

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE

TITLE 5. MATTERS AFFECTING PUBLIC OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES  
SUBTITLE C. MATTERS AFFECTING PUBLIC OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF MORE  
THAN ONE TYPE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER 180. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS AFFECTING OFFICERS AND  
EMPLOYEES OF MORE THAN ONE TYPE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Sec. 180.001. COERCION OF POLICE OFFICER OR FIRE FIGHTER IN CONNECTION WITH POLITICAL CAMPAIGN. (a) An individual commits an offense if the individual coerces a police officer or a fire fighter to participate or to refrain from participating in a political campaign.

(b) An offense under this section is a misdemeanor and is punishable by a fine of not less than \$500 or more than \$2,000, confinement in the county jail for not more than two years, or both a fine and confinement.

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

Sec. 180.002. DEFENSE OF CIVIL SUITS AGAINST PEACE OFFICERS, FIRE FIGHTERS, AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL PERSONNEL.

Text of subsection effective until January 01, 2025

(a) In this section, "peace officer" has the meaning assigned by Article 2.12, Code of Criminal Procedure.

Text of subsection effective on January 01, 2025

(a) In this section, "peace officer" has the meaning assigned by Article 2A.001, Code of Criminal Procedure.

(b) A municipality or a school district or other special purpose district shall provide a municipal or district employee who is a peace officer, fire fighter, or emergency medical services employee with legal counsel without cost to the employee to defend the employee against a suit for damages by a party other than a governmental entity if:

(1) legal counsel is requested by the employee; and

(2) the suit involves an official act of the employee within the scope of the employee's authority.

(c) To defend the employee against the suit, the

municipality or district may provide counsel already employed by it or may employ private counsel.

(d) An employee may recover from a municipality or district that fails to provide counsel as required by Subsection (b) the reasonable attorney's fees incurred in defending the suit if the trier of fact finds:

(1) that the fees were incurred in defending a suit covered by Subsection (b); and

(2) that the employee is without fault or that the employee acted with a reasonable good faith belief that the employee's actions were proper.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1, Sec. 42(a), eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 56 (H.B. 1016), Sec. 1, eff. May 18, 2013.

Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 765 (H.B. 4504), Sec. 2.140, eff. January 1, 2025.

Sec. 180.003. MAXIMUM DUTY HOURS OF PEACE OFFICERS.

(a) In a county with a population of 372,000 to 400,000, a sheriff, deputy, constable, or other peace officer of the county or a municipality located in the county may not be required to be on duty more than 48 hours a week unless the peace officer is called on by a superior officer to serve during an emergency as determined by the superior officer.

(b) Hours of duty over 48 hours a week, compiled by a peace officer under Subsection (a), may be treated as overtime and may be deducted from future required hours of duty if:

(1) the overtime is used within one year after it is compiled; and

(2) the peace officer obtains the permission of the superior officer.

Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1987. Amended by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 597, Sec. 93, eff. Sept. 1, 1991; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 669, Sec. 72, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1163 (H.B. 2702), Sec. 77, eff. September 1, 2011.

Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 644 (H.B. 4559), Sec. 139, eff. September 1, 2023.

Sec. 180.004. WORKING CONDITIONS FOR PREGNANT EMPLOYEES.

(a) In this section, "office" means a municipal or county office, department, division, program, commission, bureau, board, committee, or similar entity.

(b) A municipality or a county shall make a reasonable effort to accommodate an employee of the municipality or county who is determined by a physician to be partially physically restricted by a pregnancy.

(c) If the physician of a municipal or county employee certifies that the employee is unable to perform the duties of the employee's permanent work assignment as a result of the employee's pregnancy and if a temporary work assignment that the employee may perform is available in the same office, the office supervisor who is responsible for personnel decisions shall assign the employee to the temporary work assignment.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 533, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 180.005. APPOINTMENTS TO LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES. (a)

In this section, "local government" means a county, municipality, or other political subdivision of this state.

(b) An appointment to the governing body of a local government shall be made as required by the law applicable to that local government and may be made with the intent to ensure that the governing body is representative of the constituency served by the governing body.

(c) A local government that chooses to implement Subsection (b) shall adopt procedures for the implementation.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 301, Sec. 8, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 180.006. SOVEREIGN OR GOVERNMENTAL IMMUNITY WAIVED FOR

CERTAIN CLAIMS. (a) This section applies only to a firefighter or police officer covered by:

(1) Chapter 141, 142, or 143 or this chapter;

(2) a municipal charter provision conferring civil service benefits of a municipality that has not adopted Chapter 143; or

(3) a municipal ordinance enacted under Chapter 142 or 143.

(b) A firefighter or police officer described by Subsection (a) who alleges the employing municipality's denial of monetary benefits associated with the recovery of back pay authorized under a provision listed in Subsection (a) or a firefighter described by Subsection (a) who alleges the denial of monetary civil penalties associated with recovery of back pay owed under Section 143.134(h) may seek judicial review of such denial only as provided in Subsections (e) and (f), provided that if there is no applicable grievance, administrative or contractual appeal procedure available under Subsection (e), the firefighter or police officer may file suit against the employing municipality directly in district court under the preponderance of the evidence standard of review.

(c) Sovereign and governmental immunity of the employing municipality from suit and liability is waived only to the extent of liability for the monetary benefits or monetary civil penalties described by Subsection (b). This section does not waive sovereign or governmental immunity from suit or liability for any other claim, including a claim involving negligence, an intentional tort, or a contract unless otherwise provided by the statute.

(d) This section does not:

(1) grant immunity from suit to a local governmental entity;

(2) waive a defense or a limitation on damages, attorney's fees, or costs available to a party to a suit under this chapter or another statute, including a statute listed in Subsection (a)(1); or

(3) modify an agreement under Chapter 142, 143, or 174.

(e) Before seeking judicial review as provided by Subsection (b), a firefighter or police officer must initiate

action pursuant to any applicable grievance or administrative appeal procedures prescribed by state statute or agreement and must exhaust the grievance or administrative appeal procedure.

(f) If judicial review is authorized under statute, judicial review of the grievance or administrative appeal decision is under the substantial evidence rule, unless a different standard of review is provided by the provision establishing the grievance or administrative appeal procedure.

(g) This section does not apply to an action asserting a right or claim based wholly or partly, or directly or indirectly, on a referendum election held before January 1, 1980, or an ordinance or resolution implementing the referendum.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1200 (H.B. 1473), Sec. 1, eff. June 15, 2007.

Sec. 180.007. PAYMENTS IN EXCESS OF CONTRACTUAL AMOUNT.

(a) A political subdivision may not pay an employee or former employee more than an amount owed under a contract with the employee unless the political subdivision holds at least one public hearing under this section.

(b) Notice must be given of the hearing in accordance with notice of a public meeting under Subchapter C, Chapter 551, Government Code.

(c) The governing body of the political subdivision must state the following at the public hearing:

(1) the reason the payment in excess of the contractual amount is being offered to the employee or former employee, including the public purpose that will be served by making the excess payment; and

(2) the exact amount of the excess payment, the source of the payment, and the terms for the distribution of the payment that effect and maintain the public purpose to be served by making the excess payment.

Added by Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 862 (H.B. 483), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Sec. 180.008. PROHIBITION ON USE OF PUBLIC MONEY TO SETTLE

OR PAY SEXUAL HARASSMENT CLAIMS. (a) In this section, "political subdivision" means a county, municipality, school district, other special district, or other subdivision of state government.

(b) A political subdivision may not use public money to settle or otherwise pay a sexual harassment claim made against a person who is:

(1) an elected or appointed member of the governing body of the political subdivision; or

(2) an officer or employee of the political subdivision.

Added by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 551 (S.B. 282), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 180.009. PAID QUARANTINE LEAVE FOR FIRE FIGHTERS, PEACE OFFICERS, DETENTION OFFICERS, AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS. (a) In this section:

(1) "Detention officer" means an individual appointed or employed by a political subdivision as a county jailer or other individual responsible for the care and custody of individuals incarcerated in a county or municipal jail.

(2) "Emergency medical technician" means an individual who is:

(A) certified as an emergency medical technician under Chapter 773, Health and Safety Code; and

(B) employed by a political subdivision.

(3) "Fire fighter" means a paid employee of a municipal fire department or emergency services district who:

(A) holds a position that requires substantial knowledge of fire fighting;

(B) has met the requirements for certification by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection under Chapter 419, Government Code; and

(C) performs a function listed in Section 143.003(4)(A).

(4) "Health authority" has the meaning assigned by Section 121.021, Health and Safety Code.

Text of subdivision effective until January 01, 2025

(5) "Peace officer" means an individual described by Article 2.12, Code of Criminal Procedure, who is elected for, employed by, or appointed by a political subdivision.

Text of subdivision effective on January 01, 2025

(5) "Peace officer" means an individual described by Article 2A.001, Code of Criminal Procedure, who is elected for, employed by, or appointed by a political subdivision.

(b) The governing body of a political subdivision shall develop and implement a paid quarantine leave policy for fire fighters, peace officers, detention officers, and emergency medical technicians who are employed by, appointed by, or elected for the political subdivision and ordered to quarantine or isolate due to a possible or known exposure to a communicable disease while on duty.

(c) A paid quarantine leave policy must:

(1) provide that a fire fighter, peace officer, detention officer, or emergency medical technician on paid quarantine leave receive:

(A) all employment benefits and compensation, including leave accrual, pension benefits, and health benefit plan benefits for the duration of the leave; and

(B) reimbursement for reasonable costs related to the quarantine, including lodging, medical, and transportation; and

(2) require that the leave be ordered by the person's supervisor or the political subdivision's health authority.

(d) A political subdivision may not reduce a fire fighter's, peace officer's, detention officer's, or emergency medical technician's sick leave balance, vacation leave balance, holiday leave balance, or other paid leave balance in connection with paid quarantine leave taken in accordance with a policy adopted under this section.

Added by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 685 (H.B. 2073), Sec. 2, eff. June 15, 2021.

Amended by:

Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 765 (H.B. 4504), Sec. 2.141, eff. January 1, 2025.

Redesignated from Local Government Code, Section 180.008 by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 768 (H.B. 4595), Sec. 24.001(29), eff. September 1, 2023.

Sec. 180.010. REMOVAL FOR CERTAIN CRIMINAL OFFENSES.

(a) In this section, "qualifying offense" means a criminal offense involving:

- (1) bribery;
- (2) theft of public money;
- (3) perjury;
- (4) coercion of public servant or voter;
- (5) tampering with governmental record;
- (6) misuse of official information;
- (7) abuse of official capacity; or
- (8) conspiracy or the attempt to commit any of the offenses described by this subsection.

(b) A person who holds an elected or appointed office of a political subdivision is automatically removed from and vacates the office on the earlier of the date the person:

- (1) enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to a qualifying offense;
- (2) receives deferred adjudication for a qualifying offense; or
- (3) is convicted of a qualifying offense.

(c) The governing body of a political subdivision shall at the first regularly scheduled meeting of the governing body for which notice is required under Chapter 551, Government Code, following the date an officer of the political subdivision is removed from office under this section:

- (1) order an election on the question of filling the vacancy to be held on the first day that allows sufficient time to comply with other requirements of law, if an election is required to fill the vacancy; or
- (2) fill the vacancy in the manner provided by law, if an election is not required.

Added by Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1048 (S.B. 232), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2023.