



**COOK COUNTY BUREAU OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

**EMPLOYEE TIME AND ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: June 1, 2020**

**Supersedes: June 27, 2016  
November 22, 2016**

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**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to promote the efficient operation of Cook County Government and to ensure consistent administration of time and attendance management issues.

**II. INTENT**

This policy is intended to be interpreted consistent with and subject to applicable law. It supersedes all earlier policies and/or memoranda that may have been issued from time-to-time on subjects covered in this policy. This policy is not intended to supersede or limit the County from enforcing programs or provisions in any applicable collective bargaining agreement. Should any provision in this policy conflict with a specific provision(s) in the Personnel Rules or the Telecommuting Policy, the provision(s) of the Personnel Rules or the Telecommuting Policy shall take precedence.

**III. JURISDICTION**

The Bureau of Human Resources is authorized to develop and issue policies for the effective management of Cook County employees, pursuant to Section 44-45 of the Cook County Code of Ordinances.

**IV. SEVERABILITY**

If any section or provision of this document should be held invalid by operation of law, none of the remainder shall be affected.

**V. AREAS AFFECTED**

This policy applies to all Cook County employees in Bureaus and Departments in the Offices under the President and/or covered by the Cook County Employment Plan, including Cook County Commissioners' staff. To the extent that any provision in this policy conflicts with a specific provision in a collective bargaining agreement, the collective bargaining agreement shall prevail.

**VI. DEFINITIONS**

**Absent/Absence** - An employee's failure to report and be prepared to work in accordance with their Standard Work Schedule for all or a substantial part of their scheduled work day.

**Alternative Work Schedule** - Any work schedule that deviates from the Standard Work Schedule.



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**BHR** - means Cook County’s Bureau of Human Resources.

**Benefit Time Accrual Time** - Vacation time, sick time, personal time, and holiday time.

**Compensatory Time** - An arrangement by which FLSA Non-Exempt employees accrue PTO in lieu of Overtime pay. Eligible FLSA Exempt employees may accrue PTO through the completion of special projects related to an Emergency.

**Cook County Time System (CCT System)** – Cook County’s time and attendance system to which employees gain access through Time Clocks, an IVR Clock, or the web based Dashboard.

**Cook County Time Dashboard or CCT Dashboard** - The web based dashboard, which allows employees to clock in and/or out through the Web Clock, view their respective time entries, accrual balances and time off requests, and further allows Supervisors to manage and approve timesheets and time off requests.

**Department** - A unit of the County, including, but not limited to, a bureau, operating unit, or department, which is under the jurisdiction of the President of the Board of Commissioners.

**Department Head** - The individual assigned to head or direct a Department.

**Emergency** - A situation which has been certified involving a significant threat to public safety or health (e.g., a natural disaster, a weather-related event, a terrorist attack, or similar event), but not including budgetary or financially caused situations (e.g., a hiring freeze, a grant application deadline or similar event).

**Employee Identification Number** - The identification number assigned to an employee upon hire in the Payroll/Human Resources system.

**Flextime** - A system that allows an employee to choose the hours for starting and ending their Standard Work Schedule.

**FLSA Exempt** - Salaried employees who, because of their compensation and duties, are not subject to the minimum wage and Overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 USC 201, *et seq.*, as determined by BHR’s Workforce Strategy Division.

**FLSA Non-Exempt** - Employees who are subject to the minimum wage and Overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 USC 201, *et seq.*, as determined by BHR’s Workforce Strategy Division.



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**IVR Clock** - Interactive Voice Response system for recording employees' times of starting and ending work or attendance.

**Leave of Absence** - Paid or unpaid leave other than vacation, personal, floating, or sick leave.

**Overtime** - Hours worked by an FLSA Non-exempt employee in excess of forty (40) hours per week or as defined by the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

**Personnel Rules** - Cook County Personnel Rules.

**Proximity Card** - Cook County identification card generated for use with the CCT System and distributed to each employee for use with the Time Clock, IVR Clock and/or Web Clock.

**Proximity Card ID Number** - Number printed on the back of the Proximity Card.

**PTO** - Paid time off, including Compensatory Time and Benefit Time.

**Standard Work Schedule** - An eight (8) hour workday and forty (40) hour work week for all employees; the standard work hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. shall apply to FLSA Non-Exempt employees.

**Supervisor** - Person in the first line of management who monitors and regulates employees in their performance of assigned or delegated tasks and approves employees' time records.

**Tardy/Tardiness** - An employee's failure to report and be prepared to work at start of their Standard Work Schedule.

**Timekeeper** - An employee charged by the Department Head with various time and attendance responsibilities within the Department.

**Telecommute or Telecommuting** - A flexible work arrangement whereby an employee performs the duties and responsibilities of their position, and other authorized activities, from an approved Alternate Worksite other than the location from which the employee would otherwise work.

**Time Clock** - A stationary clock with a device for recording employees' times of starting and ending work and/or attendance.



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**Web Clock** – A web based clock housed in the CCT Dashboard used to record employees' times of starting and ending work and/or attendance.

## VII. POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Cook County employees are required to report to work as scheduled, on time and prepared to work, in accordance with their Standard Work Schedule. Timely and regular attendance is a condition of employment and is an expectation of performance for all employees. Additionally, employees must accurately report time worked including an appropriate accounting of Benefit Time and leave time taken.

As a general matter, FLSA Exempt employees often work more than 40 hours a week and they will not receive additional pay based on: working more than the usual 8-hour work day and 40-hour work week, as required in the scope of their normal job requirements. This work might include, but is not limited to, evening meetings, extended travel, or working additional hours to meet a project deadline. As such, FLSA Exempt Employees are expected to work, as necessary within and outside of the standard workday to perform their job duties, which includes being available to respond to work related calls and requests.

Supervisors may require all employees, including FLSA Exempt employees, to be present at work during the County's standard work hours, as necessary to perform the employee's duties. Any employee, who, without reasonable justification and without prior approval fails to comply with a Supervisor's directive to be present at work when needed, may be disciplined pursuant to the Personnel Rules.

The Bureau Chief of BHR has the discretion to authorize the award of Compensatory Time to eligible FLSA Exempt employees assigned to Emergency-related projects.

### A. System Access

1. Employees may access the Cook County Time ("CCT") System through use of Time Clocks, an IVR Clock or the CCT Dashboard.
2. Each employee will be assigned to either a Time Clock, IVR Clock or Web Clock use category by their respective Department at the start of employment, upon promotion or transfer, at the time of CCT System implementation or thereafter, whichever is applicable. With respect to new employees, Department Timekeepers must assign employees to Time Clock, IVR Clock and/or Web Clock use, and enroll employees in the CCT System at the time the Department issues the employee's Proximity Card.



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- a. Employees are assigned to the Time Clock use category for payroll information collection and entry because their job responsibilities require them to work at a fixed physical County location for the majority of the time; and, they are required to utilize the functioning Time Clock station nearest to their assigned work location.
  - b. Employees are assigned to the IVR Clock use category for payroll information collection and entry because their job responsibilities frequently require them to work outside a fixed physical County location, they are working remotely pursuant to the Cook County Telecommuting Policy, or are authorized by their Department Head for another reason.
  - c. Employees are assigned to the Web Clock use category for payroll information collection and entry because their job responsibilities frequently require them to work outside a fixed physical County location, they are working remotely pursuant to the Cook County Telecommuting Policy, or are authorized by their Department Head for another reason.
  - d. Employees may be assigned access to either the Time Clock, IVR Clock, or Web Clock use categories where Supervisors and Department Heads deem such access necessary due to an employee's job responsibilities, alternative work location, or where circumstances require such access from time to time.
  - e. All Employees will have access to the CCT Dashboard.
3. Employees shall account for any and all time worked in the CCT System as provided in Section B below.
  4. Employees shall access the Time Clock IVR Clock and/or Web Clock using some combination of a finger scan, Proximity Card, Proximity Card ID Number, and Employee Identification Number ("EIN").

#### **B. Clock In/Out Requirements**

1. FLSA Non-exempt employees are required to:
  - a. Clock in to the CCT System using the Time Clock, IVR Clock, or Web Clock as assigned, on their scheduled workdays no sooner than seven (7) minutes before their scheduled shift starts;



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- b. Clock out of the CCT System using the Time Clock, IVR Clock, or Web Clock as assigned on their scheduled work days no later than seven (7) minutes after their scheduled shift ends;
  - c. Take their approved breaks (i.e., lunch) in full, as scheduled;
  - d. Use accrued PTO in approved increments; and,
  - e. Clock in/out of the CCT System using the Time Clock, IVR Clock or Web Clock, as assigned, when PTO is taken during their scheduled work days, as prescribed in Section F below.
2. FLSA Exempt employees are required to:
  - a. Clock in/out of the CCT System using the Time Clock, IVR Clock or Web Clock, as assigned, on their scheduled work days, with the exception of Grade 24 employees who are required only to clock in to the CCT System;
  - b. Use accrued PTO in approved increments; and
  - c. Provide appropriate notice to their Supervisor when they expect to be off-site for any length of time during the standard County work hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
3. FLSA Exempt employees are expected to work a minimum of 40 hours a week unless appropriate accrued benefit time is used in the event of an Absence.
4. Employees shall not clock in/out of the CCT System for their approved breaks (i.e., lunch).
5. Employees shall not deviate from their assigned work schedules without advance written approval from their Supervisors.
6. Except as provided below, individual employees are permitted and required to clock in/out of the CCT System using the Time Clock, IVR Clock or Web Clock, as assigned, only for themselves, and are not allowed to clock in/out of the CCT System for other employees:
  - a. When employees are not able to clock in/out of the CCT System using the Time Clock, IVR Clock or Web Clock, as required, due to a technical



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failure or problem with the Time Clock, IVR Clock or Web Clock, they must notify their Supervisors immediately. Supervisors shall notify the Cook County Bureau of Technology (“BOT”) and may authorize the Department’s Timekeeper to enter the employee’s time in the CCT System.

- b. When employees are not able to clock in/out of the System, as required, due to authorized work off site or travel on County business, they must notify their Supervisors in advance, or immediately upon return to work, if advance notification is not possible. In such an instance, Supervisors may authorize the Department’s Timekeeper to enter the employees’ time in the CCT System, upon the Timekeeper’s receipt of the employee’s clock in and/or clock out time via email.
- c. When employees forget to clock in/out of the CCT System, as required, they must notify their Supervisors as soon as practicable to explain the circumstances and provide actual clock in/out information; their Supervisors may authorize the Department’s Timekeeper to enter the employees’ time in the CCT System, accordingly.
- d. When employees are required to attend off site training that has been approved in advance by their Supervisors, they are not required to clock in/out of the Time Clock, but are required to clock in/out of the IVR Clock or Web Clock, as authorized by the Supervisor. For employees with access to the Time Clock, only, Supervisors may authorize the Department’s Timekeeper to enter the employees’ time in the CCT System, accordingly.

#### **C. Tardiness**

1. Employees are expected to report and be prepared to work at the start of their Standard Work Schedule.
2. FLSA Non-exempt employees who fail to report and be prepared to work at the start of their Standard Work Schedule are considered to be Tardy.
3. The CCT System is designed to allow FLSA Non-exempt employees a seven (7) minute grace period to clock in after the start of their Standard Work Schedule after which the CCT System will place the employee in an unpaid status for their Tardiness. The Bureau Chief of BHR has the discretion to extend the grace period in the event of an Emergency.



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4. FLSA Non-exempt employees whom the CCT System places in an unpaid status, may use accrued PTO, if approved by their Supervisor, in the increments described in Section F below to achieve their full scheduled work day in the CCT System.
5. In the absence of Supervisor approval or sufficient accrued PTO in the CCT System to compensate for the shortage of time in the CCT System, the CCT System will place the employee in an unpaid status for the time that remains unaccounted for, and the employee's time will be docked accordingly.
6. In accordance with the Personnel Rules, Tardiness may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**D. Absence**

1. Employees who fail to report and be prepared to work on a scheduled work day, in accordance with their Standard Work Schedule, are considered to be Absent.
2. Employees are expected to request time-off as soon as practicable in advance of a scheduled Absence.
3. If advanced notification of an Absence is not possible, employees must notify their Supervisors as soon as practicable to explain the circumstances of the Absence and to request the use of accrued PTO in the increments described in section F below.
4. FLSA Non-exempt employees whom the CCT System recognizes as absent may use accrued PTO, if approved by their Supervisor, in the increments described in Section F below to achieve their full scheduled work week in the CCT System.
5. In the absence of sufficient accrued PTO in the CCT System to compensate for the shortage of time required for a full scheduled work week in the CCT System, the CCT System will place the employee in an unpaid status for the time that remains unaccounted for and the employee's time will be docked accordingly.
6. Unapproved Absence(s) will result in appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, in accordance with the Personnel Rules and/or applicable collective bargaining agreement.





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**E. Requesting Time Off**

1. FLSA Non-exempt employees are expected to request time off as soon as practicable in advance of a scheduled Absence for any period of time within their Standard Work Schedule.
2. FLSA Exempt employees are expected to request time off as soon as practicable in advance of a scheduled Absence.
3. If advanced notification is not possible, employees must notify their Supervisors as soon as practicable to explain the circumstances and to request the use of accrued PTO in the increments described in section F below.
4. Employees must request time off through the CCT System.
5. Approval/Denial of employee requests for time off will be sent through the CCT System.

**F. PTO Usage**

1. FLSA Non-exempt employees are required to use accrued PTO in the following approved increments:
  - a. Vacation time – 0.25 hour or 15-minute increments;
  - b. Sick time – 0.25 hour or 15-minute increments;
  - c. Personal time – 4-hour increments;
  - d. Floating holidays – 8-hour increments; and,
  - e. Compensatory time – 0.5 hour or 30-minute increments.
2. FLSA Exempt employees are required to use accrued PTO only in the following approved increments. However, when the total accrued time for the requested category of PTO is less than the increments herein specified, the lesser amount of PTO may be exhausted prior to requesting approval of unpaid time. Subject to prior notice and approval by a Supervisor, FLSA Exempt employees are not required to use accrued PTO for Absences lasting less than four hours.



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- a. Vacation time – 4-hour increments;
- b. Sick time – 4-hour increments;
- c. Personal time – 4-hour increments; and
- d. Floating holidays – 8-hour increments.

The floating holiday shall be fully used in one work day or work shift:

3. Consistent with the Cook County Code of Ethical Conduct, County employees shall not intentionally perform any prohibited political activity during any compensated time (other than vacation, personal, or Compensatory Time off). All County employees must use the aforementioned PTO time in the increments outlined above when performing prohibited political activity, as defined in the Ethics Code, within the standard County work hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

#### **G. Leaves of Absence**

1. Employees may request a Leave of Absence through the CCT System.
2. Employees may submit necessary documentation supporting their requests, as described in the Personnel Rules or applicable policy, through the CCT System.
3. Approval/Denial of employee requests for a Leave of Absence may be sent through the CCT System.

#### **H. Replacing Proximity Cards**

1. Any employee whose Proximity Card is lost, stolen, or disabled must promptly report the matter to his/her Supervisor within three (3) business days.
2. Any employee whose Proximity Card is lost or stolen must submit a replacement fee in order to obtain a new Proximity Card.
3. Any employee whose Proximity Card is disabled must return the disabled card in order to obtain a new Proximity Card.
4. The Department Head (or Designee) will submit requests for new Proximity Cards to BHR, in accordance with current guidelines.



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**I. Overtime and Compensatory Time**

1. FLSA Non-exempt employees are permitted to work Overtime and/or earn Compensatory Time pursuant to the Overtime Policy, effective 08/01/2013, which is incorporated herein by reference.
2. Pursuant to the Overtime Policy, Supervisors must approve employees' Overtime Request Form to authorize payment of Overtime or earned Compensatory Time accrued in the CCT System.
3. Overtime and Compensatory Time include time accrued clocking in before the allotted seven (7) minute grace period and clocking out after the allotted seven (7) minute grace period only with prior authorization.
4. If Overtime or Compensatory Time accrues in error because employees are not arriving to or leaving work promptly, Supervisors will adjust the time in the CCT System, accordingly.
5. FLSA non-exempt employees who work Overtime and/or earn Compensatory Time without prior authorization may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

**J. Flextime and Alternative Work Schedules**

FLSA Non-exempt employees are expected to adhere to the Standard Work Schedule. Department Heads have discretion, however, to allow employees to work Flextime and/or Alternative Work Schedules, per the provisions of Section L below, provided that a Flextime and Alternative Work Schedule Request Form is submitted by each employee to his or her Supervisor and such request is approved before the Flextime or Alternative Work Schedule goes into effect. As a general matter, all FLSA Non-exempt employees are expected to report to work at their designated work site. Employees who wish to Telecommute must complete and submit the Telecommuting Request Form to their Department Head in accordance with the Telecommuting Policy.

**K. Supervisor Responsibilities**

1. Supervisors must monitor their employees' attendance on a regular basis and address unsatisfactory attendance in a timely and consistent manner.
  - a. Supervisors shall process employee requests for time off through the CCT System as soon as practicable in advance of the Absence.



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- b. Supervisors may authorize the Department's Timekeeper to enter the CCT System to reflect the appropriate approvals for PTO, Leaves of Absence, and/or unpaid status as applicable.
- 2. Supervisors shall review any and all employee requests for new Proximity Cards, and requests to deviate from their work schedules, earn Overtime and/or Compensatory Time, Flextime, and Alternative Work Schedules, and/or Telecommute, and forward such requests to their Department Heads for consideration.
- 3. Provided that an employee notifies the Supervisor and provides actual clock in/out information, Supervisors shall adjust employee work time in the CCT System when employees are not able to clock in/out of the CCT System as required due to:
  - a. A technical failure or problem with the CCT System;
  - b. Employee working off site or traveling on County business;
  - c. Employees forgetting to clock in/out of the CCT System as required; or,
  - d. Off-site training that has been approved in advance by his/her Supervisors.
- 4. Supervisors shall notify BOT immediately of any technical failures or problems with the CCT System.
- 5. Supervisors shall discipline employees for violations of this policy.

**L. Departmental Discretion**

Each Department may develop its own additional written procedures for time and attendance to address time and attendance issues unique to the Department, after consideration of the Department's operating needs, provided that such procedures are consistent with this policy, and that they are approved in writing by the BHR Chief prior to implementation. Such procedures may include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Procedures for requesting time off;
- 2. Procedures for providing notification when Absent due to illness;



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3. Procedures for authorizing Flextime/Alternative Work Schedules;
4. Emergency scheduling and related procedures (e.g., staggered start times or compressed work weeks);
5. Procedures for signing in/out during scheduled breaks (e.g., lunch); and
6. Any such approved Department policies or procedures that impose additional requirements on employees shall be communicated to the Department employees in writing.

**M. Emergency Declaration**

In the event of an Emergency as defined in Section VI above, the Bureau Chief of the Bureau of Human Resources has the discretion to suspend and/or modify the rules of this policy.

**VIII. PENALTIES**

1. Employees shall be aware that the CCT System is Cook County property and any tampering, misuse, or mistreatment of equipment by an employee may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
2. Altering, falsifying, or tampering with time records may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
3. Failure of employees to record time correctly and on a timely basis may delay the processing of employee's paychecks and may result in delay of pay and disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
4. Violations or abuse of this policy will result in appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, in accordance with the Personnel Rules, any applicable collective bargaining agreement, and the Cook County Employment Plan.