

**OCHILTREE COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT  
PERSONNEL POLICIES**

**A. EMPLOYEE POLICIES AND REGULATIONS**

**1. JOB POSTING**

Job openings for the OCAD are posted on the bulletin board in the district office at 825 S. Main Street, Perryton, Texas.

**2. COMPLETION OF FORMS**

The new employee will be required to complete the following forms:

- a. Withholding tax forms (W-4)
- b. Application for insurance
- c. Application for retirement membership
- d. Payroll maintenance form

**3. PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

A three-month probationary period is required for your benefit, as well as the OCAD's. The purpose of a probationary period is to allow a reasonable period of time for employees to adjust to the new working conditions and job duties. The OCAD uses the probationary period to observe and evaluate the work of all newly appointed employees and to encourage effective adjustment to the job and OCAD service.

At the end of the three-month probationary period, the new employee will either be dismissed (if the employee fails to meet the required performance standards) or the employee will be given the status of full time and eligible for benefits available to full time employees.

If the probation period is interrupted due to unexpected illness or other extenuating circumstances, the chief appraiser may extend the probationary period if the employee is in good standing with the OCAD.

**4. CLASSIFICATION PLAN**

Each job in the OCAD's position classification plan is classified according to the relative education, experience, responsibility, mental requirements, and effort and job conditions. The purpose of the plan is to group classes of positions, which are similar enough to receive the same rate or range of pay.

That is, the position (job) determines the pay, rather than the individual in the position.

The classification plan consists of a list of titles, descriptions of the nature of the work and requirements of the work in each classification.

**5. NEPOTISM (Exhibit #1)**

No person related within the fourth degree of affinity of consanguinity (blood relationship) to any member of the board of directors shall be appointed to any office, position, clerkship, or other service of the OCAD. This prohibition shall not apply by the OCAD prior to and at the time of the election of board members so related to him/her.

No two members of an immediate family living in the same household shall be employed by OCAD. No employee shall work under the supervision (directly or indirectly) of a relative.

The chief appraiser may apply the nepotism rule when failure to do so would be detrimental to the effective performance of duties by employees.

**6. TRAINING, PROMOTIONS AND TRANSFERS**

The OCAD fosters and promotes employee development and training programs. The chief appraiser shall assist supervisors in training to meet the specific needs for employee efficiency. Also, information shall be available concerning job requirements and training opportunities to assist employees in increasing their efficiency for present and future positions with the OCAD.

**7. RE-EMPLOYMENT**

The chief appraiser will accept requests for re-employment of former employees in the same manner as new applicants, if they were in good standing upon termination and give the OCAD two weeks notice of intention to resign.

A discharged employee seeking re-employment may be determined by the chief appraiser to be eligible for rehire. This determination will be made on the person's employment record and reasons for the discharge.

**B. WHAT THE OCAD EXPECTS OF YOU-RULES OF CONDUCT**

**1. WORKING HOURS**

8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday with an hour for lunch, is the working time for most OCAD employees. Certain other employees may have their hours vary. Your supervisor will explain your particular schedule.

## **2. ATTENDANCE/NOTIFICATION CONCERNING ABSENCES**

Employees are expected to report to work each workday at the designated time and place, unless there is a valid reason for absence. You should notify your supervisor on a daily basis if you are unable to report as scheduled. Exceptions may be granted for prolonged periods of illness or hospital confinement. Following any absence, you may be required to provide a validated excuse for absence. Negligence may be cause for disciplinary action or termination.

## **3. SEXUAL HARRASSMENT POLICY**

### **POLICY**

It is the policy and practice of the Ochiltree Appraisal District to ensure and promote equal employment opportunity for all employees and applicants. Pursuant to this commitment, the District maintains a strict policy prohibiting unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment.

The District prohibits any supervisor, agent, or employee from making sexual advances of either a verbal, or physical nature toward another employee, or applicant for employment, or from basing any personnel decisions on an individual's submission to, or rejection of such advances.

Additionally, all supervisors, agents, and employees of the District are prohibited from engaging in conduct of a sexual nature which unreasonably interferes with another employee's work performance. This prohibition applies to unsolicited sex oriented verbal comments, gestures, and physical contacts, in addition to unwelcome sexual advances.

### **PROCEDURE FOR FILING A COMPLAINT**

Any employee of the Appraisal District who feels they have been a victim of sexual harassment should contact his or her immediate supervisor, or if more appropriate, a lateral supervisor may be contacted. Such contacts

will be in the strictest of confidence until attempts at informal resolution fail and formal complaint is filed, or unless the circumstances revealed during the consultation are of a nature too serious to withhold immediate management action.

If a formal complaint is filed, managers and supervisors of the Appraisal District should advise the person making the complaint of sexual harassment that immediate action will be taken to ensure an impartial investigation by the Chief Appraiser. The alleged offender will be notified in writing of the complaint and then will be requested to provide a written response within ten working days of receiving such notification. The Chief Appraiser or other person as appointed by the Chief Appraiser will hold an investigation consisting of separate conferences with each party and other persons, if necessary. At the end of such investigation, the Chief Appraiser will issue a determination of ‘cause of corrective action’, or ‘no cause for corrective action’. Corrective action may include the full range of disciplinary actions as outline in the policies and personnel rules.

#### **APPEAL**

An appeal may be filed with the Chief Appraiser if the investigation upon which the determination was based contained errors of fact or procedural violations. These appeals must be filed within 30 days from receipt of the final determination by the Chief Appraiser.

#### **4. STANDARD OF CONDUCT**

Here are a few tips that will help you:

- a. The citizens are the people we serve.
- b. We have the responsibility of providing economic and efficient service.
- c. Respect the dignity of every individual.
- d. Be a good and sincere listener.
- e. Try honestly and sincerely to see the other person’s point of view.
- f. Ask questions instead of giving orders.
- g. Speak kindly to and of others.
- h. Smile – and mean it.
- i. Avoid arguments.
- j. Be friendly
- k. Deliver on any promises you make.
- l. Be punctual for appointments.
- m. Be loyal to your supervisor.
- n. Do not discuss your problems with co-workers but go directly to your supervisor.

When a person accepts a job with the OCAD, he/she must forego some of the privileges that a person might have in private business or industry. We must be above suspicion. OCAD employees should do nothing in their private lives that may adversely affect their reputation or character.

**5. CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

If you change your mailing address or telephone number, notify your supervisor. This is important in case we need to mail you any information or contact you on short notice.

**6. WORK STANDARDS**

It shall be the duty of employees to maintain high standards of cooperation, efficiency, and economy in their work for the OCAD. If work habits, attitude, production or personal conduct of employees fall below appropriate standards, supervisors should point out the deficiencies at the time they are observed. Counseling and warning employees in sufficient time for improvement should ordinarily precede disciplinary action, but nothing in this section shall prevent immediate disciplinary action whenever the interest of the OCAD requires it.

**7. EMPLOYEE SAFETY**

Your continued employment with OCAD is based, in part, on your ability to follow safe practices and all safety regulations concerning your work. Responsibility for a safe work place falls on the supervisor and the employee. If you are in doubt about the proper procedure to follow on the job, ask your supervisor.

**A FEW SAFETY POINTERS**

- a. Know your job.
- b. Be alert to unsafe conditions or unsafe employees, report both to your supervisor.
- c. Cooperate with your fellow employees.
- d. Offer constructive suggestions on safety.
- e. Practice on-the-job housekeeping.
- f. Ask your supervisor if you are in doubt.
- g. If you are injured, no matter how minor, immediately report it to your supervisor.

It is the intent of the OCAD to make all jobs as safe as possible. All employees are required to take every precaution to prevent accidents to themselves, their fellow employees, and the public. Strict adherence to all

safety rules and regulations is expected. Any employee who violates a safety rule will be subject to disciplinary action.

<b>BE SAFETY CONSCIOUS!</b>
-----------------------------

**8. APPROPRIATE APPEARANCE/PHYSICAL FITNESS (EXHIBIT #2)**

Your personal appearance is extremely important in that you represent the OCAD in the performance of your duties. Employees should dress in a way that is appropriate for the job; expensive clothes are not necessary, but proper clothes are important. Hair should be clean, well groomed and a length in accordance with current styles. The chief appraiser will make additional policies and rules when stricter dress codes are deemed necessary for the position. Neatness and cleanliness are essential.

It shall be the responsibility of each employee to maintain the standards of physical fitness required for performing his/her job.

Refer to Exhibit #2 for a more detailed explanation of appropriate appearance.

**9. PAYMENT OF PERSONAL DEBTS/TAXES**

As an OCAD employee, you will want to pay your debts and financial obligations. Failure to properly handle debts or taxes can result in dismissal.

**10. POLITICAL ACTIVITY**

Since the Appraisal District is a public entity serving the public and local taxing jurisdictions and conflicts of opinion or interest, apparent or otherwise can occur, no Appraisal District employee shall use his/her position to influence any person in favor of or in opposition to any candidate for local, state or national office, either elective or appointed. This in no way is intended to restrict the employee's right to execute his right and duty to vote in all elections in which he is qualified to do so, and the district encourages its employees to be good citizens and to register and vote as qualified.

**11. SOLICITATION**

Employee solicitation of funds or anything of value for any purpose whatsoever during work hours must be approved by the chief appraiser. No employee may be required to make any contribution or be penalized for failure to contribute.

**12. USE OF TELEPHONES**

Telephones in the OCAD are for OCAD business. You are allowed to make personal calls, but you are requested to hold these calls to a minimum.

**HERE ARE SOME TIPS THAT WILL HELP YOU:**

- a. Remember that the telephone is a substitute for face-to-face contact.
- b. Answer the telephone promptly when it rings.
- c. Talk directly into the transmitter at a distance of not more than one-half inch.
- d. Speak clearly, distinctly and naturally.
- e. When answering the telephone, identify your office and yourself.
- f. Cultivate the “voice with a smile”. Actually wearing a pleasant expression on your face is a good start. Ending on a rising inflection will help create the sound of a smile and give you a pleasing telephone personality.
- g. Don’t keep the caller waiting while you search for information. Offer to call back.
- h. Offer to be of assistance to a caller or take a message if the person being called is not in the office.
- i. Deliver all telephone messages promptly.
- j. When making a call, identify yourself. Don’t let the other person have to guess your identity or ask who is calling.
- k. Place your own telephone calls. If you don’t place your own calls, you give the other person the impression that you are too big and he/she is too insignificant to bother with.
- l. End your call courteously. Use the other person’s name.

**13. RESIGNATION**

In order to resign “in good standing”, an employee must give at least two weeks written notice of his/her intention to resign.

<b>SECTION I</b>
------------------

**WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE OCAD COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

**A. YOUR PAY**

**1. PAYDAYS**

All employees are paid on the last day of each month. When a payday falls on a holiday, checks will be distributed on the preceding workday. Your paycheck should be in the amount of one twelfth of your annual salary, less deductions for social security, hospital insurance and withholding tax. Also, you may authorize certain other deductions, such as insurance premiums, credit union, etc.

**2. OVERTIME/COMPENSATORY TIME**

All employees are eligible under this provision. It is expected that all employees will periodically be required to work additional hours in order to accomplish their assigned tasks. These employees will be allowed time off in order to discharge their personal responsibilities which are hampered by these additional duties. This provision is at the chief appraiser's discretion.

**3. PAY RAISES**

All employees are eligible for merit increases annually. The increments within established salary ranges are to reward employees for excellent work and consistent performance above and beyond that required for the position. Increases must be earned by the employee and requested, recommended, and justified by your supervisor, subject to the approval of the chief appraiser. All pay increases are effective at the beginning of a pay period

Any pay raises will be subject to the condition of the economy at the time of consideration.

**4. PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

Federal income tax and medicare hospital insurance will normally be deducted from every paycheck. Other deductions may include insurance premiums, credit union, etc.



## **5. YOUR FINAL PAYCHECK**

When employment with the OCAD is terminated, the terminated employee, provided all exit processing has been completed and a signed release form is turned in to the chief appraiser may pick up the final paycheck.

## **B. TIME OFF WITH PAY**

### **1. HOLIDAYS**

The OCAD allow all OCAD employees ten (10) holidays with full pay each year. They are as follows:

- a. New Year's Day
- b. Good Friday
- c. Memorial Day
- d. Independence Day
- e. Labor Day
- f. Veterans Day
- g. Thanksgiving Day
- h. The Friday after Thanksgiving Day
- i. Christmas Eve
- j. Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, the proceeding Friday shall be observed as a holiday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday shall be observed as a holiday.

### **2. SICK LEAVE**

All full-time district employees shall earn sick leave with full pay at the rate of one (1) workday for each calendar month of service. Sick leave shall accrue from the date of employment, but shall not be taken until the successful completion of the six (6) month probationary period.

Sick leave may never be taken in advance of earning the time.

Sick leave may be accumulated up to thirty (30) days.

An employee may be eligible for sick leave for the following reasons:

- (1) Personal illness or physical incapacity.
- (2) Quarantine of an employee by a physician.
- (3) Illness in the immediate family requiring the employee to remain at home.

An employee who is unable to report for work because of the above reasons shall report the reason for his or her absence to the Chief Appraiser within 4 hours from the time he or she is expected to report for work. Sick leave with pay shall not be allowed unless such report has been made. Sick leave with pay in excess of ten (10) working days shall be allowed only after presenting a written statement by a physician certifying that the employee's conditions prevented him or her from appearing for work.

Employees in good standing with current year accumulated sick leave will be compensated at the end of the year for those unused sick days at a rate of one-half days pay for each unused sick day in the current year.

An employee terminating from appraisal district service shall not be allowed the use of sick leave in the last two (2) calendar weeks of employment. Unused sick leave will not be compensated for at the time of resignation or dismissal of an employee.

### **3. VACATION**

Every employee of the appraisal district holding a permanent status position and having occupied such position for a period of twelve (12) consecutive calendar months shall be allowed annual vacation leave with pay. Employees with one but less than ten years of continuous service with the appraisal district shall be allowed vacation leave at the rate of two (2) weeks or ten (10) workdays. Employees with ten to nineteen years of service shall be allowed vacation leave at the rate of three (3) weeks or fifteen (15) workdays. Employees with twenty plus years of service shall be allowed vacation leave at the rate of four (4) weeks or twenty (20) workdays.

Vacation leave shall be taken during the year following its accumulation.

Vacation leave credit may not be carried from one year to the next.

Absence on account of sickness, injury or disability in excess of that hereinafter authorized for such purposes may, at the request of the employee and within the discretion of the chief appraiser, be charged against vacation leave allowance.

Each department head and the chief appraiser shall keep records of vacation leave allowance and use. The chief appraiser shall schedule vacation leaves with particular regard to the seniority of employees to accord with operating requirements and, insofar as possible, with the request of the employees.

When a regularly scheduled holiday occurs during the period of an employee's vacation, an additional day of vacation shall be granted.

Employees who leave OCAD service in good standing and after two years of service shall be paid for any accrued vacation leave.

**4. MILITARY LEAVE FOR TRAINING**

Regular employees who are members of the national guard or any reserve component of the armed forces are permitted fifteen (15) calendar days military leave with pay in any calendar year. The chief appraiser must be furnished a copy of your military orders authorizing such leave.

**5. MATERNITY LEAVE**

Regular full-time employees who become pregnant will be required to submit to the chief appraiser a request for maternity leave. This leave will be without pay, but the employee may be reinstated in the same or comparable position. The employee will be required to be able to return to full time employment within 90 days of the date of the birth.

**6. JURY DUTY OR COURT LEAVE**

Employees who are required to render jury service or court service will receive their regular pay during such service. The employee summoned to jury/court service should immediately notify his/her superior of such action and immediately return to work after said service.

**7. WORK BREAKS/REST PERIODS**

If authorized by your immediate superior, you may take two fifteen (15) minute work breaks each day (one in the morning, one in the afternoon) or one thirty minute break in the afternoon. Such rest periods shall be considered a privilege and not a right and shall never interfere with the work of other employees. Such periods are not to be used for personal errands or shopping unless approved by the employee's immediate supervisor or the chief appraiser.

**C. TIME OFF WITH PAY**

**1. EXTENDED MILITARY LEAVE FOR ACTIVE DUTY**

Any regular employee who may become a member of the armed forces of the United States (whether by induction, enlistment, or reservist called to active

duty) shall be granted military leave without pay. The employee must make application to the chief appraiser and furnish a copy of the orders.

Upon completion of active military service, an employee who has received military leave is eligible to return to the position held at the time the leave was granted, or a comparable position, provided the employee:

- a. Receives an honorable discharge.
- b. Is physically and mentally fit to perform the job.
- c. Makes application for reinstatement within ninety (90) days after his discharge.

## 2. **AUTHORIZED LEAVE OR ABSENCE**

All requests for leave of absence shall be submitted in writing to the chief appraiser for approval or disapproval.

## D. **BENEFITS**

### 1. **INSURANCE PROTECTION**

Regular full-time employees are covered under a group medical insurance program of a dental, life insurance, hospital, and surgical benefits with major medical coverage. The OCAD pays the full costs of employees' coverage. Employees may add dependents for coverage through payroll deduction and must contribute the designated amount toward dependent coverage as set by the board of directors each year. Employees must complete the probationary period before they are eligible for medical insurance coverage.

The employee may purchase additional dental, supplemental life or accident insurance for himself/herself or his/her dependents through payroll deduction.

### 2. **CREDIT UNION**

The OCAD does not participate in a credit union but if any employee currently belongs to one, a payroll deduction may be arranged with the district.

### 3. **RETIREMENT**

Employees of OCAD are covered as a member of OCAD retirement plan. Each regular full-time employee is a member. An employee may contribute up to seven (7) percent of their gross salary, which will be matched by an equal contribution by the OCAD.

Should you leave the employment of the OCAD before you become eligible for retirement, your vested interest of the contributions plus interest, will be returned to you. In the event of your death while still employed by the OCAD, the vested interest you are eligible to receive will be awarded to the person whom you designate as beneficiary.

## **E. TRAINING**

### **1. EDUCATION POLICY**

In compliance with the Property Tax Code; Section 5.04(c), the OCAD shall reimburse the employee of the district for all actual and necessary expenses including tuition, lodging and cost of materials incurred in attending a course or training program conducted, sponsored, or approved by the State Property Tax Board.

A daily allowance of thirty dollars (\$30.00) shall be approved for meals; actual airfare or the current mileage rate allowed by the IRS will be provided by the OCAD.

An employee may attend the pre-exam review courses prior to the Class III and Class IV level exams upon approval of the chief appraiser.

## **SECTION II**

### **A. DISCIPLINARY PROCESS AND GRIEVANCE PRODEDURE**

#### **1. WORKING RELATIONSHIPS**

All employees should maintain high standards of cooperation, efficiency, and economy in their work for the OCAD. Supervisors will help correct any deficiencies in work habits, attitudes, productivity, or personal conduct. If necessary, formal discipline may be used to correct these deficiencies.

#### **2. CAUSES FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Disciplinary action may be taken against an employee for just cause. As an employee, you are expected to abide by OCAD rules, regulations and procedures. Failure to adhere may result in disciplinary action. Cause for disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Illegal, unethical, abusive or unsafe acts, and violation of OCAD rules, regulations, policies or procedures.
- b. Participation in a prohibited political activity or unauthorized solicitation.
- c. Participation in an organized strike or work stoppage.
- d. Tardiness or absences without notice.
- e. Using or being under the influence of drugs or intoxicating beverages on the job.
- f. Waste, damage or the unauthorized use of OCAD property or supplies.
- g. Failure to pay taxes or other liabilities.
- h. Abandonment of duties, insubordination, inefficiency and neglect.
- i. Unauthorized or improper use of official authority.

#### **3. TYPES OF DISCIPLINE**

The type of discipline applied shall be consistent with the nature of the offense or deficiency. The OCAD believes in, and practices, progressive discipline.

##### **FORMAL DISCIPLINE INCLUDES:**

Oral reprimand  
Suspension of privileges  
Temporary lay-off without pay  
Demotion  
Dismissal

Any of the disciplinary actions listed above may be invoked for a particular offense of deficiency, depending upon the exact circumstances. An employee may be dismissed at any time for just cause ascertained after careful and factual consideration.

#### **4. THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

A grievance is an employee complaint relating to the job, pay, working condition or treatment.

It is the OCAD's policy to deal promptly with grievances that occur. The grievance procedure is designed so that your work-related complaints, when presented in good faith, will be considered fairly and without undo delay.

#### **THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE IS AS FOLLOWS:**

- Step 1: You and your supervisor should informally discuss the problem. Hopefully, this will open communication and resolve the difficulty. You may be accompanied by a fellow employee, friend or lawyer in all steps of the grievance procedure.
- Step 2: If your complaint is not resolved, you should submit your complaint in writing to your immediate supervisor.
- Step 3: If your supervisor has not resolved the problem within ten working days after its written presentation to him/her, you can appeal your grievance to the next higher level of management, which may be the chief appraiser. The decision of the chief appraiser is final.

<b>SECTION III</b>
--------------------

**A. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

**1. EMPLOYEE FURNISHED AUTOMOBILES**

Positions within the OCAD organization as established by the position description or designated by the chief appraiser, require that the employees furnish private automobiles for travel during the working day. These employees will receive reimbursement for the use of their private automobiles on OCAD business at a mileage rate currently allowed by the IRS. When mileage is used to calculate vehicle reimbursement, the mileage must be kept in a daily log. Employees shall only be reimbursed for those miles traveled in the execution of work and shall not include any home to work trips or travel made for private matters such as lunch or coffee breaks.

On any out-of-town trips authorized by the chief appraiser, private automobile mileage will be reimbursed at the OCAD's current rate per mile. Food and lodging expense will also be reimbursed at the following rates:

Lodging: Actual expense at lodging approved by chief appraiser.

Food: \$30.00 per day

All employees using private vehicles for OCAD business shall have a valid driver's license and shall carry their own liability insurance.

**2. PERSONNEL RECORDS/PRIVACY**

Personal history records of all employees are maintained by OCAD and are available for inspection only to the employees concerned, their authorized representative and the proper OCAD officials.

All employees are encouraged to furnish a copy of any educational certificates (college degree, business school diploma or training course). This information, or any other job-related information, will be evaluated whenever the employee is considered for promotion.



### **3. LAYOFFS**

Any OCAD employee may be laid off (without reflection on his/her standing) for lack of work or funds. At least two weeks notice of the effective date of the lay-off will be given to each regular employee affected. Regular employees who are laid off will be re-employed when work or funds are again available.

### **4. CHANGES TO POLICIES**

As future changes are made to this handbook, notification of such changes will be posted on the bulletin board and all supervisory personnel will be advised as to the exact nature of the change. This handbook will be reprinted and redistributed at such intervals as are economically feasible to the OCAD.

### **5. SUMMARY OF PERSONNEL POLICIES**

This handbook contains the highlights of the personnel policy to assist you in learning what is expected of you and to advise you of the benefits to which you are entitled. If you have any questions not answered in this handbook, please consult your immediate supervisor.