SECTION 10
WAGES

SECTION 10.1

Annually, Department Heads/Elected Officials project compensation for their departments as part of the budget process. Commissioners' Court ultimately approves all departmental salary plans as part of the County's budget review process.

A. Pay Periods

1. Employees will be paid on a bi-weekly basis. There are normally 26 pay periods. Paychecks will normally be distributed every other Friday. The normal workweek starts at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday and ends at 12:00 midnight on Saturday.

2. If a holiday occurs on a Friday on which a payday falls, paychecks will be issued on the preceding day.

3. Pay advances of any type are not allowed.

B. Paid Holidays

The County regularly observes a number of holidays designated by Commissioners' Court by the end of the year for the succeeding year. To receive pay for a County holiday, an employee must work the working day before and working day after the holiday, if scheduled, be on approved vacation or compensatory time off, out on Family Medical Leave (FMLA) or, if ill and not on FMLA, the Department Head/Elected Official may require a written doctor's excuse for the day(s) absent. Employees working other than five/eight hour shifts will need to adjust their work schedule in a week where a holiday falls. For example, if an employee is working four/ten hour shifts, they will need to work an additional two hours during that week that the holiday will be taken in order to be paid forty hours. If the employee has accrued compensatory time off or wishes to use two hours of vacation they may do so in lieu of working the additional time. If none of the above options are used, the employee will be docked for time not worked. Overtime pay for employees scheduled to work on a Holiday is addressed in the Section 10.3, Overtime/Compensation time.

C. Religious Holidays

1. It is the intent of the County to make reasonable accommodations for the religious needs of employees, whenever possible.

2. Employees requesting time off for religious holidays other than those as County Holidays, will be permitted to take vacation leave or time off without pay as long as the leave does not interfere with the normal business operations and/or cause an undue hardship on the County. If vacation leave or personal time off has been exhausted, the employee may be allowed to take time off, without pay or use compensatory time. Any request for religious holiday use as provided in this section must be approved two (2) weeks prior to its incident.

D. Direct Deposit

1. Purpose

In keeping with sound fiscal policy, effective March 1, 2005, all new County employees are required to receive paychecks by direct deposit unless specifically exempted.

2. Policy

It is in the best interest of Jefferson County to enact mandatory direct deposit for both financial and administrative reasons. Direct deposit provides a number of benefits such as less chance of a lost check, reduced potential for theft or forgery, and funds are deposited in employees' accounts on payday.

All employees hired after March 1, 2005 are required to use direct deposit for their payroll unless they are otherwise exempted under this policy.

There are certain circumstances for which salary payment by check rather than direct deposit is necessary or suitable. These exceptions are explained in the Guidelines of this policy.

3. Guidelines

a. Business Exemption-The following circumstances constitute an exemption to the direct deposit rule:

1. The first paycheck of an employee shall be by check.
2. An employee's last paycheck may be by check to facilitate the checkout process and insure that County property is returned prior to departure. The preferred method will still be by direct deposit.
3. An employee hired for less than ninety (90) days may be paid by check. If employment is extended, direct deposit is required unless a personal exemption (see below) is granted.
4. Employees in repayment status (note, loan, etc) may receive a check to facilitate repayment. This option should only be used if a miscellaneous deduction or additional direct deposit is not feasible.

b. Personal Exemptions

Employees not covered under a business exemption may request a hardship exemption on the "Application for Exemption from Payroll Direct Deposit" form. Possible exemptions for direct deposit include inability to have a bank account or the employee is unable to withdraw funds because he or she does not live or work near a bank. The supervisor and Auditing must approve exemptions.

County employees who have questions or need assistance with these guidelines may contact the Auditing Department.

E. Longevity Pay

Longevity pay is based on the number of continuous years of service with the county and paid out over 24 pay periods per year. Longevity is eligible to be paid upon completion of twelve (12) or more months of continuous employment. Most employees/Elected Officials are eligible to receive $75.12 ($3.13 per pay period) after the first year of employment. Employees/Elected Officials receive $75.12 per year for each year of service up to a maximum of $1,502.40 ($62.60 per pay period) for twenty (20) years of continuous service. Longevity pay is not affected by percentage salary increases or cost-of-living adjustments. Part-time employees do not receive longevity pay.