



**LAKE COUNTY**  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
*County Procedure*

**Title: VETERANS PREFERENCE IN EMPLOYMENT**

Number: ES-3.01.02

Approved: May 12, 2008

Originator: Employee Services

Review: May 12, 2013

**I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

To outline the process used for administering Veterans' Preference program relating to the appointment, promotion, and retention of eligible veterans in accordance with Florida Statute 295. This procedure applies to all applicants and employees of Lake County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for positions designated as regular full-time or regular part-time with the exception of the following exempt positions:

- Department/Office Directors
- County Attorney
- Deputy County Attorney
- Office Associates, Legal Office Associates, or Office Managers assigned as personal secretaries of the preceding
- Members of board and commissions
- Temporary employees without benefits

**II. DEFINITIONS**

none

**III. PROCEDURES**

A. Initial Appointment

1) Recruitment

- Job Postings: Job vacancy announcements that are entitled to consideration under this procedure will include the phrase, "Veterans Preference Applies."
- Employment Application
  - Each hard copy and electronic employment application will contain a supplemental information section regarding Veterans' Preference and a supplemental Application for Veterans' Employment Preference section. (*Attachments 1 and 2*).
  - The County's employment applications (hard copy and electronic)

- require the applicant to indicate whether or not they are claiming Veterans' Preference. In those cases where the applicant answers 'yes', the applicant will be asked to complete the Application for Veterans' Employment Preference (*Attachment 2*), requiring them to identify which of the eligibility scenarios applies to them (*Attachment 1, section A & B and Attachment 2, section 2*).
- Eligibility Verification: The applicant must establish eligibility for consideration under the Veterans Preference statues prior to the closing date of the position as follows:
    - 1) Proof of Florida Residency
      - Unexpired Florida Drivers License
      - Florida ID Card
      - Voters ID Card
      - Library Card
      - Intent to Domicile Recorded by the Clerk of Court
    - 2) Proof of Veterans Eligibility
      - Veterans, disabled veterans and spouses of disabled veterans must furnish a copy of the DD Form 214, military discharge papers, or equivalent certification from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) listing status, dates of service and discharge type.
      - Disabled veterans must also provide documentation from the Department of Defense (DOD) or VA certifying that the veteran has a compensable service-connected disability.
      - Spouses of disabled veterans must provide
        - Certification from the DOD or VA that the veteran is totally and permanently disabled. (Including proof that the disabled veteran cannot qualify for employment because of the service-connected disability)
        - Evidence of marriage to the veteran
        - A written statement that the spouse is still married to the veteran at the time of application for employment
      - Spouses of persons on active duty must provide:
        - Documentation from the DOD or VA certifying that the person on active duty is listed as missing in action, captured in the line of duty, or forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government power
        - Evidence of marriage to the person on active duty
        - A written statement that the spouse is still married to person on active duty at the time of application for employment
      - Un-remarried widow or widower of a deceased veteran must provide:

- Documentation from the DOD or VA certifying the service-connected death of the veteran
- Evidence of marriage to the deceased veteran
- A written statement that the spouse is not remarried

Failure by the applicant to provide the required documentation will invalidate the claim for Veterans Preference for the vacant position.

## 2) Selection Process

The BCC does not use a numerically based selection process; therefore, preference is given at each step of the employment consideration process to preference eligible applicants, provided such individual meets the minimum qualifications of the position as stated in the official job description. Since Lake County uses a non-numerical selection process, qualified veterans receive the same level of preference despite disability status.

### a. Interviews

- The Office of Employee Services reviews Veterans' Preference applicants for eligibility and qualification for each position. Hiring departments are notified of Veterans' Preference status via the job application supervisor's portal.
- All eligible veterans who meet the minimum qualifications for the position are granted an interview by the hiring department.

### b. Selection

- The most qualified applicant should be selected for the position. If the most qualified applicants (including a preference eligible veteran) are equally qualified, the veteran must be given selection preference. If the non-veteran is the most qualified for a position, the non-veteran should be employed.
- Documentation of the hiring decision is paramount. In those cases where the veteran is not selected, the hiring department must be able to demonstrate why the veteran was not selected, should they be asked. All interview questions, notes and score sheets should be retained should the need arise to justify the action taken.

### c. Notification of Decision

- It is the hiring department's responsibility to ensure that a Letter of Non-Selection be sent to all interviewed applicants, including veterans who were interviewed but not selected, within three (3) business days from the time that the selected candidate signs the Conditional Offer of Employment.
- All original documents pertaining to the selection process and hiring decision shall be submitted to the Office of Employee Services no

later than five (5) business days after the selected candidate signs the Conditional Offer of Employment.

B. Reinstatement and/or Promotion

- When an eligible employee leaves employment with the BCC to serve in the Armed Forces, the BCC will reinstate the employee to the same or equivalent position within one (1) year of separation or discharge provided the employee is separated under honorable conditions, and proof of such service is documented in the form of a new DD Form 214. This provision applies for both voluntary and involuntary service and for active military service only, service such as reserve drills or training does not apply.
- Those employees reinstated under this provision will be awarded preference in promotion. Specifically, when a promotion opportunity exists, should the veteran be as qualified as the most qualified contender, the veteran MUST be offered the promotion. This entitlement expires with the veteran's first promotion.

C. Retention

- When layoffs or a reduction-in-force are necessary, special consideration in the retention of employees shall be given as follows:
  - First, to qualifying disabled veterans and spouses of a qualifying disabled veteran or of active duty personnel missing in action, captured in the line of duty by a hostile force, or forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power; and
  - Second, to wartime veterans and un-remarried widows or widowers of veterans who died of a service-connected disability.
- In those cases where two (2) employees otherwise equally compare under the County's Layoffs procedure and one is a veteran, the veteran must be retained.
- Records will be maintained to document the manner of retention and the propriety of the retention and decision process.

**IV. RESERVATION OF AUTHORITY**

The authority to issue or revise this Procedure is reserved to the County Manager. The County Manager may authorize exceptions to this procedure when deemed appropriate.

Approved by: Cindy Hall, County Manager

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