

ARTICLE 7

Employee Benefits

Section 701 Insurance Benefits

- A. The County offers both medical and dental coverage, under the County's group health plan, to all regular full-time employees and regular part-time employees occupying budgeted positions. For clarification purposes, regular part-time employees are those who work a minimum of thirty hours per week. Each employee shall be enrolled for coverage in accordance with the Health Plan provisions. Coverage will begin on the first day of the month following a waiting period of thirty (30) calendar days. Effective July 1, 2017 medical and dental coverage will terminate on the effective date of resignation. Employees who are on FMLA as of their resignation date will have individual medical and dental coverage paid for by the County.
- B. Payroll deductions shall be allowed, at the option of the employee, to provide coverage for dependents in accordance with the provisions of the County's Group Health Plan.
- C. All employees with a hire date through September 1, 2007 who are covered under the County's Group Health Plan and retiring from the County with at least ten years continuous creditable service with Currituck County and eligible for retirement benefits from the North Carolina Local Government Retirement System, are eligible for coverage under the County's Group Health Plan. The County will pay a pro rata share, according to the following schedule, of a retiree's individual coverage but in no instance shall the benefit cost exceed that of an active employee:

**NUMBER OF YEARS OF
CREDITABLE CURRITUCK COUNTY
SERVICE**

**PERCENTAGE OF COUNTY'S
PARTICIPATION IN THE PLAN**

10 yrs. but less than 15 yrs.
15 yrs. but less than 20 yrs.
20 yrs. or more

50% of active employee rate
75% of active employee rate
100% of active employee rate

All employees hired after September 1, 2007 and before January 1, 2017 who are covered under the County's Group Health Plan and retiring from the County with at least twenty (20) years of continuous creditable service with Currituck County and eligible for retirement benefits from the North Carolina Local Government Retirement System, are eligible for coverage under the County's Group Health Plan at a County participation rate of one hundred (100) percent of the active employee rate. Employees who have left full-time employment with Currituck County and returned to full-time County service with a one year or less break in service and who meet the above mentioned criteria are also eligible for coverage under the County's Group Health Plan. Employees hired on or after January 1, 2017 will not be eligible for County-paid insurance at retirement.

Retirees must accept or decline the County's Group Health Plan coverage within sixty (60) days of the day of retirement. Re-enrollment in the County's Group Health Plan after this time period is not optional.

Employee status of coverage will change when a retiree becomes eligible for Medicare. When this occurs, the County's Group Health Plan becomes secondary coverage to Medicare. Coverage will also be affected by a Health Plan provision in which retiree eligibility is amended.

Section 702 Unemployment Compensation

County employees who are laid off or dismissed from the County service may apply for unemployment compensation through the local office of the North Carolina Department of Employment Security. Eligibility for unemployment compensation will be determined by the North Carolina Department of Employment Security.

Section 703 Old Age and Survivors Insurance (Social Security)

The County, to the extent of its lawful authority and power, shall extend Social Security benefits for its eligible employees in accordance with the provisions of the Social Security Act.

Section 704 Retirement Benefits

Each employee in a regular budgeted position, working a minimum of 1000 hours per year, will be enrolled in the Local Governmental Employee's Retirement System. Employees contribute, through payroll deduction, six percent (6%) of their gross salary each month to the system. The County contributes an actuarially determined percentage of the gross payroll each month to the system.

Section 705 Death Benefit

If an employee dies while still in active service with at least one year as a contributing member of the Retirement System, the employee's beneficiary will receive a lump sum payment equal to the employee's highest twelve (12) months' consecutive salary during the preceding twenty-four (24) months, not to exceed \$50,000. This benefit is also paid if the employee dies within 180 days after the last day for which he or she was paid a salary.

Section 706 Benevolence Policy

The County may purchase a memorial book for the Currituck County Library to be donated in memory of a deceased current employee or sitting County Commissioner and their immediate family. Immediate family, as defined for this section, is spouse, child, mother or father. Additionally, a memorial book may be donated in memory of a retired employee or past Commissioner. The Chairman of the Board of Commissioners may, at his discretion, authorize a memorial book for prominent citizens or others who have greatly contributed to the betterment of Currituck County.

Section 707 Law Enforcement Officers' Separation Allowance

- A. The County shall provide a special separation allowance to qualified officers who retire early or who leave service early and who meet all of the following qualifications:
1. The officer must have completed thirty years or more of creditable service or have attained fifty-five years of age and completed five or more years of creditable service.
 2. The officer must not yet be age sixty-two.
 3. The officer must have completed at least five years of continuous service as a law enforcement officer immediately prior to service retirement.
- B. Payment of the separation allowance will cease if the officer (1) reaches age sixty-two, (2) dies, or (3) is re-employed in any capacity by the State of North Carolina or any of its political subdivisions. Retired Law Enforcement Officers may be re-employed in positions not requiring participation in the North Carolina Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System without forfeiting their separation allowance.

Section 708 Supplemental Retirement Income Plan for Law Enforcement Officers

All law enforcement officers automatically become a member of the State Supplemental Retirement Income Plan on the date of hire.

Section 709 Benefits - Other (Fixed)

Currituck County, as the employer, provides the following additional benefits to employees:

- A. Workers' Compensation - Provides coverage to all employees to cover medical expenses and lost time from work due to work-related injuries. As required by law, Currituck County participates in a Workers' Compensation program at no cost to employees. In cases of certified injuries arising out of employment, the program pays hospital and doctor bills with a weekly cash benefit if employees are disabled. To be certain that employees may qualify for Workers' Compensation, they must report any job-related injuries immediately to their supervisor or Department Head. In turn, the Department

Heads shall file all applicable forms with the Risk Manager. The County will assist employees in processing claims. If Department Heads are not certain whether injuries are compensatory, they may contact the Risk Manager for assistance.

No Workers' Compensation payments shall be allowed for the first seven calendar days of disability resulting from injury except as otherwise provided for by law. Since there is no cash payment during the first seven calendar days of disability resulting from an injury, the County will permit employees to use any accrued benefits such as sick or vacation leave; or employees may exercise the option of accepting no regular pay until Workers' Compensation is granted. If the injury results in disability of more than twenty-one days, the compensation shall be allowed from the date of disability at a rate established under State law. Employees shall be required to return to the County any amounts of insurance payments received for the first seven days of disability, in excess of his or her regular salary. Employees will not be permitted to draw an income in excess of his or her regular salary which is provided by the insurance carrier or the combination of accrued benefits. Employees are responsible for returning any overpayments of combined income to the Human Resources Office. Worker's Compensation leave runs concurrently with FMLA leave.

- B. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) - Provides assistance to full-time employees and individuals residing in the employee's household in resolving problems, including family problems, substance abuse, marriage difficulties, financial trouble, stress, and depression. Supervisors and Department Heads have the discretion to require an employee's mandatory attendance in the EAP as a condition of continued employment.
- C. 401(K) Plan - Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina, which provides an automatic contribution by the employer for all participating members of the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System.

Section 710 Benefits - Other (Flexible)

Additional deductions or benefits may be allowed at the option of the employee, under the provisions of the insurance contracts, and may be payroll deducted:

- A. Miscellaneous insurance.
- B. Credit Union.
- C. Flex Plan - provided by Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code, allowing employees to spend pretax dollars on insurance premiums.

D. Deferred compensation plans authorized by Section 457 of the Internal Revenue Code, providing supplemental long-term retirement.