

# ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES



Procedure Number: 23-16

Effective Date: 03/09/2001

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County Administrator

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SUBJECT: **ACCESS TO OFFICIAL EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL and BENEFITS FILES**

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DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBLE: **Human Resources Department**

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## I. PURPOSE

To state the procedures for accessing official employee personnel and benefits files maintained by the Human Resources Department.

## II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Official Personnel File – an official file maintained by the Human Resources Department which contains information related to an individual's employment with Pima County and may include, but not be limited to, the employee's employment application, performance appraisals, documentation of formal disciplinary actions, personnel action forms and other documents designated by Merit System Rules and Personnel Policies.
- B. Official Benefits File – an official file maintained by the Human Resources Department containing insurance documentation resulting from the employee's enrollment elections. The information in this file may differ from the information maintained in the employee's confidential department medical file.
- C. Official Personnel Files and/or Records – pertains to either one or a combination of both of the above when referenced throughout this procedure.

## III. PROCEDURES

- A. Obtaining Copies of Records for Employees
  - 1. Employee personnel and benefits files maintained by Human Resources are the property of Pima County and may not be removed from the Human Resources Department.
  - 2. Current employees may obtain copies of their own personnel and/or benefits files, or specific documents contained therein, by making a request to Human Resources. All copy charges are the responsibility of the employee making the request and shall be set at \$.10 per page after five (5) pages. The first five (5) pages are free.

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Former employees may obtain copies of their own personnel and benefits files by completing a Public Records Request Form and filing it with the Clerk of the Board on the County website or by mail pursuant to Administrative Procedure (AP) 4-4. All copy charges are the responsibility of the requesting party and cost recovery is outlined in AP 4-4.

3. All copy charges are the responsibility of those who submit subpoenas in accordance with Arizona Revised Statutes §12-351.
4. Unauthorized access to or use of personnel records, computerized personnel files, or benefits records may result in corrective action, up to and including dismissal or termination.

B. Review of Personnel Files by Employees and Others

1. Merit System Rules and Personnel Policies define those who may have access to the official personnel files maintained by Human Resources. Personnel records may be reviewed by eligible individuals at the Human Resources' Personnel Records Center from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
2. Individuals may review their own personnel records and files upon presentation of a Pima County or other official picture identification. An employee wishing to grant access to his or her personnel records shall provide a signed letter of consent, addressed to the Human Resources Director, which specifies the name of the individual to whom the records may be released. Human Resources shall verify the validity of the letter of consent telephonically with the employee prior to granting access.
3. Authorized access to official personnel records which may require the Human Resources Director's approval, in accordance with policy, include, but are not limited to, members of the Board of Supervisors, the County Administrator, the employee's Appointing Authority or designee, or the Appointing Authority or designee considering an employee to fill a vacant position, law enforcement and investigative organizations to include the County Attorney and Deputy County Attorneys, and Human Resources staff in the conduct of official business. Access to records for hiring purposes requires the approval of the Human Resources Director or, when absent, a designee. For access to insurance files by authorized individuals, the Human Resources Director's approval, or that of a designee, is required.

C. Public Release of Official Personnel Files and Records

1. Official Personnel Files and Records of current or former employees shall not be available to the public without the employee's consent, unless required by law or other action. All public records requests shall be made in accordance with AP 4-4. All copy charges are the responsibility of the requesting party and cost recovery is outlined in AP 4-4.

2. Departments shall refer all requests for employment verification information about current and former employees to Human Resources. Upon receipt of a request for such information, the Human Resources Director or designee may provide the employee's dates of employment, department, salary history, and job title. The requestor must provide the current or former employee's social security number to Human Resources. Human Resources staff may verify, but shall not under any circumstances disclose or provide the current or former employee's social security number. No other information shall be released unless required by law or other action.

D. Retention of Official Personnel Records and Files

An employee's personnel records shall be retained in accordance with the State of Arizona's Retention and Disposition Schedule.

References: Pima County Personnel Policy 8-118  
Administrative Procedure 4-4  
Arizona Revised Statutes §12-351  
State of Arizona's Retention and Disposition Schedule