

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE

TITLE 5. MATTERS AFFECTING PUBLIC OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

SUBTITLE B. COUNTY OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

CHAPTER 157. ASSISTANCE, BENEFITS, AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF COUNTY OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

SUBCHAPTER A. MEDICAL CARE, HOSPITALIZATION, AND INSURANCE

Sec. 157.001. HOSPITALIZATION INSURANCE. The commissioners court of a county may provide hospitalization insurance to a county official, deputy, assistant, or other county employee.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 157.002. MEDICAL CARE, HOSPITALIZATION, AND INSURANCE IN COUNTIES. (a) The commissioners court by rule may provide for medical care and hospitalization and may provide for compensation, accident, hospital, and disability insurance for the following persons if their salaries are paid from the funds of the county or funds of a flood control district located entirely in the county, or funds of a hospital district described by Section 281.0475, Health and Safety Code, located entirely in the county, or if they are employees of another governmental entity for which the county is obligated to provide benefits:

(1) deputies, assistants, and other employees of the county, or of the flood control district, or of the hospital district, who work under the commissioners court or its appointees;

(2) county and district officers and their deputies and assistants appointed under Subchapter A, Chapter 151;

(3) employees appointed under Section 76.004(b), Government Code;

(4) any retired person formerly holding any status listed above; and

(5) the dependents of any person listed above.

(b) The commissioners court may contract with a county-operated hospital or a hospital operated jointly by a municipality and county to provide medical care and hospitalization

under this section. The commissioners court may, if circumstances warrant, provide for medical care and hospitalization in a private hospital.

(c) A rule adopted under this section relating to a person's medical care, hospitalization, or insurance coverage must be included in the person's employment contract.

(d) A rule adopted under this section is subject to the approval of the county auditor.

(e) Before adopting a rule under this section, the commissioners court must give notice of a hearing about the proposed adoption. The notice must be published in a newspaper that is published in the county. The publication must be made at least once a week for two consecutive weeks. The first notice must appear before the 15th day before the date of the hearing. The notice must provide a brief summary of the rule as well as the time and day of the hearing. On adoption, the rule must be entered in the minutes of the hearing and it takes effect on the date set out in the rule. At the hearing, an employee or taxpayer of the county is entitled to appear and protest the adoption of a rule.

(f) A county providing coverage under this section shall reinsure its potential liability or purchase stop-loss coverage for any amount of potential liability that is in excess of 125 percent of projected paid losses and may reinsure its potential liability or purchase stop-loss coverage for any amount of potential liability that is 125 percent or less of projected paid losses. A county must reinsure the liability or purchase stop-loss coverage from an insurance company admitted to do business in this state that has a certificate of authority from the State Board of Insurance. Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1, Sec. 87(h), eff. Aug. 28, 1989; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 872, Sec. 1, 2, eff. June 14, 1989.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1094 (H.B. [2120](#)), Sec. 22, eff. September 1, 2005.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 770 (H.B. [2299](#)), Sec. 2.77, eff. January 1, 2017.

Sec. 157.003. HOSPITAL AND INSURANCE FUND. (a) In a county that adopts rules under Section 157.002, the commissioners court may require persons participating in the health plan to contribute toward the payment of the plan. The commissioners court may establish a fund to be known as the "Hospital and Insurance Fund--County Employees" to pay for the medical care or hospitalization or the insurance.

(b) A person who elects to participate in the health plan must authorize contributions to the fund by salary deduction. The authorization must be in writing and must be given at the time of the person's employment or on the effective date of the rules. The county and any participating flood control district or hospital district shall also contribute to the fund. A person who does not contribute to the plan may not receive hospitalization or insurance benefits.

(c) The fund may be used only for the purposes stated in Subsection (a). Employees who are discharged or who end their employment voluntarily have no vested right to contributions made to the fund. The fund shall continue to be used for the benefit of the remaining employees.

(d) Claims shall be paid from the fund in the same manner as provided by law for the payment of other claims of the county or flood control district.

(e) If a plan established under this section is terminated by the commissioners court, the remaining funds shall be transferred to the county and to any participating flood control district in proportion to the total contributions made by them.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1094 (H.B. 2120), Sec. 23, eff. September 1, 2005.

Sec. 157.004. DISABILITY COMPENSATION IN COUNTIES OF 290,000 TO 500,000. (a) The commissioners court of a county with a population of 290,000 to 500,000 shall provide for the payment of a county employee who is made totally unfit to continue employment because of a physical injury occurring in the actual and active

discharge of a duty. The payment may not cover more than six months of disability. The payment must be in the following amounts:

(1) full salary for each month, or part of a month, of total disability during the first three months of the disability; and

(2) one-half salary for each month, or part of a month, of total disability during the second three months of the disability.

(b) The commissioners court, before making an award for disability under this section, shall conduct a hearing to determine the merits of the claim and may subpoena and examine witnesses to assist in the determination. The commissioners court may grant or refuse an award.

(c) The employee making a claim under this section may appeal a decision of the commissioners court within 10 days after the date of the decision. Appeal is by trial de novo before the court that has jurisdiction of the amount involved.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 157.005. SUBROGATION. (a) A county that has paid medical expenses, doctor bills, hospital bills, or salary for a sheriff, deputy sheriff, constable, deputy constable, or other county or precinct law enforcement official under Article III, Section 52e, of the Texas Constitution, as adopted in 1967, is subrogated to the law enforcement official's right of recovery for personal injuries caused by another to the extent of the payments made by the county.

(b) A county may not refuse to pay medical expenses, doctor bills, or hospital bills on the ground that the law enforcement official has a claim for damages for personal injury.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.

Sec. 157.006. PAYMENTS FOR CERTAIN HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE. (a) A hospital district created under Article IX of the Texas Constitution or a county may purchase and pay the premiums for a conversion policy or other health insurance coverage for a person who is diagnosed as having HIV or AIDS, or defined by Section

[81.101](#), Health and Safety Code, or other terminal or chronic illness, who is unemployed, and whose income level is less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level, based on the federal Office of Management and Budget poverty index in effect at the time coverage is provided, even though that person may be eligible for benefits under Chapter [32](#), Human Resources Code, or a medical assistance program of the county or hospital district.

(b) Health insurance coverage for which premiums may be paid under this section includes coverage purchased from an insurance company authorized to do business in this state, a group hospital services corporation operating under Chapter [842](#), Insurance Code, a health maintenance organization operating under Chapter [843](#), Insurance Code, or an insurance pool created by the federal or state government or a political subdivision of the state.

(c) The county or hospital district may provide for payment of premiums from unencumbered money available to it for that purpose.

(d) A county or hospital by order may adopt necessary rules, criteria, and plans and may enter into necessary contracts to carry out this section.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1041, Sec. 6, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Amended by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 14, Sec. 284(10), eff. Sept. 1, 1991; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1276, Sec. 10A.537, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 157.007. APPLICABILITY OF SUBCHAPTER. (a) A county that chooses to provide medical or related benefits may operate under this subchapter or Subchapter F.

(b) A county operating under this subchapter that previously created a fund under Section [157.102](#) may continue the fund or may terminate the fund and create a fund as provided by Section [157.003](#).

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 630, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 157.008. INSURANCE POOL OR INSURANCE COMPANY NOT CREATED. If a county provides for medical care and hospitalization or provides for compensation, accident, hospital, and disability

insurance to persons listed under Section 157.002(a)(1), the county:

(1) has not created an insurance pool with a flood control district, hospital district, or other governmental entity, unless the county enters into a contract under Chapter 172; and

(2) is not an insurance company subject to the Insurance Code or to regulation by the Texas Department of Insurance as an insurance company.

Added by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1094 (H.B. 2120), Sec. 24, eff. September 1, 2005.

#### SUBCHAPTER B. HOURS OF WORK

Sec. 157.021. HOURS OF WORK OF COUNTY EMPLOYEES. (a) In a county with a population of 355,000 or more, the commissioners court may adopt and enforce uniform rules on the hours of work of department heads, assistants, deputies, and other employees whose compensation is set or approved by the court.

(b) The commissioners court of any county may adopt and enforce uniform rules on overtime and compensatory time for department heads, assistants, deputies, and other employees whose compensation is set or approved by the commissioners court. The rules may:

(1) prohibit unbudgeted overtime, except when the commissioners court or an elected county or district officer declares an emergency; and

(2) require that emergency overtime be reported to the county auditor and the commissioners court.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987. Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 713, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 157.022. HOURS OF WORK OF PEACE OFFICERS IN COUNTIES OF MORE THAN ONE MILLION. (a) A peace officer employed by a county with a population of more than one million may not be required to work more hours during a calendar week than the number of hours in the normal work week of the majority of other county employees.

(b) A sheriff or constable may require a peace officer to

work more hours than allowed by Subsection (a) if the sheriff or constable determines an emergency exists that requires the officer to work extra hours.

(c) A peace officer who elects to work extra hours during a calendar week shall be compensated on a basis consistent with overtime provisions of the county personnel policy.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987. Amended by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 597, Sec. 91, eff. Sept. 1, 1991.

#### SUBCHAPTER C. LIABILITY INSURANCE

Sec. 157.041. GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE. (a) The commissioners court of a county may obtain insurance or similar coverage from a governmental pool operating under Chapter 119 or a self-insurance fund or risk retention group operating under Chapter 2259, Government Code, for an official or employee of the county including county and precinct peace officers designated by the commissioners court, a district attorney who has all or part of the county within the district attorney's jurisdiction, or an official of any special purpose district located, in whole or in part, in the county against liability arising from the performance of official duties or duties of employment.

(b) Insurance provided under this section must be purchased from an insurance company authorized to do business in this state and must be on forms approved by the commissioner of insurance.

(c) The commissioner of insurance shall adopt rules and set rates to implement this section.

(d) Coverage obtained from a pool operating under Chapter 119 or a self-insurance fund or risk retention group operating under Chapter 2259, Government Code, is not insurance and, except as provided by Subsections (b) and (c), is not subject to regulation by the commissioner of insurance.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987. Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 561, Sec. 7, eff. Aug. 30, 1993; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1420, Sec. 8.287, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 157.042. MOTOR VEHICLE LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR PEACE

OFFICERS IN CERTAIN COUNTIES. (a) A county that has a population of more than 1.3 million and in which a municipality with a population of more than one million is primarily located shall insure its sheriff, constables, and full-time deputies of those officers against liability to third persons arising from the operation or maintenance of:

- (1) county-owned or county-leased motor vehicles; and
- (2) privately owned motor vehicles to the extent used for the performance of county business or law enforcement duties.

(b) A county may satisfy the requirement of Subsection (a) by requiring that the person to be covered purchase an extended coverage endorsement to an individually owned liability insurance policy and by reimbursing the person for the cost of the extended coverage endorsement. The extended coverage endorsement must be in an amount equal to or greater than that required by Subsection (d) and must extend coverage to include the operation of vehicles in the scope of the person's employment. The county may require a person insured in this manner to provide proof of coverage.

(c) A county may elect to comply with the requirements of this section by self-insuring in accordance with Section [601.124](#), Transportation Code.

(d) Liability coverage required under this section must be in amounts equal to or greater than the amounts required by Chapter [601](#), Transportation Code.

(e) In this section, "motor vehicle" means a vehicle for which motor vehicle insurance is written under Subchapter A, Chapter 5, Insurance Code.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987. Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 165, Sec. 30.217, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 644, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 669, Sec. 68, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 157.043. GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR COUNTY OFFICIALS. (a) In this section, "county officer or employee" includes a county or precinct peace officer, the district attorney, or an officer of a special purpose district located in whole or in part in the county.

(b) The commissioners court of a county may obtain insurance or similar coverage from a governmental pool operating under Chapter 119 or a self-insurance fund or risk retention group operating under Chapter 2259, Government Code, for a county officer or employee, insuring the officer or employee from liability for losses arising from the performance of official duties by the officer or duties of employment by the employee, including losses resulting from errors or omissions of the officer or employee or from crime, dishonesty, or theft.

(c) An insurance policy purchased under Subsection (b) may be a blanket insurance policy covering some or all county officers or employees. The commissioners court may self-insure for part or all of any deductible required under a blanket insurance policy. A blanket insurance policy purchased under this subsection may be used to satisfy any requirement for insurance required of a county officer by any law.

(d) This section is cumulative of other statutory, common law, or constitutional provisions.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 92, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1420, Sec. 8.288, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

#### SUBCHAPTER D. CHILD CARE SERVICES

Sec. 157.061. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Child care services" means the care, training, education, custody, treatment, and supervision of children for all or part of a day.

(2) "County juror" means a juror in a justice, county, or district court in a county.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1, Sec. 37(a), eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 157.062. AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH PROGRAM. The commissioners court of a county with a population of 500,000 or more may establish a program by which the county provides child care services to benefit county employees, county jurors, and their

children.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1, Sec. 37(a), eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 157.063. ELIGIBLE CHILDREN. Any child of a county employee or county juror, including a stepchild, foster child, or other child in the possession of the employee or juror under a court order, is eligible to participate in the child care program subject to the limitations imposed under Section 157.065.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1, Sec. 37(a), eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 157.064. SPACE FOR PROGRAM. The commissioners court may set aside space in an existing county facility or may acquire by lease or purchase additional space for the child care program.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1, Sec. 37(a), eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 157.065. SCOPE OF PROGRAM. (a) The commissioners court may determine its own guidelines about the scope of the child care program. The guidelines must include provisions relating to fees for participation in the program, ages of children who may participate, services to be available, times services are available, and related matters.

(b) The commissioners court shall appoint a board of county employees to review the program and guidelines and to make recommendations to the court about the program.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1, Sec. 37(a), eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 157.066. STAFF. (a) The commissioners court may employ a child care administrator to supervise the administration of the program and, with the approval of the court, to employ the necessary staff to administer the program.

(b) Instead of exercising the authority under Subsection (a), the commissioners court may contract for the child care services.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1, Sec. 37(a), eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 157.067. FEES. (a) The commissioners court may set fees to be charged for the child care services. A fee may be set at any amount not to exceed the actual cost of providing the service. If the amount of a fee is less than the cost of providing the service, the difference between the two amounts is considered to be part of the compensation of the county employee or county juror.

(b) Fees collected under this section shall be deposited in the general fund of the county.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1, Sec. 37(a), eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

#### SUBCHAPTER E. POOLING OF SICK LEAVE BY COUNTY EMPLOYEES

Sec. 157.071. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Administrator" means the person designated by the commissioners court of a county to administer the county's sick leave pool program.

(2) "Employee" means a district, county, or precinct employee with 12 or more months of continuous employment with the district, county, or precinct who is paid from the general fund of the county, from a special fund of the county, or from special grants paid through the county.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 613, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1993.  
Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 612, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Sec. 157.072. AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH PROGRAM FOR SICK LEAVE POOL. (a) The commissioners court of a county may establish a program within the county to allow an employee to voluntarily transfer sick leave time earned by the employee to a county sick leave pool.

(b) The commissioners court of a county with a population of 800,000 or more may allow an employee to voluntarily transfer vacation leave time earned by the employee to a county sick leave

pool.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 613, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1993.

Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 711, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 216 (H.B. 180), Sec. 1, eff. June 4, 2021.

Sec. 157.073. ADMINISTRATION OF SICK LEAVE POOL PROGRAM.

(a) The commissioners court may adopt rules and prescribe procedures and forms relating to the operation of the county sick leave pool program. The commissioners court by rule may require an employee to:

(1) enroll in the county sick leave pool as a condition for eligibility under Section 157.075(a); and

(2) transfer at least one day of accrued sick leave time or, if allowed under Section 157.072(b), accrued vacation leave time earned by the employee as a condition of enrollment.

(b) The commissioners court shall designate a person to administer the county sick leave pool program.

(c) The commissioners court shall determine which injuries and illnesses are classified as catastrophic for purposes of this subchapter. The court shall provide to the administrator a written statement of that classification.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 613, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1993.

Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 493, Sec. 1, eff. June 11, 2001.

Sec. 157.074. EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION TO SICK LEAVE POOL.

(a) To contribute time to the county sick leave pool, an employee must submit an application to the administrator in the form prescribed by the commissioners court.

(b) On approval by the administrator, in a fiscal year the employee may transfer to the county sick leave pool not less than one day or more than five days of accrued sick leave time, or accrued vacation leave time in a county operating under Section 157.072(b), earned by the employee. The administrator shall credit

the pool with the amount of time contributed by the employee and shall deduct the same amount of time from the amount to which the employee is entitled, as if the employee had used the time for personal purposes.

(c) An employee who is terminated or who resigns or retires may donate not more than 10 days of accrued sick leave time or, if allowed under Section 157.072(b), accrued vacation leave time earned by the employee to take effect immediately before the effective date of termination, resignation, or retirement.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 613, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1993.

Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 711, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 612, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 493, Sec. 2, eff. June 11, 2001.

Sec. 157.075. EMPLOYEE WITHDRAWAL FROM SICK LEAVE POOL.

(a) An employee is eligible to use time contributed to the county sick leave pool if:

(1) because of a catastrophic injury or illness, the employee has exhausted all the accrued paid leave and compensatory time to which the employee is otherwise entitled; and

(2) the employee is enrolled in the county sick leave pool, if the commissioners court requires enrollment under Section 157.073(a).

(b) An eligible employee must apply to the administrator for permission to use time in the county sick leave pool. If the administrator determines that the employee is eligible, the administrator shall approve the transfer of time from the pool to the employee. The administrator shall credit the time to the employee, and the employee may use the time in the same manner as sick leave earned by the employee in the course of employment.

(c) An eligible employee may not use time in the county sick leave pool in an amount that exceeds the lesser of one-third of the total amount of time in the pool or 180 days. The administrator shall determine the exact amount that an eligible employee may use.

(d) An employee absent on sick leave assigned from the county sick leave pool is treated for all purposes as if the employee were absent on earned sick leave.

(e) The estate of a deceased employee is not entitled to payment for unused sick leave acquired by that employee from the county sick leave pool.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 613, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1993.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 612, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 493, Sec. 3, eff. June 11, 2001; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 554, Sec. 1, eff. June 11, 2001.

#### SUBCHAPTER F. GROUP HEALTH AND RELATED BENEFITS

Sec. 157.101. GROUP HEALTH AND RELATED BENEFITS. (a) A commissioners court by rule, including through an intergovernmental risk pool organized under Chapter 172, may provide for group health and related benefits, including medical care, surgical care, hospitalization, and pharmaceutical, life, accident, disability, long-term care, vision, dental, mental health, and substance abuse benefits, for the following persons if their salaries are paid from the funds of the county or funds of a flood control district located entirely in the county, or funds of a hospital district described by Section 281.0475, Health and Safety Code, located entirely in the county, or if they are employees of another governmental entity for which the county is obligated to provide benefits:

(1) deputies, assistants, and other employees of the county, or of the flood control district, or of the hospital district, who work under the commissioners court or its appointees;

(2) county and district officers and their deputies and assistants appointed under Subchapter A, Chapter 151;

(3) employees of a community supervision and corrections department established under Chapter 76, Government Code;

(4) a retired person formerly holding a status listed in Subdivisions (1)-(3); and

(5) the dependents of a person listed in Subdivisions (1)-(4).

(b) The commissioners court may provide the benefits under Subsection (a) through insurance, self-insurance, or a contract

with a county-operated hospital, a hospital operated jointly by a municipality and county, or a private hospital.

(c) A rule adopted under this section relating to a person's group health or related benefits coverage must be included in the person's employment contract or otherwise communicated in writing to the person.

(d) A rule adopted under this section may be subject to the approval of the county auditor.

(e) Before adopting a rule under this section, the commissioners court must provide notice of a hearing about the proposed adoption in accordance with Chapter 551, Government Code. At the hearing, an employee or taxpayer of the county is entitled to appear and protest the adoption of a rule.

(f) A county providing coverage under this section may reinsure its potential liability or purchase stop-loss coverage for any amount of potential liability that is in excess of projected paid losses. A county that reinsures its potential liability or purchases stop-loss coverage for any amount of potential liability must do so from an insurance company admitted to do business in this state that holds a certificate of authority from the Texas Department of Insurance or an intergovernmental risk pool organized under Chapter 172.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 630, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1094 (H.B. 2120), Sec. 25, eff. September 1, 2005.

Sec. 157.102. GROUP HEALTH AND RELATED BENEFITS FUND. (a) The commissioners court of a county that adopts rules under Section 157.101 may require persons participating in the group health and related benefits plan to contribute toward the payment of the plan. The commissioners court may establish a fund to pay for the group health and related benefits. The fund may take the form of a single nonprofit trust as described by Section 222.002(c)(5)(A), Insurance Code.

(b) A person who elects to participate in any aspect of the group health and related benefits plan and is required to make

contributions toward the payment of the plan must authorize contributions to the fund by salary deduction. The authorization must be submitted in writing to the county officer authorized by the commissioners court to administer payroll deductions. The authorization remains in effect as long as the person is required to make contributions toward the payment of the plan. If the amount of the person's required contributions changes after the date the request for deduction is submitted, the county shall notify the person of the change before the change takes effect. The county and any participating flood control district or hospital district may also contribute to the fund.

(c) The fund may be used only for the purposes stated in Subsection (a). Employees who are discharged or who end their employment voluntarily have no vested right to contributions made to the fund. The fund shall continue to be used for the benefit of the remaining employees.

(d) Claims shall be paid from the fund in the same manner as provided by law for the payment of other claims of the county or flood control district.

(e) If a plan established under this section is terminated by the commissioners court, the remaining funds shall be transferred to the county and to any participating flood control district in proportion to the total contributions made by them.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 630, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 728 (H.B. [2018](#)), Sec. 11.145, eff. September 1, 2005.

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1094 (H.B. [2120](#)), Sec. 26, eff. September 1, 2005.

Sec. 157.103. SUBROGATION. (a) A county that has paid group health and related benefits for a sheriff, deputy sheriff, constable, deputy constable, or other county or precinct law enforcement official is subrogated to the law enforcement official's right of recovery for personal injuries caused by another to the extent of the payments made by the county.

(b) A county may not refuse to pay group health and related

benefits on the ground that the law enforcement official has a claim for damages for personal injury.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 630, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 157.104. PAYMENTS FOR CERTAIN HEALTH COVERAGE. A county may purchase and pay premiums for coverages as described by Section [157.006](#).

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 630, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 157.105. APPLICABILITY OF SUBCHAPTER. (a) A county that chooses to provide medical or related benefits may operate under this subchapter or Subchapter A.

(b) A county operating under this subchapter that previously created a fund under Section [157.003](#) may continue the fund or may terminate the fund and create a fund as provided by Section [157.102](#).

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 630, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 157.106. INSURANCE POOL OR INSURANCE COMPANY NOT CREATED. If a county provides for group health and related benefits, including medical care, surgical care, hospitalization, and pharmaceutical, life, accident, disability, long-term care, vision, dental, mental health, and substance abuse benefits, to persons listed under Section [157.101\(a\)\(1\)](#), the county:

(1) has not created an insurance pool with a flood control district, hospital district, or other governmental entity, unless the county enters into a contract under Chapter [172](#); and

(2) is not an insurance company subject to the Insurance Code or to regulation by the Texas Department of Insurance as an insurance company.

Added by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1094 (H.B. [2120](#)), Sec. 27, eff. September 1, 2005.

## SUBCHAPTER Z. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Sec. 157.901. LEGAL DEFENSE OF EMPLOYEES. (a) A county official or employee sued by any entity, other than the county with

which the official or employee serves, for an action arising from the performance of public duty is entitled to be represented by the district attorney of the district in which the county is located, the county attorney, or both.

(b) If additional counsel is necessary or proper in the case of an official or employee provided legal counsel under Subsection (a) or if it reasonably appears that the act complained of may form the basis for the filing of a criminal charge against the official or employee, the official or employee is entitled to have the commissioners court of the county employ and pay private counsel.

(c) A county official or employee is not required to accept the legal counsel provided in this section.

(d) Repealed by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 509, Sec. 2, eff. June 14, 1989.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987. Renumbered from Sec. 157.061 and amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1, Sec. 37(a), (b), eff. Aug. 28, 1989. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 509, Sec. 1, 2, eff. June 14, 1989.

Sec. 157.9015. REPRESENTATION PERMITTED WITHOUT CONFLICT OF INTEREST. (a) It is not a conflict of interest for a district or county attorney under Section [157.901](#) to defend a county or a county official or employee sued by another county official or employee and also to advise or represent the opposing party on a separate matter arising from the performance of a public duty, regardless of whether the attorney gives the advice or representation to the opposing party before the suit began or while the suit is pending.

(b) If practicable, the district or county attorney shall assign a different attorney to defend the county or a county official or employee under this section than the attorney assigned to advise or represent the opposing party on a separate matter.

(c) This section does not require a district or county attorney to represent a county official or employee who brings a suit against the county or another county official or employee for an action arising from the performance of a public duty.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 338, Sec. 1, eff. May 29, 1999.

Sec. 157.902. PERSONNEL RULES APPLYING TO JUVENILE AND PROBATION OFFICERS, COURT REPORTERS, AND COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE IN COUNTIES OF 500,000 OR MORE. (a) This section applies only to counties with a population of 500,000 or more.

(b) The district judges in the county may, by a majority vote at a meeting of which each judge has notice, apply to all juvenile and probation officers appointed under Title 82, Revised Statutes, all court reporters, and the county auditor and all the auditor's assistants in the county the rules that:

(1) are adopted by the commissioners court in the county for other county and district employees; and

(2) relate to hours of work; vacations; holidays; sick leave; deductions for absences; retirement; medical care; hospitalization; and compensation, accident, hospital, and disability insurance.

(c) The district judges must uniformly apply the rules as far as practicable.

(d) If the district judges do not exercise their authority under Subsection (b):

(1) the juvenile board of the county may, to the extent the board determines, apply the rules to the juvenile and probation officers;

(2) the district judges may, to the extent the judges determine by vote of a majority present, apply the rules to the court reporters; and

(3) the county auditor may, to the extent the auditor determines and with the approval of a majority of the district judges, apply the rules to the county auditor and the auditor's assistants.

(e) A decision of the district judges under Subsection (d)(2), must be evidenced by an order entered in the minutes of each judge's court. A certified copy of the order must be given to the commissioners court of the county.

(f) If a juvenile or probation officer, a county auditor, or an assistant to the auditor is jointly employed by two or more subdivisions of government, the rules that are applied to that person may be changed accordingly. To achieve uniform application

of the rules, the person may be considered to be employed and paid by only one subdivision, but the expenses of administration and contributions may be prorated to the different employing subdivisions.

(g) This section does not affect any other law that applies to the time, method, and manner of appointment or discharge of a juvenile or probation officer, a court reporter, or the county auditor or an assistant to the auditor or that applies to the number or salaries of those persons.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987.  
Renumbered from Sec. 157.062 by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1, Sec. 37(a), eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 157.903. AUTHORITY TO INDEMNIFY ELECTED AND APPOINTED COUNTY OFFICERS. The commissioners court of a county by order may provide for the indemnification of an elected or appointed county officer against personal liability for the loss of county funds, or loss of or damage to personal property, incurred by the officer in the performance of official duties if the loss was not the result of the officer's negligence or criminal action.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 253, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 157.9031. AUTHORITY TO REQUIRE REIMBURSEMENT FOR CERTAIN COVERAGE. A self-insuring county or the intergovernmental pool operating under Chapter 119, under policies concerning the provision of coverages adopted by the county's commissioners court or the pool's governing body, may require reimbursement for the provision of punitive damage coverage from a person to whom the county or intergovernmental pool provides coverage.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 439 (S.B. 1243), Sec. 2, eff. June 17, 2011.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1341 (S.B. 1233), Sec. 18, eff. June 17, 2011.

Sec. 157.904. PERSONNEL RECORDS OF CERTAIN SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENTS. (a) This section applies only to a sheriff's department in a county with a population of 3.3 million or more.

(b) In this section, "employee record" means any letter, memorandum, or document maintained by the department that relates to a department employee.

(c) The sheriff or the sheriff's designee shall maintain a permanent personnel file on each department employee. An employee's permanent personnel file must contain any employee record relating to:

(1) a commendation, congratulation, or honor bestowed on the employee by a member of the public or by the department for an action, duty, or activity that relates to the employee's official duties;

(2) any misconduct by the employee if the employee record is made by the department and if the misconduct resulted in disciplinary action by the department; and

(3) the periodic evaluation of the employee by a supervisor.

(d) An employee record relating to alleged misconduct by an employee may not be placed in the employee's permanent personnel file if the department determines that there is insufficient evidence to sustain the charge of misconduct.

(e) An employee record relating to disciplinary action taken against an employee or to alleged misconduct by the employee that is placed in the employee's permanent personnel file shall be removed from the file if a court or an administrative body of competent jurisdiction, including the sheriff's department civil service commission, determines that:

(1) the disciplinary action was taken without just cause; or

(2) the charge of misconduct was not supported by sufficient evidence.

(f) If a negative record of employee misconduct or other notation of negative impact is included in an employee's permanent personnel file, the sheriff or the sheriff's designee, not later than the 30th day after the date the record is included, shall notify the affected employee that the record has been included in the file. The employee may, not later than the 15th day after the date of receipt of the notification, file a written response to the

negative employee record. The sheriff or the sheriff's designee shall place the response in the employee's permanent personnel file with the negative record.

(g) An employee is entitled, on request, to a copy of any employee record placed in the employee's permanent personnel file. The department may charge the employee a reasonable fee not to exceed actual cost for copies provided under this subsection.

(h) The sheriff or the sheriff's designee may not release an employee record or other information contained in an employee's permanent personnel file without first obtaining the employee's written permission, unless the release of the record or information is required by law.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 875, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1991.  
Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 669, Sec. 69, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 157.906. PAYMENT FOR APPEARANCES OF PEACE OFFICERS EMPLOYED BY COUNTY IN COURT OR ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS. (a) A county shall pay a peace officer employed by the county for an appearance as a witness in a criminal suit, a civil suit, or an administrative proceeding in which the county or other political subdivision or government agency is a party in interest if the appearance:

- (1) is required;
- (2) is made on time off; and
- (3) is made by the peace officer in the capacity of a peace officer.

(b) Payment under this section is at the peace officer's regular rate of pay.

(c) Payment under this section may be taxed as court costs in civil suits.

(d) This section does not reduce or prohibit compensation paid in excess of the regular rate of pay.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 412 (H.B. 1960), Sec. 3, eff. June 19, 2009.