



**St. Johns County Administrative Code
Section: Human Resources**

Title:	409 Conduct	Issued: April 1992
Reference: F.S. 112		Revised: August 2007 June 2012 January 2023

409.1 Solicitation

Salespeople, canvassers and other persons not employed by the County are prohibited from visiting work areas without permission from the County Administrator and are further prohibited from conducting business, or soliciting contributions or memberships during employee work time. This policy does not prohibit distribution of literature during employee's breaks in areas not designated as part of the employees' work area. Soliciting contributions or memberships during employee work time is prohibited.

409.2 Visitors

Visitation to any work area should be minimal unless it is directly related to work as disruptions impact productivity.

409.3 Smoking

To maintain a safe and comfortable working environment and to ensure compliance with applicable laws, smoking in County buildings and County vehicles is not permitted. Smoking is permitted during normal break times and in designated areas only.

409.4 Postings of Notices, Flyers, Advertisements

The Intranet and bulletin boards shall be used to communicate official government information on equal employment opportunity, wages and hours, health and safety, and other issues.

Designated bulletin boards may be used for County related business. Any person, official, department, employee or outside organization requesting to post any bulletin at or in a County Building must have the permission of the department whose bulletin board will be used. If permission is granted, the item must be posted on a designated bulletin board or area reserved for this purpose. There shall be no postings on doors, walls, windows, or other areas not designated for such postings.

County Message Board

County employees are permitted to post items on the electronic bulletin board, entitled "County Message Board," providing all County Ordinances are adhered to and prohibited items as noted below are not posted. Messages sent to the "Everyone Group," "BCC All Group," and the County Message Board must be approved by the County Administrator or designee.

Postings

Material that contains content that is obscene, pornographic, libelous, promotes any religious activities or any political activities of a partisan nature, advocates violence, bigotry, or bias based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, age, disability or genetics are not allowed. Postings of a commercial nature for personal financial gain or promotion of commercial ventures are also prohibited. Employees selling personal items on an individual basis who are not engaged in a commercial enterprise may post items for sale on the County Message Board if approved by the County Administrator or his/her designee. Employees wishing to announce events and non-profit fundraisers must obtain permission from the County Administrator, or designee, prior to posting.



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409.5 Political Activities

Employees are permitted to be politically active but are not permitted to be a candidate for political office, to hold political office, or to hold an office in a political party as an employee of the County. Active or passive political campaigning or solicitation for political contributions during working hours is prohibited.

409.6 Conflict of Interest

County employees shall not have personal investments in any enterprise, which could create substantial conflict between their private interests and the public interest. It is important that employees do not maintain such relationships with organizations, businesses or individuals with which they have official County business. Such behavior might be construed as evidence of favoritism, coercion, unfair advantage, or collusion.

409.7 Personal Business

Employees shall only conduct official County business during work hours. Personal business may not be conducted at work. The use of County property and/or equipment may not be used for personal business.

409.8 Personal Appearance and Grooming

Employees are expected to take pride in their personal appearance and meet appropriate grooming standards as enforced by each Department Director.

409.9 Dress Code

Work attire shall reflect our customer oriented and professionally operated organization. In order to balance the County's image with the employee's freedom to make his or her own wardrobe choices, casual business attire is acceptable in the office environment during regular business hours. Department policy may vary based on safety regulations, tasks performed, and the customers served.

409.10 Performance Evaluations

Written employee evaluations will be prepared at least annually, by the supervisor or department director. Employee evaluations are used for, but not limited to, the following:

- To inform the employee of their work performance in the reporting period.
- To recognize the employee's potential for promotion.
- To determine the employee's eligibility for salary advancements.
- As a basis for taking disciplinary action against the employee.
- To determine training needs.

Employees who have completed the introductory/probationary period of six (6) months shall have their performance evaluated.

409.11 Outside Employment

Employees who engage in secondary employment may not allow that employment to interfere or conflict with County work and interest. Military service is not considered outside employment. Outside employment must be approved by the Department Director and Human Resources using the designated form. Outside employment may not:

- Conflict with the employee's duties with the County.
- Have an association with any business that has an unfavorable or questionable reputation that would reflect negatively on the County.
- Conflict with business or contractual agreements with the County.



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409.12 Confidentiality

Employees shall not disclose confidential information gained through their employment with any person who does not have the need to know. Employees are also prohibited from using such privileged information for their personal gain or benefit.

409.13 County Telephone Use

County provided telephones (land lines and cellular phones) are intended for the conduct of St. Johns County business and are a tool for carrying out the County's day-to-day operations. All calls are to be handled in a professional manner.

Personal incoming and outgoing phone calls should be a rare occurrence and are restricted to local or toll-free calls only. Department Directors shall review all telephone bills and ensure that all calls are County business related. Charges for emergency personal calls that incur cost shall be reimbursed by the employee to the County. The Department Director shall be responsible for documenting the payment of charges and forwarding such payments to the Comptroller's Finance Department.

409.14 Cell Phone Use

The use of personal cellular phones or other communication devices is restricted to non-duty time, such as breaks, lunch, etc.

Cellular Phone Use in Vehicles

The policy and procedure for the safe use of cellular devices in vehicles is located in the Employee Handbook.

409.15 Computer Use

Any employee using a St. Johns County computer is considered a user, and is obliged to comply with the policy. The County computer system may only be used for the purpose of conducting County business and may only be accessed by authorized users. All employees are required to read, understand and comply with the Computer Use Policy. A Policy Acknowledgement form must be completed by every user and shall be maintained in each employee's personnel file.

409.16 Appropriate Conduct

Employees are expected to adhere to accepted business principles in matters of professional and personal conduct and exhibit a high degree of personal integrity at all times. Employees must refrain from behaviors that may be harmful to self and others or that might be viewed unfavorably by employees or the public. St. Johns County is an "at will" employer as defined by Florida Law. Types of behavior and conduct that St. Johns County considers inappropriate and which could lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment without prior warning include, but are not limited to, the following (this list is not all-inclusive):

- Negligence.
- Inefficiency.
- Inability to perform assigned duties.
- Insubordination.
- Willful violation of County rules and regulations.
- Conduct unbecoming of a public employee.
- Misconduct.
- Use of alcoholic beverages or narcotics while engaged in County business.
- Reporting to work intoxicated or under the influence of non-prescribed drugs.



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- Arrest of any crime involving moral misconduct.
- Arrest of a felony.
- Falsifying employment or other County records.
- Violating the Prohibition of Unlawful Harassment policy.
- Establishing a pattern of excessive absenteeism or tardiness.
- Using County supplies/materials or other property for personal purposes.
- Illegally manufacturing, possessing, using, selling, distributing, or transporting drugs.
- Fighting or using obscene, abusive, or threatening language or gestures while on the job.
- Stealing.
- Possessing unauthorized firearms.
- Disregarding safety or security regulations while on the job or while on County property.
- Making false allegations or claims.
- Making unauthorized recordings.
- Purposely Damaging to County property

409.17 Disciplinary Action

St. Johns County uses a progressive discipline process. Progressive steps will be followed with regard to employee disciplinary matters except in matters where management determines the matter should be addressed outside of the progressive system.

Normally, the supervisor will administer appropriate corrective or disciplinary action. Appropriate action will be determined based on factors such as severity, frequency, and degree of deviation from expectations.

Disciplinary actions may take the form of: verbal warning, written warning, suspension, change in assignment, reduction in pay, demotion, or termination. All disciplinary action other than verbal and written warnings must be discussed with the Human Resources Director or designee prior to such action. Disciplinary action (verbal or otherwise) must be documented on the Corrective Action form and submitted to Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's personnel file. The County Administrator reserves the right to modify disciplinary action as necessary.

409.18 Grievance/Appeals

The County is committed to providing fair treatment to all employees and will ensure each concern is handled in an efficient and equitable manner. This policy establishes a procedure in the employee handbook, to provide a way for employees to solve problems, resolve disputes, and appeal employment decisions which may rise regarding the application, meaning or interpretation of the County's practices and procedures. This procedure does not apply to new employees serving their initial six (6) month probation, contract employees, and temporary employees. Employees who have concerns regarding discrimination or harassment should follow the procedure explained in the Prohibition of Unlawful Harassment policy.

The County encourages employees to discuss concerns with their supervisor without fear of reprisal. It is the intent and desire of the County to address complaints informally. Both supervisors and employees are expected to make every effort to resolve problems as they arise.

409.19 Resignation

Employees who resign after giving a minimum of two (2) weeks' advanced notice may be entitled to the payment of accrued leave in accordance with the policy.



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409.20 Abandonment of Position

Employees who are absent for three (3) consecutive working days without authorized leave will be considered to have abandoned their position and will have their employment terminated.