building for personal errands during working hours needs to be approved by Danny Jones, Mark Powers.


Personal telephone calls should be kept to a minimum.(A Minimum-and no more than 5 minutes.)

2 Breaks granted-- one in the morning and one in the evening not to exceed 20 minutes each.

As an employee of Deaf Smith County Appraisal District you have a responsibility to the office, your fellow employees and the Chief Appraiser. Those responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- A. Coming to work, arriving on time, and putting in a full workday.
- B. Abiding by office policies and work rules.
- C. Treating each other with respect.

If an employee is rude to taxpayers they will receive a warning. After 2 warnings the next occurrence will be grounds for dismissal.


Chairman

VACATION - PERSONNEL EMPLOYED FOR TWELVE MONTHS

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All full time employees after 10 years service will be granted three (3) weeks or 15 working days vacation each year. Vacation time will accrue according to the months worked.

All vacations must be approved and scheduled at least thirty days in advance with the Chief Appraiser. There will be times during the year, due to the work load that vacations will not be approved.

If an employee is unable to use all his vacation days in 1 year, the district will buy back up to 1 week or 5 working days of unused vacation time.

If any employee leaves the employment of the District, all claims for vacation time will be paid for at the time of departure.

There may be special circumstances where vacation time may be carried over to the following year. Any vacation time carried over must be approved in advance by the Chief Appraiser.

1 Free Day is given a year. (Free day does not accumulate)

Date Approved February 29, 1996

Carey H. Black

Carey Black, Secretary

L. Probation Period:

All new employees are automatically on six months probation before being regular employees of the District and can be discharged without cause during this period.

The six months probation period of the new employees was discussed in the November 5, 1998, Board Meeting. The insurance company had brought to our attention that by law new employees should be eligible for health insurance with our company. On November 5, 1998, the Board discussed this matter and recommended the Probation Period stay the same, but recommended that new employees be eligible for health insurance effective upon employment.

The paragraph above was approved November 5, 1998.

M. Disciplinary Action

Cause of Disciplinary Action:

Following is a list of some causes for disciplinary action or dismissal:

1. Incompetency, inefficiency, or negligence in performing the duties of the position.
2. Insubordination, refusal or failure to carry out instructions.
3. Falsification of pre-employment data.
4. Abuse of Sick Leave Policy.
5. Excessive tardiness/absenteeism.
6. Unexcused absence from place of work/failure to notify supervisor of absences/abandonment of position.
7. Use of abusive language while on duty.
8. Reporting for duty while under the influence of alcohol or narcotics.
9. Destruction, misappropriation, theft, or conversion of the Deaf Smith

County Appraisal District's property.

10. The receipt of any gift, reward, or other form of remuneration, in addition to regular compensation, from any outside source for the performance of the employee's regular duties and responsibilities when by its receipt the position of the District and/or employee would tend to be compromised.
11. Failure to comply with personnel rules and procedures of the Deaf Smith County Appraisal District.
12. Use or application of the property of Deaf Smith county Appraisal District for any purpose other than official business is prohibited and is grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal.

N. Forms of Discipline:

Depending on the severity of the infraction, the following forms of discipline may be administered.

1. Verbal reprimand.
2. Written reprimand.
3. Suspension without pay.
4. Termination.

Transfers and layoffs are not being considered disciplinary action against any employee.

O. Record of Disciplinary Action: All disciplinary action shall be documented in the employee personnel files. The employee, supervisor and the Chief appraiser will each be given a copy of the documentation of any written or oral reprimand or other disciplinary action.

P. Appeal of Disciplinary Action:

In the event an employee wishes to appeal disciplinary action, such an appeal shall be handled in the following manner.

The first step shall be for the employee to request a conference with his or her immediate supervisor. If as a result of such conference the employee is not satisfied with the resolution of the said appeal, then the employee may appeal to the Chief Appraiser and request a conference with the Chief Appraiser and the immediate supervisor. The appeal shall be resolved in said conference and the Chief Appraiser's decision will be final.

PERSONNEL POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

1. **POLICY:**

The Deaf Smith County Appraisal District's policy is to provide a professional, businesslike work environment free from all forms of employee discrimination including incidents of sexual harassment. No employee shall be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcomed sexual overtures or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment will be treated as misconduct with appropriate disciplinary sanctions.

The sexual harassment of any employee of the Deaf Smith County Appraisal District by any other employee or non-employee is demeaning to both the victim of the harassment and to the Appraisal District. It can result in high turnover, absenteeism, low morale, and uncomfortable work environment. Some forms of sexual harassment, including certain kinds of unwelcome physical contact, may also be criminal offenses. The Appraisal District will not tolerate the sexual harassment of any of its employees, and it will take immediate, positive steps to stop it when it occurs.

2. **PURPOSE:**

Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and similar state statutes sexual harassment in the workplace constitutes unlawful employment discrimination which may give rise to liability against both the employer and the harasser whether the harasser is a supervisory level employee or a co-employee of the complainant. The purpose of this policy is to define sexual harassment, establish District policy concerning allegations of sexual harassment, and establish appropriate reporting procedures.

3. **DEFINITIONS:**

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- A. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or
- B. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an employee is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the employee; or
- C. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.
- D. By way of illustration only, some examples of conduct which could

constitute sexual harassment in the workplace under certain circumstances would include but not necessarily be limited to the following:

1. Sexual comments, attempts at humor or innuendoes of a provocative or suggestive nature.
2. The leaving of sexually explicit books, magazines or photographs in the workplace.
3. Unwelcome demeaning comments, ridicule, offensive language, propositions or other similar actions.
4. Unwanted, unwarranted unsolicited off-duty telephone calls and contact.
5. Hiring or promoting an employee in exchange for sexual favors or transferring, demoting or dismissing employees who refuse such sexual advances.

4. **EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Each supervisor shall be responsible for preventing acts of harassment. This responsibility includes:
 1. Monitoring the unit work environment on a daily basis for signs that harassment may be occurring;
 2. Counseling all employees in the types of behavior prohibited, and the District procedures for reporting and resolving complaints of harassment;
 3. Stopping any observed acts that may be considered harassment, and taking appropriate steps to intervene whether or not the involved employees are within his/her line of supervision, and
 4. Taking immediate action to limit the work contact between two employees where there has been a complaint of harassment, pending investigation.
- B. Each supervisor has the responsibility to assist any employee of the District, who comes to that supervisor with a complaint of harassment, pending investigation.
- C. Each employee of this District is responsible for assisting in the

prevention of harassment through the following acts:

- a. Refraining from participation in, or encouragement of, actions that could be perceived as harassment;
- b. Reporting acts of harassment to a supervisor.

5. PROCEDURES:

- A. Any employee who believes that he/she is being harassed shall report the incident (s) to his/her supervisor as soon as possible so that steps may be taken to protect the employee from further harassment, and appropriate investigative and disciplinary measures may be initiated. Where it is not practical to report the incident (s) to the immediate supervisor (such as when the supervisor is unavailable or where the allegation of misconduct involves the supervisor) the employee may instead report the incident (s) to another supervisor or the Chief Appraiser. If the allegation involves the Chief Appraiser, the complainant should present the allegation without delay to the Chairman of the Board of Directors.
- B. Any complaint of sexual harassment will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the Chief Appraiser, (or the Board of Directors of the Deaf Smith County Appraisal District if the complaint is against the Chief Appraiser) to verify whether a violation of law and District policy has occurred. Where the allegations are verified, prompt and appropriate corrective action and disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal, will be implemented.
- C. The Chief Appraiser (or Board of Directors of the Deaf Smith County Appraisal District, if applicable) shall inform the parties involved of the out come of the investigation.
- D. An employee reporting an incident of sexual harassment or assisting, testifying or participating in the investigation of such a complaint shall not be subject to any adverse employment action unless it is determined that the employee made the allegation knowing it was false.
- E. Complainants or employees accused of harassment may file a grievance/appeal in accordance with the District procedures when they disagree with the investigation or the disposition of a harassment claim.

6. COVERAGE AND DISTRIBUTION OF POLICY

This sexual harassment policy applies to all officers and employees of the Deaf Smith County Appraisal District.

This personnel policy is effective 1-27-2000. It has precedence over any other policy.

APPENDIX

VACATION AMENDMENT

NOVEMBER 18TH 1999

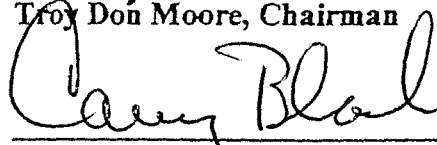
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Troy Don Moore, Chairman



Carey Black, Secretary