



HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT  
FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS

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Director of Human Resources

To: Judge KP George  
Commissioner Vincent Morales  
Commissioner Grady Prestage  
Commissioner Andy Meyers  
Commissioner Dexter McCoy

From: Kim Dzierzanowski, Human Resources Generalist

Date: November 7, 2023

Subject: Revisions to Employee Information Manual Policies:  
401 – Categories of Employment  
408 – Employee I.D. and Access Security Badge

Human Resources is submitting the recommended revisions to the Fort Bend County Information Manual, Policy 401-Categories of Employment and 408-Employee I.D. and Access Security Badge. Below are the suggested revision highlights to each policy.

**Policy 401-Categories of Employment:** Added Section 401.04 “Unpaid Interns”

An unpaid intern is defined as a person who is:

- Not paid for services provided to the County, directly or indirectly;
- Is placed with a County Department through an Inter-local agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, or upon request of an Elected Official; and
- Has conducted a background check with the County.

Unpaid Interns are not eligible for county benefits, except those required by law. All Department Heads and Elected Officials must notify Human Resources of the Start and End Dates for all Unpaid Interns.

All Persons who are not designated as an Employee or Unpaid Intern are considered Volunteers. Volunteers are not eligible for services under Section 408.

**Policy 408-Employee I.D. and Access Security Badge:**

Addressing I.D. cards and security access badges to include unpaid interns in the following sections:

- Section 408.02 – Policy
- Section 408.03 – Employee Access at the Fort Bend County Justice Center
- Section 408.04 – Loss Notification and Replacement Badges
- Section 408.06 – Resignation, Termination, and Transfers
- Section 408.08 – Firearms Prohibited

## 401 - CATEGORIES OF EMPLOYMENT

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### Section 401.01 Categories

For purposes of salary administration, employment, and other personnel matters, it is necessary to classify employees into certain categories. Elected Officials and Department Heads, with guidance from Human Resources, are responsible to ensure that employees in their office or department meet the criteria of the category of employment to which the employees are assigned.

The definition of the categories of employment are as follows:

1. **FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE:** An employee, exempt or non-exempt, assigned to a full-time budgeted position. Such employees are typically expected to work a minimum of 40 hours per week in fulfillment of their job duties, and are eligible for all County benefits.
2. **PART-TIME EMPLOYEE:** An employee who works a regular schedule of less than 30 hours per week for an indefinite period. Such employees participate in the County retirement program as defined in Section 510 of this manual, but are not eligible for any County benefits except those required by law. Note: In accordance with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), any employee who works, on average, 30 or more hours per week is benefit eligible and must be offered medical benefits. Therefore, it is the policy of Fort Bend County that part-time employees shall not be permitted to work 30 or more hours per week without the approval of Commissioners Court through the budgeting process.
3. **TEMPORARY EMPLOYEE:** An employee who is hired to work for a short period of time not to exceed 90 calendar days. Temporary employees are not eligible for any County benefits, except those required by law. Temporary employees may work any number of hours as needed during the 90-day assignment. At the conclusion of 90 days, the employee should either be terminated or transferred to a part time or full time position. Note that persons hired as "floaters" to work sporadic assignments as needed in various County departments shall be classified as part time employees.

Persons who are employed as Visiting Judges will be classified as temporary employees.

Persons who are employed in connection with a work program for individuals with intellectual, developmental, or physical disabilities may also be classified as temporary employees and may be employed for more than 90 days. The employee cannot work 30 or more hours per week, on average.

4. **ELECTION WORKER:** For the purpose of this policy an Election worker is defined as an individual who only performs services for Fort Bend County at polling locations in connection with national, state or local elections. These individuals are not employees of the County, and are not eligible for any County benefits, except those required by law. Individuals hired by the Elections Department to perform duties other than solely working at the polling locations shall be properly classified as full-time, part-time, or temporary employees of the County.

**Section 401.02  
Departmental  
Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of the elected official or department head to identify the category of employment for each position at the time of hire. Any change in status of an employee that impacts the budget is subject to the normal approval process of the Budget Office and Commissioners Court. Part time and temporary employees who are permitted to work 30 or more hours per week, on average, during a 12-month period must be offered benefits in the following 12-month period, or the County may be subject to federal penalties. Therefore, any costs incurred due to an elected official's or department head's failure to manage the hours worked must be covered by transfer of funds from within the same department or office, and the transfer shall be subject to Commissioners Court approval.

**Section 401.03  
At-Will Status of  
Employees**

Texas is an "employment at-will" state, and as an employee of Fort Bend County, you have the right to terminate your employment at any time, with or without notice, for any legal reason or no reason. The County also retains the right to change any terms, conditions, benefits, or privileges of employment at any time without notice. No employment contract, either expressed or implied, shall exist between the County and any employee for any duration either specified or non-specified.

**Section 401.04  
Unpaid Interns**

An unpaid intern is defined as a person who is:

- Not paid for services provided to the County, directly or indirectly;
- Is placed with a County Department through an Inter-local agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, or upon request of an Elected Official; and
- Has conducted a background check with the County (age 18 years of age and above)

Unpaid Interns are not eligible for county benefits, except those required by law. All Department Heads and Elected Officials must notify Human Resources of the start and end dates for all Unpaid Interns.

All persons who are not designated as an employee or unpaid intern are considered volunteers. Volunteers are not eligible for services under Policy 408-Employee I.D. and Security Badges.

## 408 - EMPLOYEE I.D. and SECURITY BADGES

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### Section 408.01 Purpose

This policy is to provide guidelines to obtain, wear and replace employee identification badges and security badges to gain access to Fort Bend County facilities. The Sheriff's Office shall produce all badges and administer security access to all County buildings except the libraries.

The use of employee badges will facilitate identification to the public, County officials and personnel, as well as provide access to secured areas as authorized by an Elected Official or Department Head, and permitted by the bailiffs if applicable.

### Section 408.02 Policy

All full-time, part-time and long-term, temporary employees, and unpaid interns are required to wear, or maintain in their personal possession, a Fort Bend County identification badge at all times while performing County business. If wearing a badge on the outside of an employee's clothing presents a safety hazard, employees may retain their I.D. or security badge in their wallet or otherwise in their personal possession.

The Sheriffs Office maintains the County's security card access system. Elected Officials or Department Heads shall authorize employee security level access as it relates to buildings, secured areas and days and times of access (including after hours access), by e-mailing an Employee Badge Request Form found in the Employee section of Employee Connect or at the following link:

<http://econnect/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=3196>

and emailing the form to the bailiffs at:

[cardaccesssystem@fortbendcountytexas.gov](mailto:cardaccesssystem@fortbendcountytexas.gov)

[Note: The Library administers security badges for those library branches requiring card access.]

**Each employee and unpaid intern entering a secured area must use his/her own employee I.D. or Security Badge for only his/her personal entry. Employees and unpaid interns are prohibited from using their security badge to allow access to secured areas to any unauthorized person. A violation may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.**

### Section 480.03 Employee Access at the Fort Bend County Justice Center

The Sheriffs Office is responsible for courthouse security, and as such, the Sheriffs Office shall review requests for security badges for the Justice Center and any other secured facility. Employees and unpaid interns who have been approved and issued an employee security badge will normally be allowed to bypass the security checkpoint at the Justice Center; however there may be times of heightened security or other circumstances when the bailiffs will require employees to submit to security screening upon entering the Justice Center.

## FORT BEND COUNTY EMPLOYEE INFORMATION MANUAL

Employees and unpaid interns who do not possess their badge will not be allowed to bypass security screening and will be required to submit to security screening for entry to the Justice Center. Employees and unpaid interns who work at the Justice Center but are at the Justice Center as a party to a trial or other court proceeding will be required to submit to security screening at that time.

Issuance of security badges shall be primarily limited to employees and unpaid interns whose office and duties are based in the Justice Center and other secured County facilities. Elected Officials or Department Heads may request the issuance of a security badge for an employee who is not housed in the Justice Center but is required to conduct County business on a regular basis within the Justice Center. Such a request is subject to the approval of the Sheriff or designated bailiff. Requests should be emailed to the bailiffs at:

[cardaccesssystem@fortbendcountytexas.gov](mailto:cardaccesssystem@fortbendcountytexas.gov)

### **Section 408.04 Loss Notification and Replacement Badges**

Lost or stolen badges must be reported immediately to the bailiffs and the employee's or unpaid intern's supervisor. Failure to report the loss of a security badge can jeopardize courthouse security; therefore, it is essential to report the loss immediately by emailing the bailiffs at the above email address.

**Those who fail to report the loss of their badge within twenty-four (24) hours will be denied a replacement card and will be required to submit to security screening with the general public.**

Requests to replace a lost employee I.D. badge should be emailed to the bailiffs at the above email address. Payment of \$15.00 is required to replace a lost employee I.D. or security badge.

**Payment must be by check or money order only, payable to Fort Bend County, and there is a \$25.00 fee for returned checks.**

### **Section 408.05 Leave Of Absence**

Any employee on a Leave of Absence for any reason will be required to turn in his/her I.D. or Security Badge to his/her Elected Official or Department Head at the onset of the approved leave.

### **Section 408.06 Resignation Or Termination and Employee Transfers**

Upon separation of an employee or unpaid intern, the Elected Official or Department Head shall immediately notify the bailiffs of the employee's departure and effective date of such separation. The employee's badge must be returned to the bailiffs.

**Employees are hereby notified that failure to return an I.D. or security badge may result in delay of final payout of accrued but unused vacation time.**

If an employee or unpaid intern moves from one County department to another, the Elected Official or Department Head may request a new badge, or request updated security access by contacting the bailiffs at [cardaccesssystem@fortbendcountytexas.gov](mailto:cardaccesssystem@fortbendcountytexas.gov)

**Section 408.07  
Contractor, Vendor and  
Visitor Access to the  
Justice Center**

Visitors to the Fort Bend County Justice Center must enter through the security screening area as directed by the bailiffs. All parties are subject to search at the discretion of the bailiffs.

Frequent visitors to the Justice Center, including but not limited to contractors, vendors, attorneys and bail bondsmen may be permitted to obtain a Fort Bend County Visitor Badge

Application for a Visitor's Badge may be found on the Fort Bend County website ([www.co.fort-bend.tx.us](http://www.co.fort-bend.tx.us)) or at the Information Desk at the Justice Center. Attorneys in good standing with the State Bar of Texas shall be subject to a \$25.00 annual application fee; frequent visitors other than attorneys shall be subject to a \$50.00 initial application fee and a renewal fee of \$25.00. Applicants will be subject to a criminal background investigation. The Visitor's Badge will serve as identification and will normally allow the visitor identified on the badge to bypass security screening at the Justice Center. However, badge holders must follow the directions of the bailiffs and submit to screening if requested.

**Replacement badges will cost \$15.00 per lost badge. Payment must be by check or money order payable to Fort Bend County, and there will be a \$25.00 fee for returned checks.**

Due to the high level of security necessary at the Justice Center, the Fort Bend County Sheriff reserves the right to refuse to reissue a Visitor's Badge to an individual who requests a replacement badge more than 3 times per calendar year.

**Section 408.08  
Firearms Prohibited**

Employees, unpaid interns, and visitors are prohibited from possession of a firearm, as that term is defined by Section 46.01, Texas Penal Code, in a county building that houses a justice court, county court, county court at law, or district court. A person who possesses a firearm in any court described by this section or in any office used by the court without the court's written authorization or without complying with any written regulation of the court is subject to the penalties provided by Chapter 46, Texas Penal Code.

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Policy Approved And Adopted By:  
Fort Bend County Commissioners Court  
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Revised: June 23, 2015  
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