

<i>Jefferson County Policies &amp; Procedures</i>			
Policy Name:	Reduction in Force	Approved:	4-2014
Policy Number:	203	Author:	Keyser
Associated:			

The reduction in force procedure for employees assigned to departments controlled by the Jefferson County Commission provides equitable treatment for the layoff of full and part-time employees when reduction in force becomes necessary. A reduction in force decision will only be made after measures such as a hiring freeze on non-essential vacant positions, limits on travel and purchasing, and other alternatives have been considered. A reduction in force or layoff might become necessary because of lack of work, departmental reorganization, lack of funds, abolition of a position, or other material change in duties or organization. A reduction in force is not a short term adjustment and must be considered permanent in nature. These procedures do not apply to employees whose compensation is paid from budgets under the direct control of Elected Officials (Sheriff, County Clerk, Circuit Clerk, Assessor or Prosecuting Attorney).

Employees will be given as much advance notice as possible when it has been determined by the County Commission that a reduction in the workforce is necessary. A reduction in force decision requires a thorough evaluation of the need for particular positions and the relative value of specific employees so that the County Commission can provide the highest level of service possible with reduced work force. Determining the retention or separation of a particular employee should include an evaluation of the relative skills, knowledge, and productivity of the employee in comparison to necessary services. Length of service (seniority) and other factors will also be considered but may receive less weight in the determination process.

**Compensation, Severance Pay and Benefits:**

Employees affected by lay-off will receive compensation up to their last actual day of work. Jefferson County does not provide a salary continuation plan beyond the last day of employment. Unless otherwise agreed upon, separated employees will not receive a severance package. In accordance with established policy, separated employees will receive payment for all accumulated personal (vacation) leave but no compensation for accumulated sick leave. Employee health related benefits (group life, health, vision and dental coverage) will be continued as defined in each benefit plan, which is no later than the last day of the month in which the employee was separated. Continuation of benefits beyond that point will be in accordance with applicable State and Federal guidelines.

**Recall and Reinstatement Rights:**

An employee affected by a reduction in force has recall and reinstatement rights to a position in County government for one year after the effective date of the reduction in force. At the time of recall or reinstatement, the County will reinstate all employee benefits, including the employee's accumulated sick leave, and will provide the employee the option of buying back all, some, or none of his/her annual leave at the rate it was paid out at the time of the separation.

An employee that has been affected by a reduction in force will be given an interview for one year after the effective date of the reduction, for job opportunities which arise for the County Commission, for which they apply and are qualified. The Reduction In Force employee will be assured an interview for all positions which he/she is qualified for provided he/she has a satisfactory current evaluation, possesses all the necessary skills for the available position and applies.

**At-Will Nature of Employment:**

The provisions of this policy neither alter, amend, or modify the at-will nature of employment of all County employees nor in any way restrict the County's right to terminate any employee at any time for any reason, with or without cause as stated in the County's rules and regulations. The County also reserves the right to change the terms and conditions of employment at its sole discretion for any reason or no reason.

Employees have the right to end the employment relationship at any time for any reason, with or without cause.