



BENTON COUNTY

Outside Employment Policy

August 2026

I. Purpose and Scope

This policy provides guidelines to ensure that employees are not involved in any outside employment or activity that will affect the quality of their work for the County, create a conflict of interest or an appearance of conflict, and outline a process for approval of outside employment.

This policy applies to all Benton County employees unless otherwise addressed by a current collective bargaining agreement or employment agreement.

II. Definition

Outside employment refers to services performed by employees of the County for another employer, organization, or individual when wages, compensation, or other consideration for such duties or services is received. Outside employment also includes duties or services performed by those employees who are self-employed and receive compensation or other consideration for services, products, or benefits rendered.

III. Guidelines

Benton County employees may engage in outside employment only when it does not conflict with the duties and responsibilities of their County position. Outside employment that is unrelated to County duties does not require prior approval but must still comply with all other provisions of this policy.

Outside employment is considered related to County duties when the services performed are similar to, overlap with, or draw upon the specialized knowledge, responsibilities, or authority associated with the employee's County role. If an employee is unsure whether or not outside employment is related to County duties, they should discuss with their Elected Official or Department Head.

Outside employment is not permitted when it:

1. Negatively affects job performance or an employee's ability to fulfill all County responsibilities. This includes but is not limited to issues such as fatigue, absenteeism, tardiness, or reduced work quality as determined by the Elected Official or Department Head (EO/DH).
2. Interferes with responsibilities to the County.
3. Is performed during the employee's work hours.
4. Requires or involves the use of County information, property, facilities, or systems such as phones, tools, equipment, etc. Employees must not use, disclose, or leverage confidential, sensitive, or proprietary County information in connection with any outside employment, whether or not such information is accessed through County systems.
5. Creates or could reasonably be perceived by members of the public as creating a conflict of interest or otherwise discredits public service.

Employees remain responsible for meeting all work obligations and maintaining performance standards regardless of any approved outside employment.

IV. Process

Benton County employees who wish to engage in outside work, contractual commitments, or self-employment of a nature similar or related to their County duties as described in Section III, may do so only upon obtaining prior written approval from their EO/DH. Employees earning less than twice the applicable state minimum wage will not be denied outside employment but are still subject to the requirements of this policy in accordance with RCW 49.62.070.

- a. A written request to engage in outside employment must be submitted to the EO/DH. This request should include:
 - i. The dates of employment and anticipated hours of work;
 - ii. The potential employer or, if self-employment the name of the business;
 - iii. The nature of work to be performed and;
 - iv. Any actual or perceived problems or conflicts of interest with County employment.
- b. The EO/DH will notify the employee, in writing, of the final decision within 10 working days of receipt of request.
 - i. EO/DH may make any restrictions on outside employment consistent with the operation of the department, or any applicable policy or collective bargaining agreement.
- c. A copy of the request and response will be filed in the employee's personnel file.
- d. Employees must notify their EO/DH if any of the agreed upon conditions related to their outside employment change, or if the outside employment is terminated

V. Revocation of Approval

The County may revoke approval for outside employment if it determines that the outside work interferes with the employee's performance of County duties or creates a conflict of interest.

The EO/DH shall notify the employee in writing at least 14 calendar days in advance of such revocation with an explanation relative to the reasons why the decision to revoke the approval was made.

VI. Outside Employment while on Family and Medical Leave

Employees on FMLA or Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) are subject to the Benton County Family and Medical Leave Policy.

V. Existing Outside Employment Arrangements

Employees currently engaged in outside employment, contractual agreements, or self-employment subject to this policy must report it to their EO/DH within 60 calendar days of the adoption of this policy.

Approved and accepted by the undersigned Benton County Elected Officials:

**BENTON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Signed by:
Michael Alvarez
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Chair

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Will McKay
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Chair Pro Tem

Jerome Delvin Absent
Commissioner

DISTRICT COURT

Signed by:
Judge Bell
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Hon. James Bell, Presiding Judge

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

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APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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Michael Clark, Sheriff

SUPERIOR COURT

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Hon. Jacqueline Stam, Presiding Judge

TREASURER'S OFFICE

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