

SEPARATION POLICY

Types of Separation

Separation of employees from Rockdale County shall be designated as one of two categories with the following reasons:

- Voluntary
 - Resignation
 - Retirement
- Involuntary
 - Dismissed for cause
 - Job abandonment
 - Loss of Job Requirement
 - Layoff
 - Disability
 - Death

In the event of separation, it is the employee's responsibility to keep his/her address and telephone number current with the Department of Human Resources.

Resignation

To resign in good standing, an employee shall give notice in writing to his/her Department Head at least ten (10) working days prior to the effective date of the employee's resignation. Normally, failure to comply with this rule shall be entered on the service record of the employee. An employee who resigns in good standing and with a satisfactory performance evaluation shall be eligible for rehire as a new employee.

Retirement

Employees that leave the County based upon the guidelines of the County retirement plans.

Dismissed for Cause

When an employee has a serious violation of County policy, has not been able to successfully improve a performance problem or has gotten to the final stage of the disciplinary process. Employees who have been dismissed for cause are not eligible for rehire.

Job Abandonment

Any employee who, without valid reason, fails to report to work for three (3) consecutive workdays without authorized leave shall be removed from the payroll and reported as a having abandoned their job. He/she will no longer be an employee of Rockdale County.

Loss of Job Requirements

Any employee who is unable to do a job because of a loss of the necessary license, or who fails to obtain any certification that is necessary to meet the requirements of the employee's job, or who fails to maintain certifications, or who fails to meet other job requirements shall be terminated.

Layoff

For the purposes of definition, any involuntary separation due to lack of work or elimination of position, and not otherwise the result of disciplinary action shall be considered a layoff. Any layoff shall be conducted in accordance with the following rules:

Employees shall be laid off on the basis of the following three (3) factors to be weighed in descending order: employee's past performance, skills of a critical nature and seniority.

- (1) If a regular employee is scheduled to be laid off, a demotion to a lower class shall be offered if a vacancy exists within the same department, provided the regular employee is qualified and able to be trained to fill the position in the lower class. If no such position is available, the employee shall be laid off without cause.
- (2) Prior to a reduction in force, the Director of Human Resources shall submit the names and job titles of all regular employees scheduled for layoff to the Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners for approval. Until the names submitted are approved and confirmed for layoff, no layoff shall be consummated.
- (3) Regular employees to be laid off shall be notified in writing by the Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners, or designee, at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the effective date of the layoff.

Disability

When a disability of any kind (other than as a result of an on the job injury) is discovered which impairs the ability of an employee to perform the essential functions of a job, or impairs the effectiveness of others, the following action may be taken:

- (1) If the disability is correctable, the employee may be allowed a specified length of time as determined by a medical professional to have it corrected. If the employee fails to take steps to have it corrected within the specified time, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- (2) If, in the opinion of a medical professional, the disability cannot be corrected, the Department Head shall:
 - (a) Attempt to reasonably accommodate the employee or place the employee in another position within the department where the essential functions of the job can be

performed satisfactorily. If that cannot be accomplished without undue hardship, the Department Head shall contact Human Resources which will provide assistance in attempting to seek other opportunities within the County.

- (b) If no opportunities exist, Human Resources shall take steps to separate the employee from County service through dismissal without prejudice.

Death

When any employee dies while in the service of Rockdale County, all compensation due within the guidelines of the law, shall be paid to the legal representative of the employee's estate or any other properly designated individual.

County Property

At the time of separation and prior to final payment, all records, assets, and other items of County property in the employee's custody shall be transferred to his/her Department Head/Elected Official. Any property shall also be turned in if the employee will be away from work for more than two (2) weeks for any reason except scheduled PTO. The Department Head or Elected Official, or designee, will sign certification to this effect. The employee shall reimburse the value of any items not returned prior to termination. In the case of a Department Head being terminated, the accounting shall be to the Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners. All accountings must be forwarded to the Director of Human Resources prior to final payment. The Department Head or Elected Official will determine the value of the materials.

Rights of Employees

Employees who separate shall receive payment for all earned salary, and those employees who have successfully completed the working test period shall receive payment for all accrued PTO, per the PTO Policy # 2006-4-8.

Dismissal of County Employee

A Department Head or Elected Official may dismiss an employee **with or without cause**, after receiving approval of action from the Director of Human Resources. The employee shall be furnished notice of dismissal in writing, stating the reason for dismissal. It is recognized there will be occasions when immediate dismissal might be warranted. In those cases, the employee should be placed on administrative leave with pay, pending review and approval of such action with the Director of Human Resources.

Dismissal of an Appointed Department Head

When a Department Head is to be dismissed for any reason, the provisions of Georgia law creating the Board of Commissioners, as amended, shall supersede the provisions of this policy, and shall govern with regard to the special powers and authorities of the Board of

Commissioners and of the Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners. Department Heads, as part of management, are not eligible to use the appeal procedures contained in the Appeals Policy # 2006-4-31.

Break in Service

Persons who leave employment of Rockdale County and are eligible for re-hire may be re-employed with full seniority, provided the absence is for a period not to exceed 365 days. Upon rehire, the employee's leave balance will be zero, but the employee will accrue leave based on an adjusted service computation date (SCD). The adjusted SCD will be the employee's original hire date moved forward the number of days he/she was not in the employment of the County (less than 365 days). Persons re-employed after a period of absence greater than 365 days will be treated as new hires. Seniority will be counted from the date of rehire.

Refer to the Summary Plan Document for the County retirement plan regarding questions on breaks in service impact on retirement plans.

Policy Changes

The County reserves the right to delete, modify, amend or terminate this policy at any time, with or without prior notice.

Approved this 14 day of March, 2006.

Board of Commissioners
Rockdale County, Georgia

By: Roy J. Middlebrooks
Roy J. Middlebrooks, Chairman

Attest:

By: Jennifer Rutledge
Jennifer Rutledge, County Clerk