

Comprehensive Policy Manual

July 2009

Updated December 16, 2025

[CLICK HERE FOR TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)



Changes to the Comprehensive Policy Manual

Approved August 17, 2010

- HR 201.1 – Equal Employment Opportunity - Amended
- HR 217.1 – Classification and Compensation - Amended
- HS 504.1 – Safety Review Board - Amended
- IT 706.1 – Cell Phone Usage and Reimbursement - Amended
- IT 707.1 – Internet Usage and Guidelines - Amended

Approved December 14, 2010

- TD 405.1 – Employee Travel and Training Expenses - Amended
- Fin Pro 600.1 – Introduction - Added
- Fin Pro 601.1 – Budget Preparation - Renamed and Amended
- Fin Pro 602.1 – Capital Expenditures - Renamed and Amended
- Fin Pro 603.1 – Procurement - Amended
- Fin Pro 604.1 – Criteria for Items Requiring Bids - Renumbered to 603.2
- Fin Pro 605.1 – Criteria for Items not Requiring Bids - Renumbered to 603.3
- Fin Pro 606.1 – Office Supplies - Renumbered to 603.4
- Fin Pro 607.1 – Emergency Purchases - Renumbered to 603.5
- Fin Pro 608.1 – Professional Services / Requests for Proposals - Renumbered to 603.6
- Fin Pro 609.1 – Computer Hardware and Software Purchases - Renumbered to 603.7
- Fin Pro 610.1 – Funds not Appropriated or Available - Renumbered to 603.8
- Fin Pro 611.1 – Contracts - Renumbered to 603.9
- Fin Pro 612.1 – Purchases from Employees or Elected Officials - Renumbered to 603.10
- Fin Pro 613.1 – State Specifications for Bid Items - Renumbered to 603.11
- Fin Pro 614.1 – Surplus Property Sales - Renumbered to 603.12
- Fin Pro 604.1 – Purchasing Card - Added
- Fin Pro 605.1 – Debt Administration - Added
- Fin Pro 606.1 – Accounting and Financial Reporting - Added
- Fin Pro 607.1 – Revenue - Added
- Fin Pro 608.1 – Reserves - Added
- Fin Pro 608.2 – Reserves – Water Utility - Added
- Fin Pro 609.1 – Bank Accounts - Added
- Fin Pro 610.1 – Investments - Added
- Fin Pro 611.1 – Cash Management - Added
- Fin Pro 612.1 – Cell Phone Usage and Reimbursement - Added
- Fin Pro 613.1 – Interment of an Indigent Decedent - Added
- IT 706.1 – Cell Phone Usage and Reimbursement - Removed (was relocated to Fin Pro 612.1)

APPROVED February 15, 2011

- Fin Pro 602.1 – Capital Expenditures – Amended
- Fin Pro 610.1 – Investments – Amended

APPROVED March 15, 2011

- GI 104.1 - Definitions – Amended
- GI 105.1 – Public Record Request Response – Added
- HR 203.1 – Employee Separation and Termination – Amended
- HR 225.1 – Emergencies/Incontinent Weather/Adverse Conditions – Amended
- HR 230.1 – Family Medical Leave – Amended
- HR 236.1 – Catastrophic Leave – Amended
- HR 241.1 – Military Caregiver Family Medical Leave – Amended
- Conduct 302.1 – Grievance Procedure - Amended

APPROVED June 7, 2011

- Fin Pro 608.1 – Reserves, Fund Balance Policy – Amended

APPROVED June 21, 2011

- HR 236.1 – Catastrophic Leave – Amended

APPROVED September 20, 2011

- Conduct 305.1 – Department of Transportation/Fitness for Duty/Drug and Alcohol Testing Program - Amended
- Conduct 306.1 – Drug Free Workplace Policy - Amended
- Conduct 317.1 – Smoking in the Workplace Policy – Added
- TD 405.1 – Employee Travel and Training Expenses – Amended
- HS 512.1 – Employee Emergency Medical Procedures – Added
- HS 513.1 – Risk Identification and Assessment for New or Expanded Programs - Added
- Fin Pro 614.1 – Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement Policy – Added

APPROVED October 18, 2011

- Conduct 312.1 – Notice of No Smoking – Removed

APPROVED November 15, 2011

- Conduct 305.1 – Department of Transportation/Fitness for Duty/Drug and Alcohol Testing Program - Amended

APPROVED May 15, 2012

- Conduct 305.1 – Department of Transportation/Fitness for Duty/Drug and Alcohol Testing Program – Amended
- Fin Pro 608.1 – Reserves/Governmental Funds – Amended
- Fin Pro 608.2 – Reserves/Water Utility – Amended

APPROVED August 7, 2012

- TD 406.1 – Safety Training – Amended
- HS 509.1 – Vehicle Accidents – Amended
- HS 510.1 – Vehicle Accident Investigation – Amended

APPROVED December 18, 2012

- HR 236.1 – Catastrophic Leave – Amended
- HR 237.1 – Personal Time Off – Amended

APPROVED January 15, 2013

- Conduct 305.1 – Department of Transportation/Fitness for Duty/Drug and Alcohol Testing Program – Amended

APPROVED April 16, 2013

- Conduct 508.1 – Vehicle Safety - Amended

APPROVED May 21, 2013

- Fin Pro 603.1 – Procurement – Amended and combined 603.1 to 603.12 into 603.1
- Fin Pro 605.1 – Debt Administration – Amended
- Fin Pro 608.1 – Reserves/Governmental Funds – Amended
- Fin Pro 615.1 – Donation of Funds/Items – Added
- Fin Pro 616.1- Payment Card Acceptance – Added

APPROVED August 20, 2013

- Fin Pro 601.1 Budget Preparation - Amended

APPROVED June 17, 2014

- HR 202.1 New Employee Onboarding/Orientation – Amended
- HR 214.1 Work Periods – Amended
- HR 216.1 Service Recognition – Amended
- HR 217.1 Classification and Compensation – Amended
- HR 218.1 Recording, Utilization and Auditing of Overtime – Renamed and Amended
- HR 225.1 Emergencies/Inclement Weather/Adverse Conditions – Amended
- HR 232.1 Holiday – Amended
- HR 237.1 Personal Time Off – Amended
- HR 239.1 Workers' Compensation - Amended
- Conduct 308.1 Anti-Harassment – Amended
- HS 503.1 Blood Borne Pathogens - Amended

APPROVED July 1, 2014

- FIN Pro 603.1 Procurement – Amended

APPROVED October 7, 2014

- GI 105.1 Public Record Request Response – Amended

APPROVED December 2, 2014

- FIN Pro 603.1 Procurement – Amended

APPROVED December 16, 2014

- FIN Pro 605.1 Debt Administration – Amended

APPROVED January 20, 2015

- IT 701.1 Password Policy – Amended
- IT 702.1 Firewall Policy – Amended
- IT 703.1 Anti-Virus Policy – Amended
- IT 705.1 Hardware Sanitization – Amended
- IT 708.1 Electronic Mail (Email) Usage and Guidelines - Amended

APPROVED February 17, 2015

- TD 405.1 Employee Travel and Training Expenses – Amended
- Fin Pro 603.2 Projects Using Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP) Funding - Added

APPROVED May 19, 2015

- HR 237.1 Personal Time Off - Amended
- Fin Pro 602.1 Capital Expenditures – Amended
- Fin Pro 605.1 Debt Administration – Amended
- Fin Pro 610.1 Investments – Amended
- Fleet 801.1 Fuelman Fuel Card – Added
- Fleet 802.1 Global Positioning System (GPS) – Added
- Fleet 803.1 Motor Pool – Added
- Fleet 804.1 Fleet Replacement Program – Added
- Fleet 805.1 Vehicle-Equipment Repurposing Program – Added

APPROVED June 16, 2015

- HR 203.1 Employee Separation and Termination – Amended
- HR 221.1 Pay Periods – Amended
- HR 224.1 Working out of Classification Pay – Amended
- HR 230.1 Family Medical Leave – Amended
- HR 241.1 Military Caregiver Family Medical Leave – Amended
- HR 246.1 Employee Identification Cards - Amended

APPROVED July 21, 2015

- IT 706.1 Video Surveillance and Recording Policy – Added
- IT 710.1 Data Backup Policy – Added
- IT 711.1 Data Center Access Policy – Added
- IT 712.1 Data Closet Access Policy – Added
- IT 713.1 Mobile Device Usage Policy – Added
- IT 715.1 Third-Party Access Policy – Added
- IT 716.1 VPN Access Policy – Added
- IT 717.1 Service Desk Policy – Added
- IT 718.1 Wireless Usage Policy – Added
- IT 719.1 Voicemail Policy – Added
- IT 720.1 Change Management Policy - Added

APPROVED August 18, 2015

- HR 214.1 Work Periods – Amended
- HR 227.1 Bereavement Leave – Amended
- Conduct 305.1 Department of Transportation/Fitness for Duty/Drug and Alcohol Testing Program – Amended
- Conduct 306.1 Drug-Free Workplace – Amended

APPROVED December 15, 2015

- HR 204.1 Hiring Process - Amended
- HR 214.1 Work Periods – Amended
- HR 215.1 Flextime – Amended
- HR 216.1 Service Recognition – Amended
- HR 219.1 Date of Hire/Service – Amended and Renamed
- HR 230.1 Family Medical Leave – Amended
- HR 239.1 Workers' Compensation – Amended
- Conduct 302.1 Grievance Procedure - Amended
- Conduct 305.1 Department of Transportation/Fitness for Duty/Drug and Alcohol Testing Program – Amended
- Conduct 306.1 Drug-Free Workplace – Amended
- Conduct 308.1 Unlawful Harassment – Amended and Renamed
- TD 404.1 Professional Development – Amended
- Fin Pro 604.2 Purchasing Card – Elected Officials - Added

APPROVED January 19, 2016

- FIN PRO 610.1 Investments – Amended

APPROVED March 15, 2016

- GI 102.1 Vision – Amended and Renamed to Our Core Values
- GI 103.1 Organizational Structure – Amended
- IT 720.1 Change Management – Amended

APPROVED June 21, 2016

- Fin Pro 617.1 Grant Administration - Added

APPROVED August 16, 2016

- Fin Pro 605.1 Debt Administration – Amended
- HR 208.1 – Outside Employment – Amended
- HR 226.1 – On Call Policy – Amended
- HR 232.1 – Holiday – Amended

APPROVED October 18, 2016

- Conduct 305.1 Department of Transportation/Fitness for Duty/Drug and Alcohol Testing Program – Amended

APPROVED January 17, 2017

- Fin Pro 614.1– Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement Policy – Amended

APPROVED May 16, 2017

- Conduct 305.1 Department of Transportation/Fitness for Duty/Drug and Alcohol Testing Program – Amended

APPROVED September 19, 2017

- HR 202.1 New Employee Onboarding/Orientation – Amended
- HR 204.1 Hiring Process – Amended
- HR 209.1 – Performance Appraisal – Amended
- HR 210.1 – Personal Information and Personnel Records – Amended
- HR 217.1 – Classification and Compensation - Amended
- HR 221.1 Pay periods – Amended
- HR 226.1 – On Call Policy – Amended
- HR 230.1 – Family Medical Leave – Amended
- HR 239.1 Workers' Compensation – Amended
- HR 240.1 – Americans with Disabilities Act of 2008 – Amended
- HR 244.1 – Administration of Employee Personnel Records – Amended
- HR 248.1 – Acknowledgement, Memorial and Sympathy – Amended
- Conduct 306.1 – Drug Free Workplace – Amended
- HS 508.1 – Vehicle Safety – Amended

APPROVED February 20, 2018

- Conduct 305.1 Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program – Renamed and Amended
- TD 403.1 Training Programs, Workshops and Seminars – Amended
- IT 701.1 – Password Policy - Amended

APPROVED March 20, 2018

- HR 237.1 Personal Time Off – Amended

APPROVED May 15, 2018

- IT 714.1 – Information Security - Added

APPROVED June 19, 2018

- Conduct 303.1 – Conflicts of Interest/Ethics – Amended and changed name
- TD 401.1 – Education Reimbursement Program - Amended
- IT 708.1 – Electronic Mail (Email) Usage and Guidelines - Amended

APPROVED August 21, 2018

- Fin Pro 603.1 – Procurement – Amended

APPROVED September 18, 2018

- IT 714.1 Information Security – Renumbered to 730.1
- IT 731.1 Information Security Awareness – Added
- IT 732.1 Computer Administrative Rights – Added

APPROVED December 18, 2018

- HR 225.1 Emergencies/Inclement Weather/Adverse Conditions – Amended

APPROVED May 21, 2019

- HR 217.1 Classification and Compensation – Amended
- IT 780.1 Technology Contingency Planning – Added

APPROVED June 18, 2019

- IT 720.1 Change Management – Amended
- IT 709.1 Software Installation – Deleted
- IT 750.1 Technology Asset Life Cycle Management – Added
- IT 751.1 Hardware Asset Life Cycle Management – Added
- IT 752.1 Software Asset Life Cycle Management - Added

APPROVED July 16, 2019

- Fin Pro 604.2 Purchasing Card – Elected Officials – Amended

APPROVED March 17, 2020

- IT 707.1 Acceptable Use Policy – Added as a new policy - Replaced 707.1 Internet Usage and Guidelines and 708.1 electronic Mail (email) Usage
- IT 790.1 Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Program – Added

APPROVED May 19, 2020

- HR 230.1 Family Medical Leave (All forms of FMLA except for Military Caregiver Leave) – Amended

APPROVED July 21, 2020

- IT 734.1 Security Incident Response Policy –Added
- IT 735.1 Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI-DSS) Program Policy – Added

APPROVED September 15, 2020

- Fin Pro 603.3 Purchases Using Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Funding –Added

APPROVED January 19, 2021

- IT 703.1 Anti-Virus Policy - Amended
- IT 707.1 Acceptable Use Policy –Amended

UPDATED March 17, 2021

- HR 230.1 Family Medical Leave Attachments (according to US Department of Labor)
 - Exhibit A – WH-381 (1) Notice of Eligibility & Rights and Responsibilities
 - Exhibit B – WH-380E – Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Health Condition
 - Exhibit C – WH-380F – Certification of Health Care Provider for Family Member's Serious Health Condition
 - Exhibit D – WH-384 – Certification for Military Family leave for Qualifying Exigency
 - Exhibit E – WH-382 – Designation Notice

APPROVED May 4, 2021

- Fin Pro 603.1 Procurement - Amended

APPROVED September 21, 2021

- Various policies were updated to reflect the new titles of the County Manager and Deputy County Manager, as well as the Human Resources Director and the Internal Services Director

APPROVED October 19, 2021

- GI 105.1 Public Record Request Response - Amended

APPROVED November 16, 2021

- Fin Pro 603.1 Procurement Policy- Amended
- IT 733.1 Technology Physical Security Policy - Added

APPROVED December 21, 2021

- Conduct 305.1 DOT Drug and Alcohol Testing Program - Amended
- IT 701.1 Password Policy- Amended

APPROVED February 15, 2022

- GI 104.1 Definitions - Amended
- HR 216.1 Service Recognition- Amended
- HR 236.1 Catastrophic Leave – Amended
- HR 237.1 PTO - Amended

APPROVED March 15, 2022

- HR 217.1 Classification and Compensation - Amended

APPROVED June 21, 2022

- HR 204.1 Hiring Process – Amended

APPROVED July 19, 2022

- Conduct 305.1 Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program – Amended
- TD 401.1 –Education Reimbursement Program – Amended
- Fin Pro 614.1 – Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement - Amended

APPROVED October 18, 2022

- IT 705.1 Hardware Sanitization – Renumbered to 753.1 and Amended
- IT 707.1 – Acceptable Use Policy - Amended

APPROVED January 17, 2023

- Fin Pro 603.1 Procurement – Amended

APPROVED September 19, 2023

- IT 710.1 – Data Backup Policy – Amended and Renumbered to 781.1

APPROVED June 18, 2024

- HR 236.1 Catastrophic Leave – Amended
- Fin Pro 614.1 – Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement - Amended

APPROVED May 20, 2025

- IT 730.1 – Information Security - Amended

APPROVED December 16, 2025

- Conduct 302.1 – Grievance Procedure – Amended

Comprehensive Policy Manual Index
Created 12/14/2010 (Revised 9/19/2023)

A

Abandonment of Job.....	203.1
Acceptable Use	707.1
Accounting and Financial Reporting	606.1
Acknowledgement, Memorial and Sympathy	248.1
Agencies Supported by the Board of Commission	103.1
Allocated Position, definition of	104.1
Americans with Disabilities Act of 2008	240.1
Anti-Virus Policy	703.1
Applicant Expenses.....	204.1
Applicant Notification	204.1
Appointment	204.1
Appointment Dates	217.1

B

Backup (definition of)	780.1
Bank Accounts	609.1
Bereavement Leave	227.1
Blood Bank.....	228.1
Blood Borne Pathogens	503.1
Board of Commissioners, definition of	104.1
Break in Service, definition of	104.1
.....	216.1
.....	219.1
Budget	601.1
Budget Amendments.....	601.1
Budget Decreases.....	601.1
Budget Increases.....	601.1
Budget Officer	601.1
Business Continuity Plan (BCP) (definition of)	780.1

C

Capital Expenditures.....	602.1
Capital Improvement Program.....	602.1
Cards of Acknowledgement, Recognition, Recovery and Sympathy	248.1
Career Service, definition of.....	104.1
Cash Advances.....	405.1
Cash Management	611.1
Catastrophic Leave, definition of	104.1
.....	236.1
Catastrophic Leave Incentive (definition of).....	104.1
.....	236.1
Cell Phone Usage and Reimbursement	612.1
Business Use of Personal Cell Phones	612.1
Personal Use of County Provided Cell Phones	612.1
Change Management	720.1
Class Specification, definition of.....	104.1
Classification and Compensation	217.1
Classification Plan, definition of	104.1
Commission-Appointed Boards and Authorities.....	103.1
Commission-Appointed Positions.....	103.1
Communicable Disease Social Distancing Program.....	501.1
Communication of Employee or Retiree Death.....	248.1
Compensation Plan, definition of	104.1
.....	217.1
Compensation Upon Demotion.....	217.1
Compensation Upon Promotion.....	217.1
Compensation Upon Transfer	217.1
Compensatory Time, definition of.....	104.1
.....	217.1
Comp Ratio, definition of	104.1
Computer Administrative Rights	732.1
Condition of Employment, Physical Examination and Drug and Alcohol Test.....	306.1
Conflicts of Interest/Ethics	303.1
Contingency	608.1

Contingency Plan (CP) (definition of)	780.1
Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) (definition of)	780.1
Continuous County Service (definition of)	104.1
Contributions and Honorariums	304.1
County, definition of	104.1
County Commission Committees	103.1
County Divisions	103.1
Court Ordered Community Service.....	245.1

D

Data Backup	781.1
Data Center Access	711.1
Data Closet Access	712.1
Data Security	704.1
Date of Hire, definition of.....	219.1
Date of Hire / Seniority Date.....	219.1
Death	203.1
Debt Administration	605.1
Definitions.....	104.1
Demotions.....	203.1
.....	217.1
.....	301.1
Department Head, definition of	104.1
Department Director/Department Manager, definition of	104.1
Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program	305.1
Disability Retirement.....	203.1
Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) (definition of)	780.1
Discharge or Dismissal.....	203.1
Disciplinary Action	301.1
Dismissal	301.1
Division Director, definition of.....	104.1
Donation of Funds/Items	615.1
Drug Free Workplace.....	306.1

E

Education Reimbursement Program	401.1
Elected Officials	103.1
Electorate	103.1
Electronic Mail (Email) Usage and Guidelines	707.1
Employee Conduct	307.1
Employee, definition of.....	104.1
Employee Disciplinary Report.....	301.1
Employee Emergency Medical Procedures	512.1
Employee Exit Interview	203.1
Employee Identification Cards	246.1
Employee-Initiated Resignation	203.1
Employee Personnel Records, Administration of	244.1
Employee Requested Drug and Alcohol Testing.....	305.1
Employee Separation and Termination.....	203.1
Employee Travel and Training Expenses.....	405.1
Employer, definition of	104.1
Ethics	303.1
Equal Employment Opportunity.....	201.1
Equal Opportunity Officer	201.1
Excess Personal Time Off Annual Contributions	237.1
Exempt Employee, definition of	104.1
External Postings	242.1

F

FLSA, definition of	104.1
Family Medical Leave.....	230.1
Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP) Funding	603.2
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	603.3
Firewall Policy	702.1
Fiscal Year	601.1
Fleet Replacement Program.....	804.1
Flextime	215.1
Floater Employee, definition of	104.1

Flowers or Memorial	248.1
Follow-Up Drug and Alcohol Testing	305.1
.....	306.1
Frozen Leave	231.1
Fuel Cards	405.1
Fuelman	801.1

G

Garnishment	220.1
Global Positioning System (GPS)	802.1
Grievance Procedure	302.1
Grant Administration	617.1
Gross or Willful Negligence, definition of	504.1

H

Hardware Asset Life cycle Management Policy	751.1
Hardware Sanitization	753.1
Hiring Process	204.1
Holiday	232.1
Hours of Work	205.1
Housekeeping / Safe Work Environment	505.1

I

Immediate Family or Extended Family, definition of	104.1
Inclement Weather / Adverse Conditions / Emergencies	225.1
Information Security	730.1
Information Security Awareness	731.1
Information Systems Contingency Plan (ISCP) (definition of)	780.1
Internal Postings	242.1
Interview Process	204.1
Intradepartmental Posting	242.1
Interment of an Indigent Decedent	613.1
Investigatory Suspension With or Without Pay	301.1
Investments	610.1

J

Job Bidding	243.1
Job Class, definition of	104.1
Job Posting	242.1
Waivers to the Job Posting Policy	242.1
Jury Duty	233.1

K

L

Lateral Transfer	217.1
Layoff	203.1
Leave of Absence Without Pay	234.1
Leave Carryover	237.1
Licenses and Memberships, Special	402.1
Loss of Job Requirements	203.1
Lost, Damaged or Destroyed Property	506.1

M

Maximum Annual Accumulation of Personal Time Off	237.1
Medical Leave Sharing, definition of	104.1
.....	238.1
Mileage Reimbursement	405.1
.....	614.1
Military Caregiver Family Medical Leave	241.1
Military Leave	235.1
Military Recognition Award	216.1
Mission	102.1
Mission Critical Employee (definition of)	104.1
Mobile Device Usage	713.1

Modified Duty, definition of.....	104.1
.....	206.1
Motor Pool	803.1
Motor Vehicle Records	508.1
N	
Negligence, definition of.....	504.1
Nepotism.....	207.1
New Employee Onboarding / Orientation	202.1
New Hire Probationary Termination	203.1
New Position, definition of	104.1
Non-Exempt Employee, definition of.....	104.1
Non-Work Related Disability, definition of	104.1
O	
On Call Policy	226.1
Oral Warning	301.1
Order of Layoff	203.1
Organizational Structure.....	103.1
Our Core Values	102.1
Outside Employment	208.1
Overtime, definition of	104.1
.....	217.1
P	
Pandemic Continuity of Operations.....	502.1
Part-Time Employee, definition of	104.1
Password Policy	701.1
Pay for Part-Time Employment	217.1
Pay Periods	221.1
Payment Card Acceptance.....	616.1
Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI-DSS) Program Policy	735.1
Payroll Deductions	222.1
Per Diem	405.1
Performance Appraisal.....	209.1
Personal Appearance	309.1
Personal Holiday, definition of.....	104.1
.....	232.1
Personal Information and Personnel Records	210.1
Personal Protective Equipment	507.1
Employee Non-Compliance / Non-Use of Personal Protective Equipment.....	507.1
Funding.....	507.1
Minimum Essential Personal Protective Equipment Chart	507.1
Personal Time Off, definition of	104.1
.....	237.1
Personal Time Off Accrual	237.1
Personal Time Off Exceptions	237.1
Personal Time Off, Non-Eligible Employees	237.1
Personal Time Off Scheduling and Usage	237.1
Personal Use of Telephones.....	310.1
Pledge.....	102.1
Political Activities	311.1
Position Classification, definition of	104.1
Position Vacancies.....	217.1
Post-Accident Drug and Alcohol Testing	305.1
.....	306.1
Pre-Employment Drug and Alcohol Testing	305.1
Probation Period	211.1
Probationary Employee, definition of.....	104.1
Probationary Termination	203.1
Procurement.....	603.1
Professional Development Program	404.1
Prohibited Conduct	305.1
Prohibited Substances	305.1
Promotion	217.1
Promotion Criteria	217.1
Pro Rata, definition of	104.1
Provisional Employee, definition of	104.1
Proximate Cause, definition of.....	504.1

Public Record Request Response	105.1
Purchasing Cards	405.1
.....	604.1
Elected Officials.....	604.2
Purpose	101.1

Q

Quartile, definition of	104.1
-------------------------------	-------

R

Random Drug and Alcohol Testing.....	305.1
Rate of Pay Increase	217.1
Reasonable Suspicion Drug and Alcohol Testing	305.1
.....	306.1
Reclassified Position, definition of	104.1
Reclassifying Positions	217.1
Recording, Utilization and Auditing of Overtime	218.1
Recovery (definition of)	780.1
Recruitment	204.1
Re-employment	212.1
Reference Check	204.1
Regional Partnerships.....	103.1
Regular Employee, definition of.....	104.1
Regular Employment Position, definition of.....	104.1
Regular Full-Time Employee, definition of.....	104.1
Regular Part-Time Employee, definition of	104.1
Requests for Use of County Personnel, Equipment and Material	316.1
Reserves/Governmental Funds.....	608.1
Operating Reserve and Designated Fund Balances Chart	608.1
Reserves – Water Utility	608.2
Retirement	203.1
Retirement Recognition Award	216.1
Return-to-Duty Drug and Alcohol Testing.....	305.1
Revenue.....	607.1

S

Safeguarding Equipment and Supplies / Loss Prevention	506.1
Safety Review Board	504.1
Authority of.....	504.1
Membership	504.1
Membership Tenure.....	504.1
Penalties Matrix.....	504.1
Safety Training	406.1
Salary Range, definition of	104.1
Seat Belts.....	508.1
Security Incident Response Policy	734.1
Seniority, definition of.....	219.1
Seniority Date, definition of	219.1
Service Desk Problem and Request Management	717.1
Service Recognition	216.1
Service Recognition Award.....	216.1
Sexual Harassment	308.1
Smoking in the Workplace.....	317.1
Social Media	707.1
Software Asset Life Cycle Management.....	752.1
Solicitations	313.1
Special Employment Programs	213.1
Special Probationary Period (definition of)	104.1
Standard Work Week, definition of	104.1
Standard Work Year, definition of	104.1
State & Federal Agencies.....	103.1
Subpoena as Witness.....	233.1
Supervisor, definition of.....	104.1
Supervisor – Initiated Resignation.....	203.1
Suspension With Pay	301.1

T

Technology Asset Life Cycle Management751.1
Technology Contingency Planning780.1
Technology Physical Security Policy733.1
Temporary Employee, definition of104.1
Terminated Employee Personal Time Off Compensation237.1
Theft or Vandalism506.1
Third-Party Access715.1
Time Sheet223.1
Trainee217.1
Training Programs, Workshops and Seminars403.1
Transfer in Lieu of Termination / Dismissal301.1

U

Unlawful Harassment.....308.1

V

VPN Usage and Access716.1
Values102.1
Vehicle Accidents.....509.1
Vehicle Accident Investigation.....510.1
 Claims.....511.1
Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement614.1
Vehicle Equipment Repurposing Program.....805.1
Vehicle Safety508.1
 Items Prohibited from Being Carried in Columbia County Vehicles508.1
Video Surveillance and Recording.....706.1
Violence in the Workplace314.1
Visitors in the Workplace.....247.1
Voicemail Policy.....719.1

W

Whistleblower Policy315.1
Wireless Network Access and Usage Policy718.1
Workers' Compensation Policy239.1
Work Periods214.1
Work-Related Injury or Illness, definition of104.1
Working Out of Classification Pay224.1
Workplace Violence314.1
Written Warning / Reprimand301.1

X Y Z



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION	DESCRIPTION
100	General Information
200	Human Resources
300	Conduct
400	Training and Development
500	Health and Safety
600	Finance / Procurement
700	Information Technology
800	Fleet



Policy Number	GENERAL INFORMATION
101.1	Purpose and Policy
102.1	Our Core Values
103.1	Organizational Structure
104.1	Definitions
105.1	Public Record Request Response
	HUMAN RESOURCES
201.1	Equal Employment Opportunity
202.1	New Employee Onboarding / Orientation
203.1	Employee Separation and Termination
204.1	Hiring Process
205.1	Hours of Work
206.1	Modified Duty
207.1	Nepotism
208.1	Outside Employment
209.1	Performance Appraisal
210.1	Personal Information and Personnel Records
211.1	Probation Period
212.1	Re-Employment
213.1	Special Employment Programs
214.1	Work Periods
215.1	Flextime
216.1	Service Recognition
217.1	Classification and Compensation
218.1	Recording, Utilization and Auditing of Overtime
219.1	Date of Hire / Service
220.1	Garnishment
221.1	Pay Periods
222.1	Payroll Deductions
223.1	Time Sheet / Preparation of Payroll / Method of Payment



LIST OF POLICIES

PAGE 2 OF 5

224.1	Working out of Classification Pay
225.1	Inclement Weather / Adverse Conditions / Emergencies
226.1	On Call Policy
227.1	Bereavement Leave
228.1	Blood Bank
229.1	Non-Work Related Disability Leave
230.1	Family Medical Leave
231.1	Frozen Leave
232.1	Holiday
233.1	Jury Duty or Subpoena as Witness
234.1	Leave of Absence without Pay
235.1	Military Leave
236.1	Catastrophic Leave
237.1	Personal Time Off
238.1	Medical Leave Sharing
239.1	Workers' Compensation Policy
240.1	Americans with Disabilities Act of 2008
241.1	Military Caregiver Leave
242.1	Job Posting
243.1	Job Bidding
244.1	Administration of Employee Personnel Records
245.1	Court-Ordered Community Service
246.1	Employee Identification Cards
247.1	Visitors in the Workplace
248.1	Acknowledgement, Memorial and Sympathy
	CONDUCT
301.1	Disciplinary Action
302.1	Grievance Procedure
303.1	Conflicts of Interest/Ethics
304.1	Contributions and Honorariums
305.1	Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program
306.1	Drug-Free Workplace
307.1	Employee Conduct



LIST OF POLICIES

PAGE 3 OF 5

308.1	Unlawful Harassment Policy
309.1	Personal Appearance
310.1	Personal Use of Telephone
311.1	Political Activities
312.1	Blank
313.1	Solicitations
314.1	Violence in the Workplace
315.1	Whistleblower Policy
316.1	Requests for Use of County Personnel, Equipment and Material
317.1	Smoking in the Workplace
	TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT
401.1	Education Reimbursement Program
402.1	Special Licenses and Memberships
403.1	Training Programs, Workshops and Seminars
404.1	Professional Development Program
405.1	Employee Travel and Training Expenses
406.1	Safety Training
	HEALTH AND SAFETY
501.1	Communicable Disease Social Distancing Program
502.1	Pandemic Continuity of Operations
503.1	Blood Borne Pathogens
504.1	Safety Review Board
505.1	Housekeeping / Safe Work Environment
506.1	Safeguarding Equipment and Supplies / Loss Prevention
507.1	Personal Protective Equipment
508.1	Vehicle Safety
509.1	Vehicle Accidents
510.1	Vehicle Accident Investigation
511.1	Claims
512.1	Employee Emergency Medical Procedures
513.1	Risk Identification and Assessment for New or Expanded Programs
	FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT



LIST OF POLICIES

600.1	Introduction
601.1	Budget Preparation
602.1	Capital Expenditures
603.1	Procurement
603.2	Projects Using Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP) Funding
603.3	Purchases Using Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Funding
604.1	Purchasing Card
604.2	Purchasing Card – Elected Officials
605.1	Debt Administration
606.1	Accounting and Financial Reporting
607.1	Revenue
608.1	Reserves – Governmental Funds
608.2	Reserves – Water Utility
609.1	Bank Accounts
610.1	Investments
611.1	Cash Management
612.1	Cell Phone Usage and Reimbursement
613.1	Internment of an Indigent Decedent
614.1	Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement Policy
615.1	Donation of Funds/Items
616.1	Payment Card Acceptance
617.1	Grant Administration
	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
701.1	Password Policy
702.1	Firewall Policy
703.1	Anti-Virus Policy
704.1	Data Security Policy
705.1	BLANK
706.1	Video Surveillance and Recording Policy
707.1	Acceptable Use Policy
708.1	BLANK
709.1	BLANK
710.1	BLANK
711.1	Data Center Access Policy



LIST OF POLICIES

PAGE 5 OF 5

712.1	Data Closet Access Policy
713.1	Mobile Device Usage Policy
714.1	BLANK
715.1	Third-Party Access Policy
716.1	VPN Usage and Access Policy
717.1	Service Desk Problem & Request Management
718.1	Wireless Network Access and Usage Policy
719.1	Voicemail Policy
720.1	Change Management Policy
730.1	Information Security Policy
731.1	Information Security Awareness Policy
732.1	Computer Administrative Rights Policy
733.1	Technology Physical Security Policy
734.1	Security Incident Response Policy
735.1	Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI-DSS) Program Policy
750.1	Technology Asset Life Cycle Management Policy
751.1	Hardware Asset Life Cycle Management Policy
752.1	Software Asset Life Cycle Management Policy
753.1	Hardware Sanitization
780.1	Technology Contingency Planning Policy
781.1	Data Backup Policy
790.1	Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Program
	FLEET
801.1	Fuelman Policy
802.1	Global Positioning System (GPS) Policy
803.1	Motor Pool Policy
804.1	Fleet Replacement program Policy
805.1	Vehicle-Equipment Repurposing Program Policy



Policy Number	GENERAL INFORMATION
101.1	Purpose and Policy
102.1	Our Core Values
103.1	Organizational Structure
104.1	Definitions
105.1	Public Record Request Response

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Purpose and Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 101.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>General Information</i>

NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES:

The purpose of this Comprehensive Policy Manual is to define and communicate the standards by which employees of Columbia County, Georgia should conduct themselves. To this end, all employees are expected to perform at a high level consistent with their job responsibilities while representing the County in a manner consistent with our vision, mission, values and pledge. Further, all employees are required to familiarize themselves with the policies contained herein and ignorance of a specific policy may not be grounds to violate such.

Specifically, this Policy Manual has been designed to assist new and current employees in familiarizing themselves with the policies, procedures and organizational culture of Columbia County, Georgia. While great strides have been taken to make this manual as comprehensive as possible, aspects of employment with Columbia County which do not appear should be addressed with your immediate supervisor. The Policy Manual will apply to all employees under the control of the Board of Commissioners unless they are excluded or exempted by name, group, department, status, class or other non-discriminatory method.

Columbia County will endeavor to give employees notice when a policy or benefit is expected to be changed. However, the County may choose for its own reasons at any time and with no prior notice to change, suspend, delete, add, remove or otherwise modify any or all content in this Policy Manual to meet legislative, economic, financial or other conditions, as needed. The regulations and benefits required by law will always remain in force. All changes in policy must first be approved by the Columbia County Board of Commissioners.

This Policy Manual includes the most recent policies and procedures. All prior copies of any policy manual should be disregarded in consideration of this copy.

Thank you for your dedication to the citizens of Columbia County!

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July, 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2016	TOPIC: <i>Our Core Values</i>
<i>Policy Number 102.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>General Information</i>



COLUMBIA COUNTY
GEORGIA

A Community of **Pride** • A County of Vision • Endless Opportunities

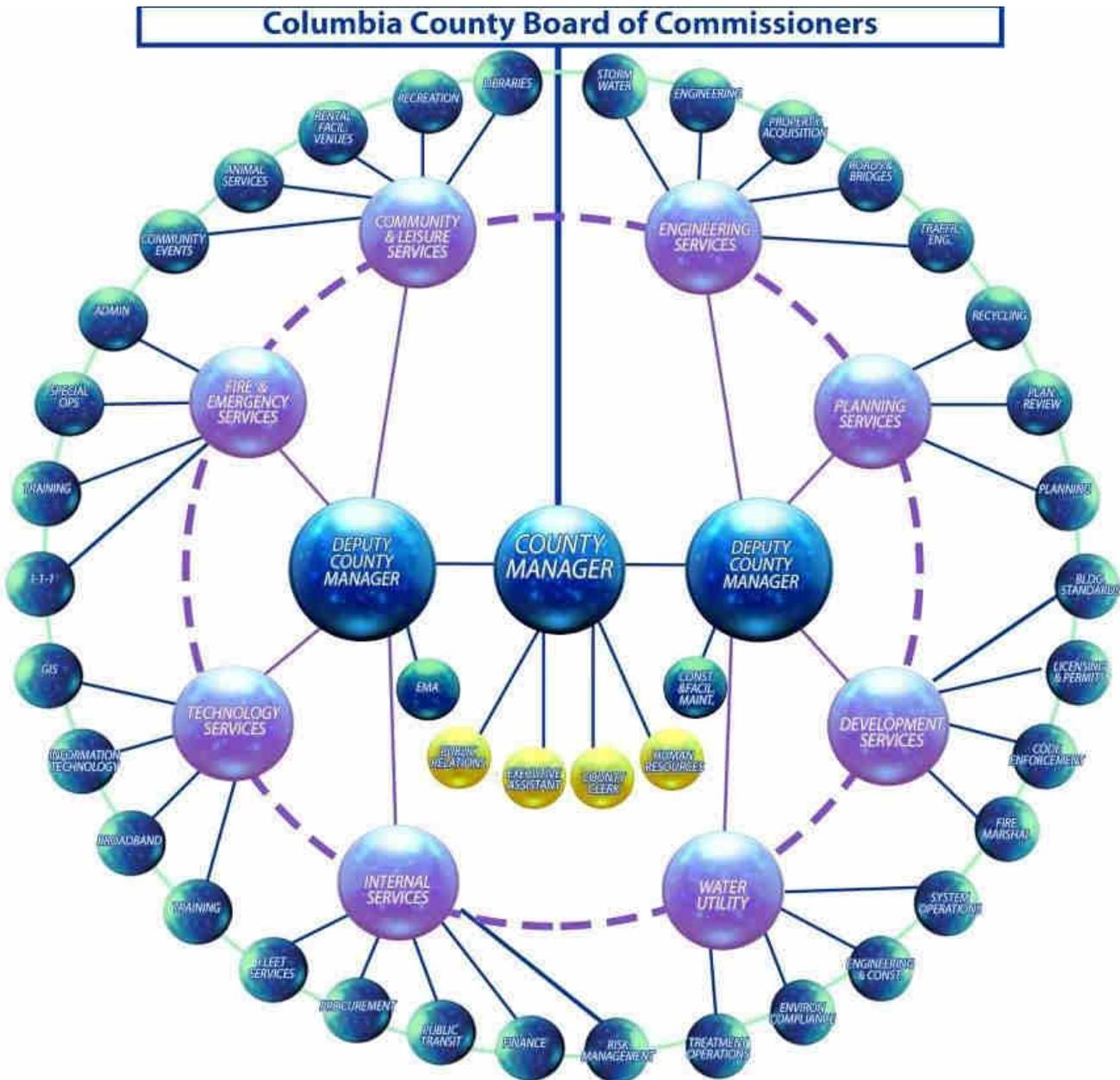
PROFESSIONALISM • RESPECT • INTEGRITY • DEDICATION • EXCELLENCE

Core Values: **PRIDE**
Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dedication, Excellence

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2016 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: Organizational Structure
<i>Policy Number 103.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: General Information

Columbia County has created a concept that will further promote teamwork, reduce bureaucracy, and encourage working together within the County--no matter what your job title or position. This spherical organizational chart allows employees to work directly with employees in other departments to accomplish these goals.



**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 September 21, 2021 February 15, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Definitions</i>
<i>Policy Number 104.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>General Information</i>

Allocated Position

A Full-Time or Part-Time Regular Employment Position that has a written job specification, has been approved by the Board of Commissioners, has funds appropriated for the position and is classified in the Classification Plan.

Board of Commissioners

Columbia County Board of Commissioners, a governing body of Columbia County, Georgia.

Break in Service

Defined as periods of employment that are broken and not bridged when the employee leaves employment for reasons other than lay off, suspension, lost time or approved leave of absence.

Career Service

Includes all Regular Employment Positions except those excluded in Article VI, 2-339 Code of Ordinances of Columbia County, Georgia.

Catastrophic Leave

Sick Leave accrued under old policy and excess accrued Personal Time Off at the end of each calendar year that has been placed in eligible employee accounts to be used for medical illness that exceeds forty working consecutive hours.

Catastrophic Leave Incentive

Eligible full-time or part-time employees with twenty or more continuous years of service to the County will be eligible for the incentive.

Class Specification

Class Specification includes description of duties, responsibilities and qualifications of positions in a certain class.

Classification Plan

A plan which sets forth all Job Titles, all Job Classes, all Position Classifications and specifications for each Job Class and procedures for maintaining the plan.

Continuous County Service

Employment with no Break in Service for the purpose of compensating eligible Employees in accordance with the Catastrophic Leave Incentive provisions upon completion of twenty or more years of continuous employment to the County.

County

Columbia County is a political subdivision of the State of Georgia.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 September 21, 2021 February 15, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Definitions</i>
<i>Policy Number 104.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>General Information</i>

Compensation Plan

A plan which sets forth a salary grade for each job title, minimum and maximum ranges for each Job Class and procedures for maintaining the plan.

Compensatory Time

Time off granted an Employee as compensation for Overtime.

Comp ratio

This is defined as the ratio of actual salary to the midpoint of the salary range.

Department Head

A department head is herein defined as Division Director, Director of a Division, Department Director or Department Manager reporting to the County Manager.

Department Director/Department Manager

Reports to the Director of his/her Division or the County Manager and manages a department within his/her specific division.

Division Director

A Division Director is herein also referred to as Department Head, serves as the Director of a Division. He/she is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and under a contractual employment agreement.

Employee

An employee is any person who renders service to the County for pay, excluding persons who work under a professional service contract. Employee includes a Probationary Employee or a Regular Employee.

Employer

The employer is Columbia County Government.

Exempt Employee

Executive, administrative or professional, computer and outside sales employees are exempt from overtime compensation.

FLSA

Fair Labor Standards Act, as codified at 29 U.S.C. § 201, et. seq., as amended.

Floater Employee

An Employee qualified to work in one or more job assignments and who is on call to work at irregular intervals in one or more County departments.

Immediate Family or Extended Family shall be deemed to include spouses, parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, brothers, sisters and the immediate or extended family of spouses, or as approved by the Division Director.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 September 21, 2021 February 15, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Definitions</i>
<i>Policy Number 104.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>General Information</i>

Job Class

A job class is a group of positions that are similar in functions, duties and responsibilities, and can be assigned the same job title and salary range.

Medical Leave Sharing

Employee sharing of personal Catastrophic Leave or Personal Time Off hours with other Employees who suffer illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental conditions that are severe in nature or extraordinary and may cause the Employee to go on leave without pay status or may have to terminate employment due to the medical problems.

Mission Critical Employee

An Employee who has been identified by a Department Head to be available during emergency or adverse situations.

Modified Duty

Modifications of work duties or tasks determined and recommended by a County approved worker's compensation physician or practitioner who has been rendering treatment to the Employee or who is qualified to render an opinion on the employee's physical abilities.

New Position

A full time or part time Allocated Position that has been approved by the Board of Commissioners and funding has been established for the position.

Non-exempt Employee

Employees who are subject to overtime standards of the FLSA as amended.

Non-Work Related Disability

A physical injury or illness not caused by the Employees occupation.

Overtime

Work performed in excess of the hours permitted in a work week under the FLSA and that shall be paid at a rate of one and one-half times the Employee's straight time hourly rate.

Part-Time Employee

A part-time employee is an Employee working in an allocated position which is budgeted for less than 40 hours during the standard work week.

Personal Holiday

A personal holiday is a personal day of leave available to Regular Employees for purposes such as time off for birthday, anniversary or other special occasion.

Personal Time Off

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 September 21, 2021 February 15, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Definitions</i>
<i>Policy Number 104.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>General Information</i>

Eligible employees accrue hours each month based on the length of service and months worked during the calendar year that is placed in the employee Personal Time Off account.

Position Classification

A system in which similar positions are grouped under common job titles based on the kind of work performed, its level of difficulty and responsibility involved and qualifications required.

Probationary Employee

New hire Employee appointed to an Allocated Position who must complete a probationary period satisfactorily to be eligible for continued employment in the Allocated Position.

Pro Rata

Benefits that a Part-time Employee receives compared to what a Full-time Employee receives and shall mean that percentage equal to the number of hours budgeted to the Allocated Position during the standard work year divided by 2,080.

Provisional Employee

A provisional appointment may be made only in the absence of a qualified applicant. Provisional appointments shall not be eligible for Regular Employee status, and shall not be continued for more than six (6) months from the date of the appointment, unless an extension is approved.

Quartile

Range sectors of each pay grade divided into fourths.

Reclassified Position

A reclassified position is when an established position is reassigned from one Job Class to a different Job Class due to changes in duties, level of responsibility or qualifications of the position.

Regular Employee

An Employee who has completed the new hire probationary period in a satisfactory manner is considered a Regular Employee.

Regular Employment Position

A job or position of employment intended for an unspecified period of time and the requirements of the new hire probationary period have been satisfactorily completed.

Regular Full-Time Employee

An Employee who has successfully completed the probationary period is assigned to a position which is expected to continue for an indefinite duration, and who works a shift schedule of 40 hours or more which will total no less than 2,080 hours per year.

Regular Part-Time Employee

An Employee who has successfully completed the probationary period is assigned to a position which is

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 September 21, 2021 February 15, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Definitions</i>
<i>Policy Number 104.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>General Information</i>

expected to continue for an indefinite duration, and who works a shift schedule of 20 hours or more, but less than 40 hours per week.

Salary Range

The difference between the minimum and maximum salaries for each pay grade.

Special Probationary Period

A period established for an Employee to improve job performance or work behavior as a condition of continued employment.

Standard Work Week

Forty hours per week beginning Sunday at 12:00 am midnight through Saturday at 11:59 pm.

Standard Work Year

2080 hours per calendar year.

Supervisor

A supervisor reports to the Department Manager of his/her respective department.

Temporary Employee

A temporary employee is an employee of a third party, working under a contract with the County and the third party contractor, on an as needed or emergency basis.

Work-Related Injury or Illness

A physical injury or illness deemed to have been caused by the Employee occupation.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED AND ADDED: March 15, 2011 AMENDED: October 7, 2014 October 19, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Public Record Request Response</i>
<i>Policy Number 105.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>General Information</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Public Record Request Policy is to establish procedures for Columbia County Board of Commission Divisions and Departments on how to respond to a public record(s) request. The Columbia County Board of Commissioners desires to be transparent and to provide public records requested by members of the public in an efficient and expedient manner in accordance with the Georgia Open Records Act, O.C.G.A. 50-18-70. In carrying out its responsibilities under the Georgia Open Records Act, the County will be guided by the provisions of the Georgia Open Records Act describing its purposes and interpretation. Failure to comply with any provision of these rules shall not result in any liability imposed upon the County other than that required in the Georgia Open Records Act. These procedures do not apply to requests for the Clerk of Superior and Juvenile Court, Magistrate Court, Probate Court, Sheriff or Tax Commissioner.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. **“Open Records Officer”** is the individual who, for and on behalf of the County, is responsible for managing, evaluating, and responding to all requests submitted to the County pursuant to the Open Records Act.
- B. **“Requester”** is any person or entity requesting a record pursuant to the Open Records Act.
- C. **“Public record”** means all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, computer based or generated information, data, data fields, or similar material prepared and maintained or received by an agency or by a private person or entity in the performance of a service or function for or on behalf of an agency or when such documents have been transferred to a private person or entity by an agency for storage or future governmental use.
- D. **“E-mail”** is electronic mail in an informational transfer system that uses computers for sending and receiving messages and is comprised of individual units of information divided into an “envelope” and the message contents. The envelope, or message header, contains the mailing address, routing instructions, transmission and receipt information, and other information the system needs to deliver the mail item correctly. Classification of emails as public records is dependent on the content of the message. Email messages are public records when they are created or received in the performance of a service or function for the County.
- E. **“Written and in writing”** means all handwritten, printed, typed and/or electronically created requests, including electronic mail (e-mail). Requests created by other electronic means, such as text messages, instant messages, SMS messages, or the like, shall not be considered to be “written” or “in writing.”

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED AND ADDED: March 15, 2011 AMENDED: October 7, 2014 October 19, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Public Record Request Response</i>
<i>Policy Number 105.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>General Information</i>

III. POLICY

This policy is to provide guidelines and overall general procedures countywide. Division Directors will inform all affected employees within their work areas of this policy and its requirements. The Columbia County Board of Commissioners has designated the County Clerk and Deputy Clerk as the County's Open Records Officers for the purpose of handling requests for records.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. All Division Directors shall have knowledge and understanding of the Georgia Open Records Act and will assist in training their employees on what public records are available in their divisions.
- B. The County Clerk will retain a copy of all Open Records Requests, response letter(s) and other communication with the requestor, in accordance with the Georgia Archives Local Government Records Retention Schedules.

V. PROCEDURE

A. Request for Public Records

It is preferable that requests be submitted through the Public Records Center located on the County website; however, it is not required. If received by email, mail or fax to someone other than the Open Records Officers the request shall immediately be forwarded to the Open Records Officers.



	HUMAN RESOURCES
201.1	Equal Employment Opportunity
202.1	New Employee Onboarding / Orientation
203.1	Employee Separation and Termination
204.1	Hiring Process
205.1	Hours of Work
206.1	Modified Duty
207.1	Nepotism
208.1	Outside Employment
209.1	Performance Appraisal
210.1	Personal Information and Personnel Records
211.1	Probation Period
212.1	Re-Employment
213.1	Special Employment Programs
214.1	Work Periods
215.1	Flextime
216.1	Service Recognition
217.1	Classification and Compensation
218.1	Recording, Utilization and Auditing of Overtime
219.1	Date of Hire / Service
220.1	Garnishment
221.1	Pay Periods
222.1	Payroll Deductions
223.1	Time Sheet / Preparation of Payroll / Method of Payment
224.1	Working out of Classification Pay
225.1	Inclement Weather / Adverse Conditions / Emergencies
226.1	On Call Policy
227.1	Bereavement Leave
228.1	Blood Bank
229.1	Non-Work Related Disability Leave
230.1	Family Medical Leave
231.1	Frozen Leave



232.1	Holiday
233.1	Jury Duty or Subpoena as Witness
234.1	Leave of Absence without Pay
235.1	Military Leave
236.1	Catastrophic Leave
237.1	Personal Time Off
238.1	Medical Leave Sharing
239.1	Workers' Compensation Policy
240.1	Americans with Disabilities Act of 2008
241.1	Military Caregiver Leave
242.1	Job Posting
243.1	Job Bidding
244.1	Administration of Employee Personnel Records
245.1	Court-Ordered Community Service
246.1	Employee Identification Cards
247.1	Visitors in the Workplace
248.1	Acknowledgement, Memorial and Sympathy

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 17, 2010 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Equal Employment Opportunity</i>
<i>Policy Number 201.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a policy to ensure equal employment opportunity with the County and to outline procedures for action in case of violation.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

The Human Resources Director shall serve as the Equal Opportunity Officer to carry out the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Program. The Officer shall be the focal point for the County's equal opportunity efforts and shall advise and assist staff and management personnel in all matters regarding implementation of and compliance with the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, and be responsible for the successful execution of the program. The Equal Opportunity Officer will have responsibility to examine existing internal policies or procedures which may serve as barriers to implementing the Equal Employment Opportunity Program.

III. POLICY

Applicants for positions and Employees of Columbia County government shall be assured of fair and equitable treatment in all aspects of personnel administration, including training, promotion and disciplinary action and shall be assured equal employment opportunity based on ability and fitness to all persons regardless of race, religion, color, creed, national origin, sex, marital status, genetic information, veteran status, age or the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability unless such disability effectively prevents the performance of the essential duties required of the position and which are bonafide, occupational qualifications which cannot be accommodated without undue hardship.

The goals and objectives of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy are to:

- 1) Ensure fair treatment, prohibit discrimination and harassment of any type in county hiring and employment practices.
- 2) Provide compliance with State and Federal equal opportunity requirements and regulations.

IV. PROCEDURES

The Equal Opportunity Officer will:

- 1) Periodically review all position qualifications and job descriptions to ensure requirements are relevant to the tasks to be performed. Make recommendations as needed to delete requirements not reasonably related to the tasks to be performed.
- 2) Assure that pay and fringe benefits depend upon job responsibility and, along with overtime work, are administered on a non-discriminatory basis.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 17, 2010 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Equal Employment Opportunity</i>
<i>Policy Number 201.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

- 3) Inform and provide guidance to staff and management personnel who make hiring decisions so that all applications for selections, promotion and termination, including those of minorities and women, are considered without discrimination and all applicants be given equal opportunity regardless of political affiliation, race, color, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, genetic information, veteran status, or physical disability unless such disability effectively prevents the performance of essential duties and functions required by the position and which are bona fide occupational qualifications which cannot be accommodated without undue hardship.
- 4) Maintain a pool of qualified candidates to encourage equal employment opportunity in hiring.
- 5) Provide orientation for all new Employees and encourage all Employees to avail themselves of employment opportunities.
- 6) This policy shall be made known to all Employees, contractors, and suppliers through distribution of the Equal Opportunity Policy. Applications for employment will include an equal opportunity clause.

V. EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

The following will be undertaken to achieve Employee job satisfaction and equal opportunity.

- 1) Seek to prevent discrimination of the type described in Section III above with regard to training and educational opportunities, reclassifications, promotions, transfer and demotion, layoffs and termination of Employees. Any actions which might adversely affect Employees and involve discrimination of the type described in Section III above will be brought to the attention of the Equal Opportunity Officer.
- 2) Actively encourage Employees to increase their skills and job potential through training and educational opportunities. Offer guidance and counseling in developing programs tailored to individual aptitudes and desires.

VI. VIOLATIONS

Violations of this policy may be cause for the full range of disciplinary action.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 17, 2014 September 19, 2017 <i>Policy Number 202.1</i>	TOPIC: <i>New Employee Onboarding / Orientation</i> POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>
--	---

I. PURPOSE

To establish a policy and procedure for New Employee Onboarding and Processing.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

The Human Resources Department is responsible for new Employee payroll and benefits orientation and processing.

III. POLICY

All new hire Employees appointed to an Allocated Position of the County will be scheduled for New Employee Onboarding with the Human Resources Department on or after their first day of work.

A Human Resources representative will obtain personal information from the Employee for the official personnel file, including tax withholding forms, authorized deductions, etc. The Employee Handbook, Outside Employment Form, Internet Usage and Guidelines, Personal Time Off, Unlawful Harassment Policy, the Vehicle Safety Policy Seat Belt requirements, and the Risk Management handbook, accident and injury procedures are discussed with the employee. All new employees must complete the I-9 form within three (3) days of the date of new hire employment.

A Benefits Representative will present and discuss the Employee benefits information to include new hire Benefit Enrollment Eligibility information, the Summary of Benefits, Flexible Benefits Plan worksheet, Statement of Medical and Life Insurance Benefits and Enrollment Forms, Retirement and supplemental products information. The Benefits Insight Booklet, HIPPA, Post offer of Employment Medical Inquiry, Workers' Compensation Procedures/Panel of Physicians, Drug Free Workplace Policy, Education Reimbursement Policy, and Mandatory Training Compliance requirement, will be presented to and discussed with the Employee. Public Transit Safety Sensitive Employees and CDL required Employees will receive and acknowledge receipt of the Department of Transportation/Fitness for Duty/Drug and Alcohol Testing Program policy.

The Fitness Representative will provide information and discussion regarding employee access, consultations and programs available through the County Fitness Center.

The Employee will read the policies and raise any questions regarding same, sign a form acknowledging receipt and understanding of these policies. The signature on the forms will be

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 17, 2014 September 19, 2017	TOPIC: <i>New Employee Onboarding / Orientation</i>
<i>Policy Number 202.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

witnessed by a Human Resources representative.

Medical, life, dental, retirement and supplemental products representatives participate in the new hire onboarding process. Each will present a brief summary of the represented plan available through payroll deduction and respond to new Employee questions concerning the schedules of benefits.

The hiring department manager or assigned employee will continue the New Employee Onboarding Process by providing any additional information to the new Employee including:

- a) Work standards and regulations
- b) Hours of work, time sheets or reports
- c) Duties of the position
- d) Safety rules and procedures, location of safety or protective equipment
- e) Tour of the work area, including location of equipment, supplies, etc.
- f) Introduction to co-workers
- g) Schedule for lunch and breaks
- h) When and whom to report absence from work
- i) Who is responsible for performance planning and review

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Employee Separation and Termination</i>
<i>Policy Number 203.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish procedure for Employee separation or termination from the Career Service with the County by resignation, abandonment of job, lay off or reduction in force, disability, loss of job requirements, dismissal or discharge, new hire probationary termination, special probationary period termination, retirement or death. The procedures are designated to provide the least disruption and inconvenience to the Employee and the County.

II. TYPES OF SEPARATION AND TERMINATION

1) Abandonment of Job

An Employee not on authorized leave of absence who, without valid reason, fails to report for work for three (3) consecutive days may be terminated from the service of the County for job abandonment. Any Career Service Employee terminated for job abandonment shall have the right of appeal under the Grievance and Appeals procedure.

2) Employee – Initiated Resignation

A voluntary termination for any reason other than retirement is an employee-initiated resignation. Employees shall make their resignation intentions known by providing a written resignation to his or her immediate Supervisor at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the effective date of resignation. The resignation letter should include the reason for leaving as well as the proposed effective date. Two weeks of notice is understood to mean that the resigning employee will be available for work during this time. Exceptions to the two-week notice may be granted by the Division Director.

3) Supervisor – Initiated Resignation

A termination requested by the Supervisor which permits the Employee to resign in lieu of being discharged. A termination of this type occurs only after the Supervisor's consultation with the Human Resources Director. An evaluation of the circumstances is conducted, including reasons for the request, supporting documentation and alternatives. Guidelines are similar to those for discharge.

4) Death

Separation shall be effective as of the date of the death of the Employee. All compensation, including leave pay and salary, shall be made payable to the estate of such Employee or as may be determined by law or by applicable executed documents in the personnel folder of such Employee.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Employee Separation and Termination</i>
<i>Policy Number 203.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

5) Discharge or Dismissal

Termination of an Employee by the County may be with or without cause governed by the provisions of these policies and procedures as hereinafter set forth and the laws of the State of Georgia.

6) New Hire Probationary Termination

The discharge of an Employee during the established new hire probationary period is a new-hire probationary termination. An Employee terminated during the established probationary period is not entitled to use the Grievance and Appeals procedure.

7) Probationary Termination

The discharge of an Employee who has failed to improve performance or work behavior during a special probationary period is a probationary termination. An employee who has been placed on temporary probation and/or transferred to a different job function will be evaluated for up to three months to allow the employee an opportunity to improve performance. If the employee fails to satisfactorily improve job performance or work behavior as a condition of continued employment, the employee will then be terminated.

8) Layoff

A Layoff is an involuntary termination or separation of an Employee by the County for shortage of funds or work, abolishment of the position, material changes in the duties or organization, or related reasons beyond the Employee's control which do not reflect dissatisfaction with the service of the Employee. The duties previously performed by any laid-off Employee may be reassigned to other Employees holding positions in appropriate classes.

9) Notice to Department Head

When a layoff of any Employee shall become necessary, the Board of Commissioners shall notify the Department Head at least 30 calendar days in advance of the intended action and the reasons therefore. The Department Head shall furnish to the Human Resources Director the names and job titles of the Employees to be laid off and the order in which such lay off shall be affected.

10) Order of Layoff

Should it become necessary to reduce the number of Employees within a given class in any department, such Employees shall be laid off on the basis of the following three factors to be weighed equally: 1) length of service in class, 2) length of service with the County, and 3) performance evaluations for the previous three years.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Employee Separation and Termination</i>
<i>Policy Number 203.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

11) Special Cases

Should a Department Head determine that the retention of a certain Employee is essential to the efficient operation of the Department because of the fact that such Employee possesses special skills or abilities, and should the Department Head wish to retain such Employee in preference to another with a higher rating, then the Department Head shall submit a written request to the Human Resources Director. Such notification shall set forth in detail the specific skills and abilities possessed by the Employee and the reasons why such Employee is essential to the effective operation of the department. With the approval of the Board of Commissioners, the individual may be retained.

12) Notice to Employees

Regular Employees and Employees on probation who are scheduled to be laid off shall be notified in writing by the Human Resources Director at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the effective date of the layoff.

13) Demotions

Any Regular Employee, who is scheduled to be laid off, shall have the right to be demoted to a lower classification, provided that a vacancy exists and such Regular Employee is qualified to fill the position in the lower classification. An Employee in a probationary period shall not have such a right.

14) Loss of Job Requirements

Any Employee who does not obtain or ceases to hold a special license or other special requirement necessary to perform or is intended to perform his or her job shall be separated by a lay off until such license or special requirement is obtained. The license or special requirement shall be obtained within the specified period of time designated by the Employee's Division Director or the Employee shall be dismissed.

15) Furloughs

Employees may be placed on mandatory time off work with no pay or furloughs due to revenue or projected revenue shortfall, changes in organization operating requirements, or other organization needs rather than implementing a lay off.

16) Disability Retirement

An Employee will notify his or her immediate Supervisor of resignation due to disability. A

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Employee Separation and Termination</i>
<i>Policy Number 203.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

disability is an inability to perform the essential functions of a job due to injury, illness, disease or a medical condition that makes the Employee's continuance on the job a danger to himself, herself or to others. Medical documentation from a licensed doctor or medical facility stating the Employee is totally disabled to perform his or her job must be provided by the retiring Employee to the Human Resources Department.

17) Retirement

Any Employee may retire by voluntarily separating employment with the County coupled with a statement by the Employee that he or she is retiring. However, for the Employee to receive public recognition as a retiring Employee at a Board of Commissioners meeting or other ceremony, the Employee must have satisfied the following requirements:

- a) Fifteen years or more service to Columbia County.

Retirement under this Policy shall not affect a person's rights to benefits under the Columbia County Retirement Plan. Participants in this plan and program shall be governed by the terms and conditions thereof.

III. EMPLOYEE EXIT INTERVIEW

The Supervisor or Employee shall schedule an exit interview with the Human Resources Department prior to the last day of employment. Temporary Employees do not participate in the Exit Interview process unless information can be gained which will improve or enhance present employment conditions.

- 1) The Exit Interview shall be maintained separately from the Employee's official personnel file.
- 2) The Human Resources Department is notified of the Employee's separation date via department memo or Employee letter of resignation.
- 3) Employees shall receive pay for work performed through the last hour worked and for unused benefits as stipulated by policy and laws governing such payments.
- 4) Termination pay shall be reduced by any authorized legal deductions, credit union and any other amounts specifically agreed upon orally or in writing by the Employee and the County.
- 5) All County property must be returned before the final paycheck is given to the Employee. The terminating Employee is responsible for ensuring all paperwork has been completed. Failure by the terminating Employee to properly exit may result in delay of receipt of the final paycheck.
- 6) The official date of termination will be the last full day the Employee reports for work.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Employee Separation and Termination</i>
<i>Policy Number 203.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

- 7) A Benefits Representative will discuss options to continue medical, life, dental and supplemental products after termination of employment.
- 8) Forms to request Retirement or Deferred Compensation refunds, if any, are available in the Human Resources Department or on vendor website.
- 9) All claims for unemployment compensation filed by a terminating Employee shall be processed by the Human Resources Department. Requests for information about unemployment compensation should be forwarded to the Human Resources Department immediately to avoid unauthorized charges against the County's account.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 June 21, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Hiring Process</i>
<i>Policy Number 204.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a policy and procedure for the hiring process.

II. POLICY

The Human Resources Department will administer and coordinate the hiring process for vacant positions in the Career Service.

III. PROCEDURES

RECRUITMENT

- 1) The Human Resources Department will be notified immediately of any position vacancy (ies).
- 2) The Department Head will complete the Human Resources Requisition Form and submit to the Human Resources Director. All position vacancy requests are reviewed by the Human Resources Director, Internal Services Director, Deputy County Manager and County Manager. Requests for New Positions or reclassification of existing positions are reviewed during the fiscal year budget process however; exceptions may be presented for review and approval by the Board of Commissioners during the budget year.
- 3) Any current position requests will be reviewed by the Human Resources Director, Internal Services Director, Deputy County Manager and County Manager to determine budget allocations, criticality of need for the position and for approval or disapproval of the request.
- 4) No vacant position may be filled until all leave balances of the former incumbent have been approved and paid and budgeted funds are available. Exceptions may be approved by the County Manager. After approval, the Human Resources Department will prepare the job posting and distribute through the County email system with a request for county departments to distribute the notice to employees who do not have email access and post on department bulletin boards. The position announcement will be posted on the Human Resources Department bulletin board, County Job Opportunity webpage and Human Resources Job Line five (5) working days prior to interviews being conducted; however, shorter periods may be declared by Human Resources due to business needs.
- 5) The Human Resources Department may assist Departments with review and screening of the active pool of application files for qualified candidates. Newspaper ads and professional journal ads will be placed when there is not an adequate pool of qualified applicants for the vacant position.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 June 21, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Hiring Process</i>
<i>Policy Number 204.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

- 6) Ads to be placed in local newspapers, trade publications and professional journals will be developed and placed by the Human Resources Department with assistance provided by the affected department. Funding of all general advertisements will be through the Human Resources Department budget.
- 7) Applications shall be submitted to the Human Resources Department using the online County Employment Application form. Applications are received from the time the position is advertised until the close of business each Friday unless the period has been extended due to holidays. If business hours are changed, Human Resources will advertise during the revised time period. A resume will not be accepted in lieu of a completed application. A candidate will not be considered without a timely submitted, complete application form. The application will be kept on file for two years and may be used to consider an applicant for all positions for which he or she might be qualified. Internal candidates interested in applying for other positions within the County must complete the online employment application form for any positions desired in the County.
- 8) No applications for a position are accepted after the published closing and/or receipt date. If there is not a sufficient pool of qualified candidates at the closing date, the position may be re-opened and re-advertised or remain open until filled.
- 9) The Human Resources Department or an outside agency may screen all applications received to ensure the applications are complete. Human Resources can assist departments by selecting qualified candidates to be interviewed for the vacant position.
- 10) Applications of qualified candidates will be made available through the applicant database to the supervisor of the advertised position or forwarded to the affected department by email, in a PDF, on disc, or by hard copies. Human Resources can provide the applications to an outside agency for review as well as assist with scheduling candidates for interviews.
- 11) Applicants may be disqualified for employment consideration when 1) they do not possess the qualifications for the job; 2) they have demonstrated an unsatisfactory employment record or personal record as evidenced by information contained on the application form or by the results of a reference check; 3) they have made false statements of any material facts or practiced deception in their application; 4) they are physically, mentally or otherwise unable to perform the essential functions or duties of the position with reasonable accommodations; 5) the applicant is not within the legal age limits prescribed by law; or 6) the applicant does not meet employment eligibility requirements.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 June 21, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Hiring Process</i>
<i>Policy Number 204.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The employment interview is part of the selection process. The primary function of the interview is to obtain data or to assess certain knowledge, skills and abilities of a candidate not available through review of applications. Certain guidelines will be observed to maximize the validity and reliability of the interview process as well as ensure the adherence to current EEO requirements.

The Human Resources Department or outside agency shall provide guidelines for the interview process, including selection of panel members, scheduling candidates, development of interview questions, etc.

- 1) The interview panel will be selected by the hiring department. A minimum of three individuals may serve on the interview panel. The interview panel shall consist of personnel who have expertise with the elements of the position and the panel should ensure objectivity and job knowledge. Relatives or applicant personal friends will be excluded from the panel.
 - a) Reasonable accommodations shall be made for disabled applicants to allow participation in the interview process.
- 2) The Department Head or Supervisor of the department in which the position vacancy exists, or the outside agency shall be responsible for the development of interview questions and standards for measurement of candidate responses. Consistency will be maintained in the questions asked of all candidates. The questions must be job related and designed to measure job knowledge, experience and education or to solicit responses that reflect those personal traits that are job related. Questions pertaining to race, sex, religion or marital status or other inquiries that directly or indirectly disclose such information are prohibited. Any questions that would indirectly divulge an applicant's age, national origin or other discriminatory factor shall be made in strict accordance with Law.
- 3) Inquiries as to birth date and proof of age are permitted as long as there is no explicit or implied preference for persons who are under forty (40) years of age and such inquiries are based on job requirements.
- 4) Inquiries as to an applicant's ability to read, write or speak foreign languages are permitted when such inquiries are based on job requirements.
- 5) Inquiries about whether an applicant has certain specified sensory, mental or physical disabilities which relate reasonably to fitness to perform the particular job, or whether an applicant has any disabilities or health problems which may affect work performance or which the employer should take into account in determining job placement are permitted. Other general inquiries that would tend to divulge disabilities or health conditions which do not

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 June 21, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Hiring Process</i>
<i>Policy Number 204.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

reasonably relate to fitness to perform the job are not permitted.

- 6) Each member of the interview panel scores the candidates independently.
- 7) Following the interview, the interview panel shall attempt to reach consensus and send the interview results and recommendations to the Human Resources Department or outside agency. If consensus cannot be reached, the final candidates, including their strengths and weaknesses, will be reported to the hiring authority.

REFERENCE CHECK

- 1) Before any offer of employment is extended, it is recommended that Human Resources, the hiring supervisory or an outside agency conduct all personal, background and reference checks on the final candidate(s). The information will include verification of employment, dates of employment, position responsibilities, work record, attendance record, strengths, weaknesses and other position related information.
- 2) No reference check or background investigation will be conducted without first notifying the applicant of the investigation.
- 3) Certain positions may be required by the Human Resources Department to undergo a thorough background check by a designated individual/agency.
- 4) Results of the reference check and/or background check will help determine the applicant's fitness for the position.

APPLICANT NOTIFICATION

- 1) After a candidate has been selected, the Department Head or Supervisor of the position that is being interviewed notifies Human Resources of the selected candidate.
- 2) Human Resources may extend the employment offer on behalf of the hiring Department and will request that the offer be accepted or rejected within a set number of days.
- 3) If the first offer is rejected, it will be decided whether to hire another candidate within the applicant pool or to re-advertise the position.
- 4) After a candidate accepts the employment offer, candidates who were interviewed are notified by phone or in writing by the interviewer that they were not selected for the position. Human Resources can assist the hiring department with correspondence to candidates who were not selected.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 June 21, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Hiring Process</i>
<i>Policy Number 204.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

APPOINTMENT

An employment confirmation letter should be forwarded to the final accepting candidate outlining the terms of employment. The letter is prepared and mailed by the Hiring Department or Human Resources stating all appointments are contingent upon satisfactory completion of a post-offer of employment physical and drug screening, motor vehicle record and criminal background review.

Within three days of the new hire employment date, and upon completion of Form I-9, Human Resources will submit a request through the E-Verify Employment Eligibility Verification system. Human Resources will immediately receive notice if the employee has received 1) Employment Authorization, 2) SSA Tentative Non-confirmation, or 3) DHS Verification in Process notice. The State of Georgia, in conjunction with Homeland Security, implemented this employment eligibility requirement July 2007.

APPLICANT EXPENSES

- 1) Unless approved by the County Manager, the County does not reimburse any applicant for travel costs in conjunction with the hiring process.
- 2) Relocation costs are paid in full by the Employee unless otherwise budgeted and approved by the County Manager.
- 3) The applicant should be advised of items 1 and 2 above before the interview.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Hours of Work</i>
<i>Policy Number 205.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a policy setting uniform hours of work for Employees.

II. POLICY

Normal working hours for Employees are eight (8) hours, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., five days per work week, with a one (1) hour unpaid lunch period. This does not include personnel engaged in shift work. Employees are expected to be at their work location and ready to begin work at the beginning of their work schedule. The lunch period will be scheduled to allow for continuous staffing of all offices with at least one person.

Employees may receive, but are not required to have, a rest period of not less than fifteen (15) minutes, on the County's time, for each four (4) hour work period. Rest periods should be scheduled as near as possible to the midpoint of each four (4) hour work period.

The County shall provide each Employee working normal business hours with one (1) hour for a meal break between the third and fifth hour of each shift. All rest breaks and lunch breaks shall be arranged by the Employee at the discretion of his/her Supervisor.

The standardization of working hours is necessary to provide:

- a) Continuity in access by and service to the citizenry.
- b) Facilitation of teamwork.
- c) Facilitation of Supervisory assistance.

Occasions may arise when the service to the citizen can be improved through the adjustment of an Employee's work hours. The Department Manager shall obtain approval of the Division Director for the adjustment in work hours, except for lunch period.

Individual requests for adjustment of working hours for personal reasons must be evaluated in light of the effect on the criteria enumerated in items a-c above.

Advance notice of anticipated tardiness is expected; notice of unavoidable tardiness is expected when possible. Failure to do so will be construed as an unexcused absence.

Notification by another Employee, friend or relative is not considered acceptable except in an emergency situation where the Employee is physically unable to make the notification.

Daily attendance records will be maintained by each department including date and time absent and reason for absence. Attendance shall be a consideration in determining promotions, transfers,

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Hours of Work</i>
<i>Policy Number 205.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

satisfactory completion of probationary periods and continued employment with the County. Frequent tardiness or other attendance irregularities shall be cause for disciplinary action. This may take the form of progressive discipline, including written warning, suspension and termination.

Hours for part-time and certain occupational groups of Employees may vary from the normal office hours noted above due to the nature of their duties and will be determined by the appropriate Department Manager or Department Head.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Modified Duty</i>
<i>Policy Number 206.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To provide for a uniform response and handling of a county-wide Modified Duty return to work program for Employees who have a Work-Related Injury or Illness.

These policies and procedures apply to any situation where an Employee is being treated for a Work-Related Injury or Illness and is determined fit by a County approved physician or practitioner to return to work on a temporary basis with modified duties.

Exception: This program is not intended to include Employees whose disability has been caused by an off-duty injury or illness.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the County, with the cooperation of all departments, to locate and assign Modified Duty, when feasible, to Employees who are temporarily disabled from their regular job as a result of Work-Related Injury or Illness. All such Modified Duty assignments are to be within the limitations as recommended by a County approved physician or practitioner.

- 1) The County approved physician/practitioner shall be encouraged to release temporarily disabled Employees to Modified Duty work status and to describe the Employees physical limitations in sufficient detail to enable the County to identify a suitable work assignment or to modify the tasks of the regular assignment which may be eliminated or adjusted.
- 2) The department in which the Employee works shall attempt to locate a work assignment or modify the work duties of the regular assignment within the limitations recommended by the physician or practitioner.
- 3) If the department is unable to assign suitable work, other departments within the division shall be contacted to determine if a suitable work assignment can be accommodated.
- 4) If no suitable assignment is available within the division, the Human Resources Department shall be contacted by the next business day in order to consider other alternatives. Human Resources will attempt to coordinate, where feasible, a temporary reassignment of the Employee on an inter-department basis. The Department to which the Employee is regularly assigned will continue to be charged for the Employee's wages and benefits.
- 5) The Employee will be responsible for reporting to their immediate Supervisor following each medical appointment and providing that person with the appropriate medical status slip from the authorized treating physician/practitioner. The Employee shall cooperate to the fullest extent possible by performing the tasks and duties within the modified assignment to the best of his/her ability.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Modified Duty</i>
<i>Policy Number 206.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

- 6) The immediate Supervisor will be responsible for monitoring the Employee's performance during the period of Modified Duty. Performance appraisals will be conducted at the appropriate intervals.
- 7) Employees shall be entitled to earn their usual base salary while on Modified Duty. It is the County's policy that no Overtime will be authorized unless the Employee is expressly given permission by the Division Director or Department Manager. All Overtime assignments must be approved in advance by the Division Director or Department Manager and must be in accordance with the work restrictions set forth by the attending physician/practitioner.
- 8) Upon release to regular work without restrictions, the Employee shall be returned to his/her regular work unit in the usual work assignment.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Nepotism</i>
<i>Policy Number 207.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish policy for the employment of Immediate or Extended Family members of a current County Employee.

II. POLICY

1. Employment of Relatives

It is the County's policy that Immediate or Extended Family members of then existing County Employees will not be employed in Regular Full-time or Regular Part-time positions where:

- a) One relative would have the authority to supervise, appoint, remove, discipline or evaluate the performance of the other.
- b) One relative would be responsible for auditing the work of the other.
- c) Other circumstances that may exist which would place the relatives in a situation of actual or reasonably foreseeable conflict between the County's interest and their own.

Columbia County shall not hire any member of the Immediate or Extended Family of any then serving member of the Board of Commissioners. Any Employee who was employed by the County prior to his/her relatives' election to the Board of Commissioners may continue to work for the County, provided, however, that the relative of such Employee who is a member of the Board of Commissioners shall take no part in and shall not seek, directly or indirectly, to exert any influence on any action involving the evaluation, compensation, promotion, demotion, discharge or status of such Employee.

This Policy applies to promotions, demotions, transfers, reinstatements and new Employees.

For the purpose of this section, Immediate or Extended Family shall be deemed to include spouses, parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, and the Immediate or Extended Family of spouses, or as approved by the Department Head.

2. Employees Who Marry

If two Employees marry while working in the same Department of County Government, one must apply for a vacant position and transfer to another department within ninety (90) days of the date of their marriage if both are to continue working for the County. Subject to the approval of the County Human Resources Director and the Division Directors involved, the two Employees may agree which will transfer.

In the event there is not approval of the agreement between the two Employees, or the two

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Nepotism</i>
<i>Policy Number 207.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Employees are not able to agree upon which should transfer, the Employee with the most recent hire date in the Department where both are working will be required to seek employment and transfer to another Department or resign the position. In the event the Employee has not been hired for a vacancy in another department within ninety (90) days of the date of the marriage, all continued rights of employment shall cease.

3. County Government Reorganization

If the County institutes a governmental reorganization which changes Departments such that family members would be working in the same Department, one of such Employees must transfer to other departments within ninety (90) days of the date of the reorganization if all family members are to continue working with the County. Subject to the approval of the Human Resources Director and the Division Directors involved, the affected Employees may agree which will transfer.

In the event there is not approval of the agreement between the affected Employees, or the Employees are unable to agree upon which should transfer, the Employee in the highest pay grade in the new Department will be allowed to remain and the other Employee will be required to transfer. If both Employees are of the same pay grade, the County Manager shall designate which Employee will transfer.

In the event there has been no position available for transfer at the end of ninety (90) days, the transferring Employee shall be transferred to any position designated by the County Human Resources Director which shall have the highest pay grade available for which such person is qualified. In such situation the transferring Employee's pay will not be reduced. Thereafter, the transferring Employee may transfer to any other Department in the County provided said Employee does not resume a position in the Department wherein a family member holds a position.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 16, 2016 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Outside Employment</i>
<i>Policy Number 208.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines to guard against conflicts of interest when involved in outside employment, and to assure an Employee's ability to render full service to the County.

II. POLICY

Outside employment shall mean any paid employment performed by an Employee in addition to his or her employment with the County. Such employment shall be governed by the following regulations:

- 1) Outside employment shall not interfere with the efficient performance of the Employee's duties for Columbia County.
- 2) Outside employment shall not involve the performance of duties which the Employee should perform as part of his or her employment with the County.
- 3) Outside employment shall not involve a conflict of interest or conflict with the Employee's duties to the County.
- 4) Outside employment shall not occur during the Employee's regular or assigned working hours unless the Employee is on Personal Time Off, compensatory leave or leave without pay.
- 5) No Employee granted permission to engage in outside employment shall work at said outside employment for a longer period of time than stated in his or her request for permission to engage in such employment.
- 6) Any Employee accepting outside employment under the terms of this policy shall make arrangements with the outside employer to be relieved of his or her outside duties if and when called upon for emergency service by the County.
- 7) The Outside Employment Form, if approved, will remain in effect for one year from the date of final approval signatures and must be reapproved annually. Any changes in Outside Employment or the employee's job duties, hours of work/days, or supervisor/manager/director will require a new form be submitted for approval to the appropriate Manager, Division Director or Department Head and Human Resources Director.

III. PROCEDURES

- 1) Any Employee desiring to perform outside employment shall first file a request in writing with his or her Department Head for permission to engage in same. The request shall state the type of employment, hours of work, name of the prospective employer and place of employment.
- 2) The Division Director may either disapprove or approve the request. The Division Director may also require special additional conditions be imposed on the request for Outside

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 16, 2016 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Outside Employment</i>
<i>Policy Number 208.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Employment, i.e. only works Outside Employment on specific days; employees may not work outside jobs at least 12 hours before reporting to duty with Columbia County, etc. If the Division Director approves the request, the Human Resources Director shall review the approval to be sure the regulations outlined above are satisfied.

- 3) Employees will be required to submit a new Request for Outside Employment approval form annually, or if there are any changes in Outside Employment hours of work/days or a change of Outside Employment employer.
- 4) If the Outside Employment is approved and causes a conflict with Columbia County Employment, the employee will discontinue the Outside Employment or resign his/her position from Columbia County.
- 5) The Division Director may withdraw or disapprove a previously approved Outside Employment request at any time.
- 6) No request is considered approved until the Division Director signs the Outside Employment Request form.
- 7) If the Division Director disapproves the request, he/she shall give the Employee a written explanation for the disapproval.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Performance Appraisal</i>
<i>Policy Number 209.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To provide a means to inform employees about the quality of his/her job performance and to uphold the principle of accountability.

II. POLICY

Regular Employees, who have been employed one (1) year or longer, or at such other time as specified by the Board of Commissioners, may be eligible for a performance adjustment to pay. Performance pay adjustments are generally effective the first day of the first full bi-weekly pay period in January or at such other time as specified by the Board of Commissioners. Regular Employees, who have completed new hire probation, may be eligible to receive a performance adjustment to pay on his or her first year of employment anniversary date. Subsequent annual adjustments to pay may be recommended by the Division Director during the regular annual performance review period. Performance pay adjustments are subject to continued and available funding approved by the Board of Commissioners.

III. PROCEDURES

1) Performance Appraisal

The Human Resources Director will announce annual, semi-annual and other special performance appraisal review periods. The annual performance review is required. Semi-annual or other special reviews may be performed at the discretion of the Supervisor, Department Manager or Division Director.

The established annual performance appraisal review period is October 1 through September 30 of the following year.

Department Managers and Supervisors will use the web-based performance appraisal system to complete the review period forms. Managers should complete the appraisal, meet with the Employee, obtain signatures and forward the original form to the Human Resources Department to be maintained in each individual employee personnel file.

2) Job Description

The Supervisor should review the Employee's job description as part of the appraisal process to ensure performance appraisal is based on the job tasks and responsibilities. A job audit by Human Resources can be requested if the Supervisor, Department Manager or Division Director has made changes in the position tasks, responsibilities, structure or other criteria.

3) Factor and Goal Performance Rating

Evaluate and rate each applicable factor and current goal(s) and to establish future goals.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Performance Appraisal</i>
<i>Policy Number 209.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

- 4) Performance Rating Justification
Justify performance factor rating averages that are below or above expectations in the *Comments* section.
- 5) Goal Setting
Identify methods the Employee can take to improve performance or objectives and outline an action plan for completion. Identify job or continuing education training that may assist the Employee in meeting objectives. The Human Resources Department will assist with providing training resources.
- 6) Comments
Employees, who have been granted access to review his or her personal evaluation on-line, may respond with comments to the evaluation via the web-based system, in writing or during the Performance Review discussion process.
- 7) Performance Appraisal Review
The Employee is recommended to sign the appraisal form as an acknowledgment that it was completed and that he or she is aware of its contents. The Supervisor, likewise, is recommended to sign the form. The completed form shall be reviewed by the Division Director then sent to Human Resources to be reviewed by the Human Resources Director and placed in the Employee's file.
- 8) Performance Based Salary Adjustments to Pay
Recommendations for annual adjustments to pay are subject to review and approval by the Management and Internal Services Committee and the Board of Commissioners, whose determination shall be final. The Oversight Committee may change the recommended salary adjustment or return it for reconsideration due to budget considerations, the evidence of rating error, bias or other relevant factors.
- 9) Appeals of Ratings
Performance ratings may be appealed by the Employee within five (5) working days of the completion date of the rating up to the next highest Supervisor, who shall respond in writing within three (3) working days. If the Employee is still not satisfied, he or she may make a final appeal to the Human Resources Director within five (5) working days of written receipt from the Supervisor. The Human Resources Director shall hold a conference with the Employee and investigate the Employee's complaint and render a decision in writing within five (5) working days of the Human Resources Director's conference with the Employee and Supervisor.
- 10) Employees With Less Than One (1) Year Service
Employees, who are on new hire probation, are not eligible for a performance pay adjustment. Employees who successfully complete their probationary period may be eligible to receive a performance pay adjustment based upon a rating of his or her performance on his or her first-year anniversary date. Exceptions must be approved by the County Manager and Board of

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Performance Appraisal</i>
<i>Policy Number 209.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Commissioners.

11) Employees With One (1) or More Years' Service

Regular Employees, who have completed new hire probation after the annual performance appraisal period has ended, may be eligible to receive a performance adjustment on his or her first year anniversary date. The percentage recommendation will be based upon a rating of his or her performance and must be within the prior year performance adjustment guidelines.

Employees, who have completed one (1) or more years of service and are placed on disciplinary probation due to violations of conduct, unsatisfactory performance or other policy violations, will not be eligible to receive a performance adjustment. Exceptions must be approved by the County Manager and Board of Commissioners.

12) Employees Completing One (1) Year of Service during the October, November or December Annual Performance Review Period

Employees, whose one year anniversary date falls during the months of October through December and who have successfully completed probation, may be eligible to receive an annual performance adjustment in addition to his or her one year anniversary date salary adjustment. Recommendations are subject to approval of the Division Director. Exceptions must be approved by the County Manager and Board of Commissioners.

13) Funds

The Board of Commissioners will approve all recommendations for salary adjustments to pay based on performance. Continued availability of funds is subject to final approvals by the Board of Commissioners.

14) Payroll Adjustments

The Human Resources Department will prepare and present a list of recommended performance adjustments to the Management and Internal Services Committee and, if requested, to the Board of Commissioners. After approvals are received, the recommendations to salary adjustments will be entered in each respective Employee payroll file by Human Resources. A list will be forwarded to the Finance Department for personnel line code adjustments to each respective department and fund.

15) Records Responsibility

The Human Resources Department will retain originals of the performance appraisal form(s) and approved annual and incremental pay adjustments in the Employee official personnel file.

Human Resources will provide administrative and management oversight of manual and web-based appraisal processes, Supervisor training and assist Supervisors and Managers, as necessary.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Personal Information and Personnel Records</i>
<i>Policy Number 210.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To identify what types of information may be released from an Employee's personnel file and to establish general guidelines for an Employee to review the contents of his or her file.

II. POLICY

1) Confidentiality

Subject to the provisions of the O.C.G.A. 50-18-70, Georgia Open Records Act and other laws of the State of Georgia, Employee personnel records covered under these policies and procedures and all other records and materials relating to the administration of the Career Service personnel system shall be considered confidential and the property of the County. Information that is obtained in the course of official duties shall not be released by an Employee charged with this responsibility as part of official duties except as required by law.

2) Personnel Transactions

All appointments, separations and other personnel transactions shall be recorded by the Human Resources Department. A separate file folder shall be prepared and maintained for each Employee and shall contain the original or a copy of all pertinent documents.

3) Public Inspection

All personnel records shall be subject to public inspections as required by the Georgia Open Records Act and other laws of the State of Georgia. The following information relative to Employees and former Employees shall be accessible to the Human Resources Director, County Manager, Board of Commissioners, Department Head concerned, Civil Service Commission and the Employee involved: classification or job title and salary, selection records and performance rating reports. Other personnel information may be made available for official purposes at the discretion of the Human Resources Director.

4) Destruction of Records

Employee service records shall be kept in accordance with Federal and State regulations and retention schedules after termination of employment.

5) Personal Information

The Human Resources Department shall be informed by the Employee when there are any changes in personal information, i.e. tax deductions, marital status, life event changes, phone or address changes, in order to maintain accurate records. The employee can make many of these changes through the Employee Self Service Center.

6) Review of Personnel File

The Employee may view his or her personnel records at any mutually convenient time and in the presence of a Human Resources Department representative. Examination of personnel files will be limited to normal business hours.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Probation Period</i>
<i>Policy Number 211.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish policy and procedure for the probation or introductory period for new Employees.

II. POLICY

New hire Employees, except those Employees who serve at the pleasure of the Board of Commissioners, serving in authorized Regular Full-Time or Regular Part-Time positions must serve a period of probation. Employees must complete a minimum six (6) month probation period, however, this may be extended up to one (1) year.

The probation period is designed to give the Employee time to learn the position and to give the Supervisor time to evaluate the Employee's potential and performance. During the established probationary period, the County reserves the right to terminate the Probationary Employee's service on the basis of any reasons deemed sufficient by the County or without any cause at all.

If an Employee is unable to perform the work, the person must be terminated as early as possible. Probationary Employees who will not be retained shall be notified of termination in writing by the Department Head at any time during the probationary period and a copy of said notification shall be retained in the personnel files.

Prior to the end of the probation period, the Employee shall be formally evaluated and shall be provided written documentation of progress. It is expected that informal evaluations will be conducted during the course of the probation period to assess performance and to advise Employees of expectations regarding performance. Significant job deficiency(ies) shall be documented in the Employee's personnel file. These evaluations provide the necessary justification for retention of the person as a Regular Employee.

At the discretion of the Department Head, the probationary period may be extended up to one (1) year from date of hire. This is only after an evaluation of the situation, the Employee's abilities, and demonstrated potential. A probation period may be extended if recommended by the Employee's immediate Supervisor and approved by the Division Director.

If an emergency arises during an Employee's probationary period, which requires a leave of absence, such time off, if granted will not be considered as time worked.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Re-Employment</i>
<i>Policy Number 212.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a policy for re-employment.

II. POLICY

Any former Regular Employee who resigned from the County in good standing is eligible for re-employment.

Persons interested in re-employment should file a completed employment application form with the Human Resources Department. The application will be considered with the regular other applicants as described in the Hiring Process Policy.

An individual re-employed in his/her former position may be paid at the same rate of pay as of the time he/she left the County, provided however that the re-employment is within one (1) month of the previous resignation.

The compensation of an Employee re-hired to a position other than the former position will be subject to provisions for new hires.

Reinstatement in the retirement plan will be made in accordance with the rules and regulations of the plan.

Personal Time Off eligibility will be based on previous County service provided that the re-employment is within one (1) month of the previous resignation.

The date of hire will take into account the person's previous service with the County, however, future pay increases will coincide with the re-employment date.

The individual's previous personnel file will be re-activated once re-employed by the County provided re-employment is within one (1) month after the original resignation.

All individuals re-employed by the County must complete a new probationary period.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Special Employment Programs</i>
<i>Policy Number 213.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a uniform policy and procedure for all special employment programs.

II. POLICY

The Human Resources Department is responsible for the coordination of all special employment programs funded by external agencies (i.e. internships).

III. PROCEDURE

Department Heads will forward all requests for participation in special employment programs to the Human Resources Department for coordination with the appropriate agency(ies).

The requesting department will develop a scope of work and qualifications statement to be used in the recruitment and selection of the program participants and in the definition of tasks to be performed during the period of employment.

The provider agency will review scope of work, qualifications, training, level of supervision and safety for appropriateness.

The Human Resources Department will maintain records on program participants including any service agreement between the County and provider agency, scope of work and qualifications statement and personal emergency data.

Department Heads/Supervisors shall provide the Human Resources Department with regular performance evaluations on program participants and feedback on program strengths and weaknesses for overall evaluation by the County.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 17, 2014 August 18, 2015 December 15, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Work Periods</i>
<i>Policy Number 214.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish the official work week for purposes of complying with the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), as amended.

II. POLICY

The work week for County Employees shall be a seven (7) day period beginning on Sunday at 7:00 a.m. and continuing to the following Sunday at 6:59 a.m. Fire and Rescue Services work week begins on Sunday at 7:00 a.m. and ends the following Sunday at 6:59 a.m.

III. LIMITATIONS

This Policy shall not apply to exempt executive, professional, administrative, or other positions exempt from the FLSA, as amended.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 15, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Flextime</i>
<i>Policy Number 215.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To allow employees flexibility in scheduling their work hours within the policy requirements described below subject to approval by the County Manager.

II. POLICY

Individual departments may use a flextime work schedule, subject to the following conditions:

- The work week for County Employees is a seven (7) day period beginning on Sunday at 7:00 a.m. and continuing to Sunday at 6:59 a.m.
- The normal workweek for non-exempt employees of 40 hours must be observed.
- The Department Manager, with the approval of the Division Director or major Department Head, has the discretion to determine if staffing coverage is adequate and sufficient to meet the operating requirements of the department and public service needs.
- Flextime schedules should be evaluated periodically.
- The accrual and use of Personal Time Off, Catastrophic Leave and Personal Holidays will be the same for employees working flextime as those working a standard schedule.
- The department management may implement, continue, discontinue or modify flextime work schedules. The department management has the right to return an employee to a standard work schedule.
- Department Managers will obtain approval by the appropriate Division Director or Department Head for the flextime schedule requests. After approval has been obtained, the schedules should be forwarded to the Human Resources Director for review.

III. DEFINITIONS

Exempt Employees – Executive, professional, administrative, or other positions exempt from the requirements of the FLSA, as amended.

Flextime – A schedule by which an employee may work an alternate work schedule within specific limits dictated by the needs of the job and is subject to management review and approval.

Flextime Policy – Full-time employees, who are non-exempt, must complete a minimum of forty (40) hours work within the established seven-day workweek period.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 15, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Flexitime</i>
<i>Policy Number 215.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

Department Manager – The department manager will ensure that flexitime is administered consistently and equitably within the department, that flexitime arrangements conform to County policy and that staffing is always adequate to meet the operational requirements of the department and public needs.

Employee – The employee will plan and organize his or her time to meet the job requirements established by the department manager and will inform the supervisor when coverage is not adequate.

V. EVALUATING FLEXTIME SCHEDULES

Departments currently participating in flexitime scheduling will evaluate the schedules periodically to ensure operational and public needs are being met.

Departments should evaluate any significant effects resulting from the flexitime schedule. Collected data should include the following:

- a) Absenteeism
- b) Turnover
- c) Punctuality
- d) Non-exempt overtime
- e) Production statistics, workload and customer service issues

The Division Director and Department Manager should review the data for any inconsistencies or problem areas. The department should also survey the opinions of staff and management.

VI. ANNUAL REVIEW

All flexitime schedules should be reviewed annually to ensure they are viable and meeting department, employee and citizen needs.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 17, 2014 December 15, 2015 September 21, 2021 February 15, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Service Recognition</i>
<i>Policy Number 216.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a policy and procedures for the annual recognition of active and retired employees for their service to the County government. Employees who have provided and are currently providing military service for the armed forces are also recognized as part of the annual recognition.

II. RECOGNITION AWARD DEFINITIONS

County Service shall for service recognition purposes mean the sum of all previous and current salaried employment in a full time or part time County government authorized position. Temporary or seasonal employment does not qualify.

Service Recognition Award pin shall be given to an employee based on five-year increments of total creditable years of service at the annual ceremony.

Retirement Recognition Award gift shall be given to an employee upon completion of a minimum fifteen years total County service the calendar year after his/her official retirement date.

Military Recognition Award name plate with the specific armed forces branch and rank of the County employee will be placed on the Armed Forces master plaque housed in the Government Center Auditorium.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

The Human Resources Director provides management oversight of the program to ensure all eligible employees are recognized annually for service to the County.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 REVISED: August 17, 2010 June 17, 2014 September 19, 2017 May 21, 2019 September 21, 2021 March 15, 2022</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Classification and Compensation</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 217.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i></p>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish procedures for classifying and compensating Employees which are nondiscriminatory and competitive.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

The Human Resources Director is responsible for preparation, maintenance and revision of a Classification Plan and Compensation Plan for all County Exempt and Non-exempt Employees subject to approval by the Board of Commissioners.

III. POLICY

The County Classification and Compensation Plans will be maintained to ensure that positions similar in classification, duties performed and responsibilities assumed are compensated fairly and equitably without regard to political affiliation, race, color, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria, and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights as citizens.

CLASSIFICATION PLAN MAINTENANCE

Position Vacancies

As vacancies occur in Allocated Positions, the Division Director or Department Head prepares the Human Resources Requisition Form or requests assistance from Human Resources, attaches supporting documentation, i.e. letter of resignation, and submits the form to the Human Resources Director for processing. The form must be approved by the County Manager prior to advertising for a replacement.

Reclassifying Positions

A position may need to be reclassified if the position has experienced significant changes in responsibilities, duties or Supervisory control. Position reclassifications are primarily processed as part of the budget process, but extenuating circumstances may require a position be reclassified during other times in the fiscal year.

A revised position description and a completed Human Resources Requisition Form with supporting documentation attached must be submitted by the Division Director or Department Head to the Human Resources Director.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 REVISED: August 17, 2010 June 17, 2014 September 19, 2017 May 21, 2019 September 21, 2021 March 15, 2022</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Classification and Compensation</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 217.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i></p>

Requests for Reclassification of a position and movement to a higher or lower salary grade based on changes in the position requirements, skills or responsibilities, will be reviewed by the Human Resources Director and approved or disapproved by the County Manager. Budget impact will be reviewed by the Internal Services Director. If approved, the request will be submitted to the, appropriate Oversight Committee and the Board of Commissioners for final approval. If disapproved, the request will be returned to the requesting Department Head with comments regarding the reason for disapproval.

Department or section reorganization or restructuring may require submission of revised position descriptions for affected Allocated Positions to the Human Resources Director.

New Positions

The Department Head must submit requests for New Positions to the Human Resources Director prior to the new fiscal year budget review process. The request will be reviewed by the Internal Services Director, County Manager, Oversight Committee and if recommended, submitted for final adoption with the fiscal year budget.

Requests for a New Position may be required during the fiscal year due to extenuating circumstances, (i.e. State mandates positions to maintain compliance). The Department Head for the respective area will complete a Human Resources Requisition Form, attach supporting documentation to the form and submit the form to the Human Resources Director for review and approval. The County Manager will review and approve or disapprove the request. Budget impact will be reviewed by the Internal Services Director. If approved, the request will be submitted to the appropriate Oversight Committee and the Board of Commissioners for final approval. If disapproved, the request will be returned to the requesting Department Head with comments regarding the reason for disapproval.

Position Descriptions

The position descriptions are descriptive and not restrictive. The use of a particular description as to duties, qualifications or other factors shall not be held to exclude others of similar kind or quality.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 REVISED: August 17, 2010 June 17, 2014 September 19, 2017 May 21, 2019 September 21, 2021 March 15, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Classification and Compensation</i>
<i>Policy Number 217.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

IV. HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Human Resources Director is responsible for developing, maintaining, interpreting, and administering the Classification and Compensation Plans. The Human Resources Director will ensure a competitive and equitable compensation program is maintained by conducting salary surveys and review of position descriptions.

Official Copy of Plan

The Human Resources Director shall be responsible for maintaining an official copy of the Classification and Compensation Plans. A copy of the official plans shall be available for the general public upon request.

Official Classification Titles

Titles for Position Classifications as listed in the Classification Plan shall be used on all personnel documents and payroll records and in the preparation of the operating budget. Working titles for internal department use should be used by departments only for purposes other than personnel, payroll or budget documents.

V. COMPENSATION PLAN

The Compensation Plan is implemented as follows:

- 1) The salary matrix is composed of general pay grades, fire rescue pay grades and contract rates.
- 2) Each general and fire rescue pay grade has a minimum, midpoint and maximum salary.
- 3) The minimum and maximum salaries in each general and fire rescue pay grade have a forty percent (40%) spread, 20% below and 20% above the midpoint.
- 4) Funds for performance or other adjustments to pay approved during the fiscal year budget adoption may be implemented January of the succeeding calendar year or at such other time as determined by the Board of Commissioners. Performance or other adjustments to pay are subject to approval by the Board of Commissioners and the availability of funds.
- 5) Parameters and criteria for pay for performance or other adjustments to pay will be determined by the Board of Commissioners and announced by County Administration.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 REVISED: August 17, 2010 June 17, 2014 September 19, 2017 May 21, 2019 September 21, 2021 March 15, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Classification and Compensation</i>
<i>Policy Number 217.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

- 6) Management and Internal Services Committee will review exceptions and maintain oversight of dollar adjustments.

APPOINTMENT RATES

New Employee

A new Employee may be appointed at the minimum rate of pay for the Position Classification of the Allocated Position to which he/she has been appointed.

Exceptions

Exceptions may be made to allow an initial appointment in excess of the minimum rate of pay as indicated below:

- a) Appointments may be recommended at a rate up to ten percent (10%) above the minimum rate for the position if funds are available in the hiring department personnel budget. Criteria supporting the recommendation will be based on qualifications that exceed the minimum for the position. Recommendations will be submitted to the County Manager for final approval.
- b) The Department Head may recommend a percentage higher than ten percent (10%) for exceptional requirements or specialized criteria to fulfill the responsibilities of a position. Justification supporting the request shall be submitted in writing to the Human Resources Director for review. If approved, the request will be submitted to the County Manager, appropriate Oversight Committee and the Board of Commissioners. No commitment to compensation higher than ten percent (10%) above minimum rate may be extended to a prospective Employee without final approval by the Board of Commissioners.
- c) If a reasonable recruiting effort has failed to provide qualified candidates for a vacant professional, specialized or technical position, the Human Resources Director may recommend to the Board of Commissioners that the position be reclassified and adjusted to a competitive salary level.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 REVISED: August 17, 2010 June 17, 2014 September 19, 2017 May 21, 2019 September 21, 2021 March 15, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Classification and Compensation</i>
<i>Policy Number 217.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

VI. TRAINEE

For certain classes of work in which the formalized training period is of unusual duration and the needs of the County can best be met by placing an individual in a training capacity, and upon recommendation of the Department Head, the Human Resources Director may designate such position be at a salary rate up to ten percent (10%) below the minimum rate for the position grade.

VII. RATE OF PAY INCREASE

An Employee may receive a rate of pay increase by means of performance review, anniversary date adjustments, salary study adjustments, or by promotion.

- a) Rate of pay increases shall become effective as designated by the Board of Commissioners.
- b) Rate of pay increases may be recommended by the Division Director or Department Manager as part of the annual performance review or to maintain a competitive rate for professional, technical, or specialized positions subject to budget constraints and approval by the Board of Commissioners.

VIII. PROMOTION

An Employee may be promoted when:

- a) The Employee is changed from his or her position to an Allocated Position and Classification that has a higher pay grade.
- b) The Employee's Position is reclassified to a Position Classification having a higher pay grade. All reclassifications of positions must be approved by the Board of Commissioners.
- c) The Employee may be promoted within or between departments.

Compensation Upon Promotion

When an Employee is promoted to an Allocated Position in a Position Classification with a higher pay grade, a salary increase may be granted:

- a) Up to ten percent (10%) above the Employee's current salary; or

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 REVISED: August 17, 2010 June 17, 2014 September 19, 2017 May 21, 2019 September 21, 2021 March 15, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Classification and Compensation</i>
<i>Policy Number 217.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

- b) Up to the minimum of the new classification or whichever is greater.

Promotion Criteria

Promotions will be based on qualifications and merit. Employees receiving promotions may be required to undergo a criminal background check and/or to provide a current motor vehicle record. Employees may be required to enter a special probationary period for up to six (6) months after the promotion to allow the supervisor an opportunity to evaluate employee performance in the new position.

Promotional opportunities may be extended to qualified applicants already employed by Columbia County.

IX. DEMOTION

An Employee shall be demoted when:

- a) The Employee is changed from his/her position to an Allocated Position with a Position Classification that has a lower pay grade.
- b) The Employee's Allocated Position is reclassified to a Position Classification with a lower pay grade.
- c) The Employee may be demoted within a department or division provided there is a position vacancy.
- d) If a promoted, reclassified, transferred or demoted Employee fails to achieve satisfactory performance in the New Position, he or she may apply for position vacancies in other departments. If the Employee is not successfully transferred to another position suitable to his/her qualifications and abilities, he/she will be terminated from employment for failure to perform satisfactorily in the position.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 REVISED: August 17, 2010 June 17, 2014 September 19, 2017 May 21, 2019 September 21, 2021 March 15, 2022</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Classification and Compensation</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 217.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i></p>

Compensation Upon Demotion

If an Employee is demoted:

- a) An Employee’s rate of pay may remain unchanged or, except as set forth in subsection c. immediately below, may be reduced upon the recommendation of the Division Director or Department Head.
- b) An Employee’s rate of pay may not be reduced when the Employee’s position is reclassified to a Position Classification having a lower pay grade.
- c) Anything herein to the contrary, notwithstanding, if a demotion is the result of a disciplinary action, the Employee’s rate of pay may be reduced.

X. LATERAL TRANSFER

An Employee shall be laterally transferred when:

- a) The Employee is moved to an Allocated Position in the same Position Classification or to an Allocated Position in another Position Classification having the same pay grade.
- b) The Employee’s Allocated Position is reclassified to a different Position Classification having the same pay grade.

Compensation Upon Transfer

An Employee shall not be eligible for a salary increase at the time of a lateral transfer.

XI. PAY FOR PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Pay for part-time employment in an Allocated Position shall be equivalent to the rate of pay for full-time employment in similar Allocated Positions. Under extenuating circumstances, a Part-time Employee may be paid at a varying rate with written approval of the Human Resources Director.

XII. OVERTIME

Except for special situations as specified in the Fair Labor Standards Act, Overtime is work beyond forty (40) hours in a workweek. Overtime work performed by a Non-exempt employee must be authorized by the Employee’s immediate Supervisor. Overtime will be paid at one and

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 REVISED: August 17, 2010 June 17, 2014 September 19, 2017 May 21, 2019 September 21, 2021 March 15, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Classification and Compensation</i>
<i>Policy Number 217.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

one-half (1 ½) times the regular rate of pay and will be in accordance with the provisions of the FLSA as amended. Public Safety employees, Columbia County Sheriff’s Office and Columbia County Fire Rescue personnel may be paid two times the employee’s regular rate of pay when such overtime is earned by working a special event for the Columbia County Community Services Division or performing duties for the Columbia Judicial Circuit when the employee is not on regular duty.

As a general rule, Compensatory Time is discouraged, however, a Division Director or Department Head may, at his or her discretion, allow employees to work additional hours during a work week, but the excess hours must be used before the end of the work week. If the employee is unable to use the excess hours by the end of the workweek, the hours must be paid as Overtime.

XIII. BUDGET LIMITATIONS

The implementation of policies and procedures pertaining to payment of salaries or rate of pay adjustments are contingent upon the continued availability of funds and may be increased, decreased or eliminated according to the availability of funds as approved by the Board of Commissioners.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND AMENDED: June 17, 2014 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Recording, Utilization and Auditing of Overtime</i>
<i>Policy Number 218.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish policy guidelines for the recording, utilization and auditing of Overtime performed by Employees of the County.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

The Finance Department shall ensure that a permanent record of Overtime accrued is kept on all Employees based on information provided by Department Heads, and that the proper payment is made and accounted for at the end of each pay period.

The Finance Department shall ensure that eligible Employees are compensated for all earned Overtime.

III. POLICY

In the event of any conflict between this policy and the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) the FLSA shall control. The Human Resources Director will identify Exempt and Non-exempt position classifications.

Exempt Employees as described in accordance with the FLSA are exempt from Overtime

- 1) Non-exempt employees will be compensated for Overtime at the rate of one and one-half (1 ½) hours for each hour worked in excess of the number of hours allowed per work week as designated under the FLSA.

IV. DEPARTMENT MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

Department Manager

- 1) It shall be the responsibility of each Department Manager to equitably administer the use of Overtime within their respective departments.
- 2) Department Managers are the authorized authorities for the approval of Overtime..
- 3) Department Managers shall ensure that all Overtime earned is recorded on the Employee's time sheet as it occurs.
- 4) Department Managers will make every effort to minimize the utilization of Overtime within their departments.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND AMENDED: June 17, 2014 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Recording, Utilization and Auditing of Overtime</i>
<i>Policy Number 218.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

- 5) Temporary adjustments in working hours or realignment of duties within the department should be considered as alternatives to the use of Overtime. Overtime shall be considered necessary only in emergency situations, wherein additional effort is needed to complete a task which is critical in nature.

- 6) As a general rule, Compensatory Time is discouraged, however, a Division Director or Department Head may, at his or her discretion, allow employees to work additional hours during a work week, but the excess hours must be used before the end of the work week. If the employee is unable to use the excess hours by the end of the work week, the hours must be paid as Overtime.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 15, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Date of Hire Service</i>
<i>Policy Number 219.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish definitions and a policy for administering the date of hire and service criteria for County Employees.

II. DEFINITIONS

Date of Hire shall be the first day of work of the individual's current employment with the County.

Original Hire Date If an Employee previously worked for Columbia County then left employment and is later rehired, this date shall relate to the Original term of employment.

Service An Employee who leaves the County in good standing shall have prior continuous service bridged for purposes of Service Recognition

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Garnishment</i>
<i>Policy Number 220.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To provide a procedure for handling garnishment of an Employee's wages.

II. PROCEDURE

Any notice of garnishment which is served on the County will be forwarded immediately to the Finance Department.

The Finance Department will calculate and process the amount of wages to be withheld from the Employee's wages.

The Finance Department will produce a check for the garnished amount and will forward to the Court as directed.

The Finance Department will notify the Employee that the garnishment has been received. No employee will be discharged by reason of the fact that his or her earnings have been subjected to garnishment for any one indebtedness. Repeated garnishments, however, may be considered cause for disciplinary action in accordance with State law [O.C.G.A. § 18-4-7].

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 16, 2015 September 19, 2017	TOPIC: <i>Pay Periods</i>
<i>Policy Number 221.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a uniform pay period schedule for County Employees.

II. POLICY

County Employees are paid bi-weekly every other Thursday. There are twenty-six (26) bi-weekly pay periods in the year. If a pay day falls on a holiday (i.e. Thanksgiving Day), the day of pay shall be the last working day before the normal pay day.

Elected Officials and Magistrates pay period. Paychecks are distributed to Elected Officials and Magistrates once a month. The monthly payroll is generated and distributed by the fifteenth (15th) of each month.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Payroll Deductions</i>
<i>Policy Number 222.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To define required and voluntary payroll deductions for County Employees.

II. POLICY

The following deductions are required by law from each Employee paycheck:

- a) State Income Tax withholding
- b) Federal Income Tax withholding
- c) Social Security and Medicare Tax withholding
- d) Deductions authorized by law, i.e. garnishments, child support recovery

Additional optional deductions requested by the Employee may include:

- a) Charitable contributions
- b) Credit Union
- c) Deferred compensation
- d) Membership dues
- e) Health insurance premium
- f) Dental insurance premium
- g) Supplemental products
- h) Miscellaneous deductions

Paychecks are distributed either electronically via email address or printed hard copy. With each paycheck, the County Employee receives a statement of deductions and earnings that itemizes the various deductions made, cumulative totals and leave balances.

It is the Employee's responsibility to maintain current payroll deduction information with the Human Resources Department. Employees requiring additions, deletions or changes to their payroll deductions should contact the Human Resources Department.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Time Sheet / Preparation of Payroll / Method of Payment</i>
<i>Policy Number 223.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for preparation of Employee time sheets and County payrolls.

II. POLICY

Time Sheets are to be completed by all Non-exempt Employees either electronically or by hard copy. The time sheet shall include the following information: Employee name; Employee ID number, department, pay period, hours worked, holiday time taken, Personal Time Off taken, Catastrophic Leave taken, leave without pay taken, military leave, etc. The Employee and Supervisor must each sign the time sheet evidencing their approval as to the correctness and accuracy thereof.

Exempt Employees will complete a time sheet only when using Personal Time Off, Catastrophic Leave taken or other types of leave.

Bi-weekly salaries and wages will be paid by check or direct deposit. Manual checks will be distributed to the Employee's Department Manager or authorized representative. Electronic payroll notices will be sent to the employee designated e-mail address.

An Employee's paycheck may be released to the Employee's spouse, designated family member or to another person only if authorized in writing by the Employee.

Payroll records shall be maintained by the County in accordance with the retention schedule.

Falsification of payroll records is reason for discipline up to termination of employment.

Employees may direct inquiries concerning payroll matters to the Finance Department.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 16, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Working out of Classification Pay</i>
<i>Policy Number 224.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To define and delineate circumstances when an Employee will receive compensation for the performance of duties in a supervisory or higher Position Classification than the Position Classification of his/her Allocated Position.

II. POLICY

- 1) Compensation for Working out of Position Classification is provided as monetary recognition to an Employee for the assumption and performance of duties normally performed by an Employee of a supervisory or higher Position Classification, subject to budget constraints. Exceptions may require Board of Commission approval for funding.
- 2) The assumption and performance of the duties of the supervisory or higher Position Classification must encompass the full range of responsibilities of the higher Position Classification. This shall not apply to temporary assignments which are made pursuant to prior mutual agreement between the Employee and his or her immediate Supervisor for the purpose of providing a training opportunity to the Employee, for a mutually agreed upon period of time.
- 3) The performance of such duties must be for an extended period of time, wherein a need exists to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of a vacant Allocated Position. An extended period of time is generally considered as an assumption of duties and responsibilities that will last in excess of twelve (12) weeks.
- 4) Working out of Position Classification compensation shall be allowed only after written recommendation of the Division Director and concurrence by the Human Resources Director and County Manager. The recommendation shall be submitted to the Board of Commissioners for final approval. Recommendation and designation shall be accomplished prior to the assumption of higher Position Classification responsibilities.
- 5) The Employee's compensation may be increased to the starting salary of the higher Position Classification in which the Employee is substituting, or up to ten percent (10%) of the Employee's current salary, whichever is greater.
- 6) When the temporary assignment is completed, the Employee's salary will be readjusted to its previous level or the level which it would have attained, including general salary adjustments and within range increases, if the Working out of Position Classification pay had not been made. The Employee's date of hire and anniversary date will remain unchanged throughout the temporary assignment.

COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 17, 2014 December 18, 2018 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Emergencies/Inclement Weather/Adverse Conditions</i>
<i>Policy Number 225.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for paying employee compensation when inclement weather, adverse conditions or other emergencies cause the County Manager to declare an Official Closure of County Government offices and services to the general public and/or staff.

II. OFFICIAL CLOSURE – COUNTY OFFICES/SERVICES TO GENERAL PUBLIC

A. Mission Critical Employees

- 1) Employees whose duties and responsibilities are deemed mission critical shall be designated by the Division Director / Department Heads / Managers to respond in the event of a designated period of emergency. These designated employees below the level of Division Director or the equivalent are eligible for overtime pay and holiday compensation as provided by this policy.
- 2) Mission Critical Non-exempt employees who work during the Official Closure period will receive compensation for all hours worked during the period at the appropriate straight time rate; however, any actual hours worked above forty (40) hours during the workweek will be compensated in compliance with FLSA overtime provisions.
- 3) Mission Critical Exempt Employees who work during the Official Closure will receive an equivalent amount of Personal Time Off (PTO) hours for each hour worked during the official closure up to a maximum of 8 hours for each day. The Department Head will report the hours worked by the employee to the Finance Department. The finance department employees will manually adjust the PTO hours appropriately in affected employee's PTO account.

B. Non-Mission Critical Employees

- 1) When inclement weather or other adverse conditions prompt Official Closure of County offices and services for the general public, and the inclement weather restricts Non-Mission Critical staff from the regular business operating schedules and work periods, employee compensation will be paid in the following manner:
 - a) Employees who report to work at their scheduled time, and work until the Official Closure Time, will not be charged personal leave.
 - b) Employees who leave work prior to the Official Closure announcement will have the corresponding amount of time deducted from personal leave or receive leave without pay from the time of their departure until the official closing time.
 - c) Employees who were scheduled to work and could not work due to the Official Closure

COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 17, 2014 December 18, 2018 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Emergencies/Inclement Weather/Adverse Conditions</i>
<i>Policy Number 225.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

will be paid as though the time was worked.

- d) Employees who do not report to work as scheduled in anticipation of Official Closure will have the corresponding amount of time deducted from personal leave or receive leave without pay.
- e) Employees who were on personal leave during the Official Closure period will still have the time deducted from the appropriate leave account and will not be eligible for inclement weather pay.
- f) Employees who do not report to work at the official reopening time will have the corresponding amount of time deducted from his/her personal leave or will receive leave without pay.

III. OFFICIAL CLOSURE – SERVICES TO GENERAL PUBLIC ONLY

- 1) When inclement weather, adverse conditions or other emergencies prompt Official Closure of County services for the general public only, both Mission Critical and Non-Mission Critical employees are expected to work and their compensation will be processed in the following manner:
 - a) Employees who report to work at their scheduled time and work their regular work schedule will be paid their regular rate of pay for the workday.
 - b) Employees who leave work due to inclement weather, adverse conditions or an emergency will have the corresponding amount of time deducted from his/her personal leave or receive leave without pay from the time of their departure until the end of their normal workday.
 - c) Employees who were scheduled to work and do not work will have that amount of time deducted from his/her personal leave or receive leave without pay.
 - d) Employees who were on personal leave during the inclement weather, adverse conditions or other emergency will be charged the appropriate leave.
 - e) Non-exempt employees who work during inclement weather, adverse conditions or an emergency will receive compensation for all hours worked during the period at his/her regular straight time rate, however, any actual hours worked above forty (40) hours during the work week will be compensated in compliance with FLSA overtime provisions.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 16, 2016 September 19, 2017	TOPIC: <i>On Call Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 226.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish policy guidelines for an on-call program and to identify Employees who accept designated on-call status during their non-working time.

II. EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION

On-call Employees are non-exempt employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) who agree to serve on an on-call basis during specified periods of non-working hours. Exempt employees, under the FLSA may, as part of their job description, are required to work on-call.

III. RECORDS

The Finance Department shall ensure that a permanent record of on-call status is kept on all non-exempt Employees based on information approved by Department Heads and that the proper payments of on-call supplements are made and accounted for at the end of each pay period.

Random audits of the on-call status record for each Employee will be conducted.

IV. POLICY

In the event of any conflict between this policy and the FLSA, the FLSA shall control. The Department Head of respective areas will identify non-exempt position classifications that may participate in the on-call program. Any non-exempt employee desiring to participate in the on-call program shall notify his/her Department Head of his/her willingness to participate. The Department Head shall establish a schedule which shall provide for the participating non-exempt employees to be on-call for a specified period (usually a weekly period) on a rotating basis.

Employees serving in on-call status are required to be available to promptly report for work during off-duty hours and over and above their normal scheduled hours of work. During the designated on-call period, employees assigned to on-call status are unrestricted in movement or location, within a reasonable distance from their work place that would allow them to report for work in the time periods specified, but must remain accessible by phone or pager and in a fit condition to work.

On-call employees must be available to respond by telephone within fifteen (15) minutes of a call from the County to answer questions or make decisions or be available when called to report to work within a thirty (30) minute time period, provided that such employee resides within thirty (30) minutes driving time from work. Employees who reside more than thirty (30) minutes from work must be underway to work within thirty (30) minutes of being called and must arrive as soon as practical.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 16, 2016 September 19, 2017	TOPIC: <i>On Call Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 226.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Non-exempt employees assigned to on-call status will be paid a daily supplement of \$35.00 for each day he/she is in on-call status.

V. ON-CALL POLICY

In addition, if the on-call status employee is called in to work, he/she will be guaranteed a minimum of one (1) hour pay at his/her current hourly rate of pay. Employees will be compensated at an overtime rate of one and one-half (1 ½) times his/her hourly rate of pay for all hours worked above forty (40) in the work week, in accordance with the FLSA.

Employees serving in on-call status 1) who cannot be located, 2) who do not respond within fifteen (15) minutes to a phone call or page, 3) who fail to report when called within the time limits provided, or 4) who report to work in an unfit condition, will not be paid the on-call supplement for that day and will be subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to removal from the on-call program, suspension without pay or termination of employment.

VI. DEPARTMENT AND EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Department Manager

- 1) It shall be the responsibility of each Department Manager to equitably administer the on-call program and the assignment of on-call status within his/her respective departments and to designate positions authorized to be involved in on-call duty.
- 2) Department Managers are the authorized authorities for the approval of on-call status at any given time.
- 3) Department Managers shall ensure that all on-call supplement payments are recorded on non-exempt Employee's records and that the hours worked when the non-exempt Employee is called in to work during the on-call period are recorded on the Employee's time sheet during the pay period the hours occur.
- 4) Department Managers will endeavor to minimize the utilization of on-call hours within their departments taking into account all relevant factors.
- 5) Departments that require twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days per week monitoring may require the use of on-call hours on a regular basis. On-call hours for other departments may be considered necessary only in emergency situations, wherein additional effort is needed to complete a task which is critical in nature.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 16, 2016 September 19, 2017	TOPIC: <i>On Call Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 226.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Employee

- 1) It is the responsibility of the individual Employee to bring any errors in recording on-call supplements or compensation for hours worked when called in to work to the appropriate Department Head as soon as possible.
- 2) Employees who are on approved Personal Time Off or Medical Leave are not eligible to serve in on-call status during that period.

VII. EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Nothing in this policy shall negate the obligation of all County employees to respond if called in emergency situations.

VIII. EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

Exempt employees whose job duties include being available for work at any time that the need arises, shall not be participants in this on-call program, but shall be available as required by their jobs on an on-call basis. Exempt employees shall not be entitled to any supplement for performing their on-call services.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 18, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Bereavement Leave</i>
<i>Policy Number 227.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the use of Bereavement Leave due to death in the Employee's Immediate Family.

II. POLICY

A Regular Full-time Employee who has a member of his/her Immediate Family taken by death may use up to twenty-four (24) working hours Bereavement Leave per calendar year to arrange and/or attend funeral activities. A Regular Part-time Employee may use up to three (3) Pro Rata days for Bereavement Leave per calendar year. Requests for additional bereavement leave for the death of other Immediate Family members during the calendar year may be approved at the discretion of the Division Director or Department Head and Human Resources Director.

If additional time is necessary, it shall be taken as Personal Time Off or unpaid leave if Personal Time Off has been exhausted, upon advance authorization by the immediate Supervisor or Department Head. Time for attendance at a funeral of others than the Immediate Family may be taken with approval by the immediate Supervisor or Department Head and shall be treated as Personal Time Off leave.

The Employee must notify his/her immediate Supervisor or Department Head as soon as possible if it is necessary to take time off from work due to a family death or to attend a funeral.

An Employee who fails to return to work on the date specified to the Department Head without receiving an approved extension is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Blood Bank</i>
<i>Policy Number 228.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a policy regarding payment of time when used for the purpose of donating whole blood or plasma.

II. POLICY

All Regular Full-time and Regular Part-time Employees are encouraged to donate whole blood or plasma.

Time off with pay may be granted for the purpose of donating blood at the closest available blood donation center provided such time off has the prior approval of the Employee's immediate Supervisor and/or Department Head. The Employee should utilize one of the blood donation centers in Martinez, Evans, Appling or a bloodmobile on site at a County facility.

Employees may be paid for time off to donate blood up to four times per year.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Non-Work Related Disability Leave</i>
<i>Policy Number 229.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

[This policy was deleted from the *Comprehensive Policy Manual* on July 14, 2009.]

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Family Medical Leave (All forms of FMLA except for Military Caregiver Leave)</i>
<i>Policy Number 230.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a policy and guidelines for the use of family or medical leave for County Employees.

II. POLICY

As provided by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), as amended, all eligible Employees shall be entitled to take up to twelve (12) weeks of paid or unpaid, job-protected leave during any twelve (12) month period for specified family and medical reasons. Workers' Compensation absences covered by the Workers' Compensation Act will run concurrently with FMLA.

Covered Family and Medical Reasons. An eligible Employee shall be entitled to a total of twelve (12) weeks of paid or unpaid leave during a twelve (12) month period for one or more of the following reasons:

- 1) the birth of the Employee's child or the placement of a child with the Employee for adoption or foster care; or
- 2) to care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition; or
- 3) to take medical leave when the Employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition; or
- 4) because of any qualifying exigency as defined below and in applicable Federal regulations arising out of the fact that the Employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent is a covered active duty military service member in the Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation; or
- 5) because you are the spouse, son or daughter, parent or next of kin of a covered service member with a serious injury or illness.

If we have not informed the Employee that accrued Paid Leave must be used while taking unpaid FMLA leave entitlement, then the Employee has a right to have Paid Leave run concurrently with Unpaid Leave entitlement, provided the Employee meets any applicable requirements of the Leave policy. If the Employee does not meet the requirements for taking Paid Leave, then the Employee will remain entitled to take unpaid Family Medical Leave.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Family Medical Leave (All forms of FMLA except for Military Caregiver Leave)</i>
<i>Policy Number 230.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

The Family Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”) also allows an employer to run FMLA concurrently with absences that are due to Workers’ Compensation injuries, illnesses or incidents.

A “serious health condition” is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents an Employee from performing the functions of the Employee's job or prevents an Employee's qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

“Qualifying exigencies” are: (1) short-notice deployment, (2) military events and related activities, (3) childcare and school activities, (4) financial and legal arrangements, (5) counseling, (6) rest and recuperation, (7) post-deployment activities within ninety (90) days of termination of active duty and (8) additional activities agreed to by the County and the Employee.

Leave for a qualifying exigency is available to families of active duty service members in the Regular Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserves.

Employees with questions about this policy or other County leave policies are encouraged to meet with a representative from the Human Resources Department. **The Employee must submit completed FMLA paperwork to Human Resources when taking paid or unpaid non-work-related or work related family or medical leave.**

Employee Eligibility. An Employee shall be eligible for FMLA leave when:

- 1) The Employee has worked for at least twelve (12) months for the County. The twelve (12) months need not have been consecutive. (If the Employee was on the payroll for part of a week, the County will count the entire week. The County considers 52 weeks to be equal to twelve months.)
- 2) The Employee has worked for the County for at least 1,250 hours over the previous twelve (12) months before the leave would begin, not including paid or unpaid leave.
- 3) When both spouses are employed by the County, they are jointly entitled to a combined total of twelve (12) workweeks of family leave for the birth or placement with the Employee of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for a parent who has a serious health condition.

Calculation of Leave. Eligible Employees can use up to twelve (12) weeks of the leave described above during any twelve (12) month period. The County will use a rolling twelve (12) month period measured forward from the first date an Employee uses any FMLA leave. The next 12-

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Family Medical Leave (All forms of FMLA except for Military Caregiver Leave)</i>
<i>Policy Number 230.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

month period would begin the first time FMLA leave is taken after completion of the prior 12-month period. Each time an Employee uses leave, the County computes the amount of leave the Employee has taken under this policy, subtracts it from the twelve (12) weeks, and the balance remaining is the amount the Employee is entitled to take at that time.

Note that the FMLA also entitles eligible Employees to take time off for “Military Caregiver Leave.” The amount of time available for Military Caregiver Leave and the method by which such leave is calculated are described elsewhere.

Maintenance of Benefits. During a family or medical leave under this Policy, an Employee shall be entitled to maintain group health insurance coverage on the same basis as if he/she had continued to work at the County. To maintain uninterrupted coverage, the Employee will have to continue to pay his or her share of insurance premium payments. This payment shall be made either in person or by mail to the Human Resources Department. If the Employee fails to make the premium payment and it becomes more than 30 days overdue, insurance coverage will be discontinued.

If the Employee informs the County that he/she does not intend to return to work at the end of the leave period, the Employee’s rights to any health care benefits shall be only to the extent provided for by the then current health care plan, if any, provided by the County for its Employees. If the Employee chooses not to return to work for reasons other than a continued serious health condition, the County will require the Employee to reimburse the County the amount the County contributed towards the Employee's health insurance during the leave period.

If the Employee contributes to life insurance or supplemental plans, the County will continue making payroll deductions while the Employee is on paid leave. While the Employee is on unpaid leave, the Employee must make arrangements to continue to make those premium payments. If the Employee does not continue these payments, the County will recover the payments at the end of the leave period in a manner consistent with the law. Certain types of earned benefits received prior to the start of an Employee’s leave shall not be lost. Leave may not accrue during the leave period if the employee has exhausted all Personal Time and Catastrophic Leave. The use of family or medical leave will not be considered a break in service for vesting or benefits program purposes.

Job Restoration. An Employee who utilizes family or medical leave under this policy will be restored to the same job or a job with equivalent status, pay, benefits and other employment terms. Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an Employee’s leave.

The County may choose to exempt certain Highly Compensated Key Employees from this job restoration requirement and not return them to the same or similar position at the completion of FMLA leave. Employees who may be exempted will be informed of this status when they request

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Family Medical Leave (All forms of FMLA except for Military Caregiver Leave)</i>
<i>Policy Number 230.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

leave. If the County deems it necessary to deny job restoration for a Key Employee on FMLA leave, the County will inform the Employee of its intention and will offer the Employee the opportunity to return to work immediately.

Use of Paid and Unpaid Leave. The Employee may use Paid Leave first and take the remainder of the twelve weeks as Unpaid Leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, Employees must comply with the County’s normal leave policies.

Intermittent Leave and Reduced Work Schedules. In certain cases, intermittent use of the twelve weeks of family or medical leave or a modified work schedule may be allowed if the Employee has received approval by the Department Head, Human Resources Director and County Manager. The use of intermittent leave should be scheduled so that this leave does not unduly disrupt the County’s operations. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, Employees must comply with the County’s normal leave policies.

Employees, who are approved due to medical necessity for intermittent use of family or medical leave, or to work a modified work schedule, are responsible for scheduling treatments so that they do not unduly disrupt the County's operations.

In some cases the County may temporarily transfer an Employee who is using intermittent leave or a modified work schedule to a different job with equivalent pay and benefits if another position would better accommodate the intermittent or modified work schedule.

III. PROCEDURES

Employees requesting leave under this policy must provide thirty (30) days advance notice if the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable. An Employee undergoing planned medical treatment is required to make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment to minimize disruptions to the County's operations. If the need for FMLA leave is not foreseeable, Employees must notify the County of the need for leave as soon as possible. The FMLA package is available in the Human Resources Department.

Upon receiving an Employee’s request for leave, the County will provide the Employee a Notice of Eligibility and Rights and Responsibilities (Form WH-381).

An Employee taking leave under this policy must submit an appropriate certification form as noted below:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Family Medical Leave (All forms of FMLA except for Military Caregiver Leave)</i>
<i>Policy Number 230.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

- An employee requesting leave because he/she is unable to work due to a serious health condition must submit a complete and sufficient Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee’s Serious Health Condition (Form WH-380-E).
- An employee requesting leave to care for an immediate family member with a serious health condition must submit a complete and sufficient Certification of Health Care Provider for Family Member’s Serious Health Condition (Form WH-380-F).
- An employee requesting leave because of a qualifying exigency must submit a complete and sufficient Certification of Qualification Exigency for Military Family Leave (Form WH-384).

The required certification should be provided within fifteen (15) calendar days or the Employee should provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. If the employee fails to provide complete and sufficient certification, the County may deny the request for FMLA leave.

After the County has received the required notice and certification, it will inform the employee within five (5) business days whether the leave will be designated FMLA leave. The employee will receive a Designation Notice (Form WH-382) indicating the amount of leave that will be counted against the employee’s FMLA entitlement, if determinable at that time.

While on leave, Employees are required to report to their Department Head on a bi-weekly basis regarding their status and their intent to return to work. Employees are required to give at least two business days’ notice if their anticipated date of return to work changes.

An Employee who takes leave because of his/her own serious health condition is required **to notify his/her Department Head of his/her Intent to Return to Work from Leave** and to provide a statement from his/her Qualified Health Care Provider, indicating that the Employee is able to resume working without restrictions. Employees who take leave because of a work related incident will comply with the Workers’ Compensation Policy in regards to Return to Work requirements.

**Notice of Eligibility & Rights and Responsibilities
under the Family and Medical Leave Act**

**U.S. Department of Labor
Wage and Hour Division**



**DO NOT SEND TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.
PROVIDE TO EMPLOYEE.**

OMB Control Number: 1235-0003
Expires: 6/30/2023

In general, to be eligible to take leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), an employee must have worked for an employer for at least 12 months, meet the hours of service requirement in the 12 months preceding the leave, and work at a site with at least 50 employees within 75 miles. While use of this form is optional, a fully completed Form WH-381 provides employees with the information required by 29 C.F.R. §§ 825.300(b), (c) which must be provided within five business days of the employee notifying the employer of the need for FMLA leave. Information about the FMLA may be found [on the WHD website at www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla).

Date: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

From: _____ (Employer) To: _____ (Employee)

On _____ (mm/dd/yyyy), we learned that you need leave (beginning on) _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) for one of the following reasons: (Select as appropriate)

- The birth of a child, or placement of a child with you for adoption or foster care, and to bond with the newborn or newly-placed child
- Your own serious health condition
- You are needed to care for your family member due to a serious health condition. Your family member is your:
 - Spouse Parent Child under age 18 Child 18 years or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability
- A qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that your family member is on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty status. Your family member on covered active duty is your:
 - Spouse Parent Child of any age
- You are needed to care for your family member who is a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness. You are the servicemember's:
 - Spouse Parent Child Next of kin

Spouse means a husband or wife as defined or recognized in the state where the individual was married, including in a common law marriage or same-sex marriage. The terms "child" and "parent" include *in loco parentis* relationships in which a person assumes the obligations of a parent to a child. An employee may take FMLA leave to care for an individual who assumed the obligations of a parent to the employee when the employee was a child. An employee may also take FMLA leave to care for a child for whom the employee has assumed the obligations of a parent. No legal or biological relationship is necessary.

SECTION I – NOTICE OF ELIGIBILITY

This Notice is to inform you that you are:

- Eligible** for FMLA leave. (See Section II for any Additional Information Needed and Section III for information on your Rights and Responsibilities.)
- Not eligible** for FMLA leave because: (Only one reason need be checked)
 - You have not met the FMLA's 12-month length of service requirement. As of the first date of requested leave, you will have worked approximately: _____ towards this requirement.
(months)
 - You have not met the FMLA's 1,250 hours of service requirement. As of the first date of requested leave, you will have worked approximately: _____ towards this requirement.
(hours of service)

Employee Name: _____

- You are an airline flight crew employee and you have not met the special hours of service eligibility requirements for airline flight crew employees as of the first date of requested leave (i.e., worked or been paid for at least 60% of your applicable monthly guarantee, and worked or been paid for at least 504 duty hours.)
- You do not work at and/or report to a site with 50 or more employees within 75-miles as of the date of your request.

If you have any questions, please contact: _____ (Name of employer representative)
at _____ (Contact information).

SECTION II – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NEEDED

As explained in Section I, you meet the eligibility requirements for taking FMLA leave. Please review the information below to determine if additional information is needed in order for us to determine whether your absence qualifies as FMLA leave. Once we obtain any additional information specified below we will inform you, **within 5 business days**, whether your leave will be designated as FMLA leave and count towards the FMLA leave you have available. **If complete and sufficient information is not provided in a timely manner, your leave may be denied.**

(Select as appropriate)

- No additional information requested. If no additional information requested, go to Section III.
- We request that the leave be supported by a certification, as identified below.
 - Health Care Provider for the Employee
 - Health Care Provider for the Employee's Family Member
 - Qualifying Exigency
 - Serious Illness or Injury (Military Caregiver Leave)

Selected certification form is attached / not attached.

If requested, medical certification must be returned by _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) (Must allow at least 15 calendar days from the date the employer requested the employee to provide certification, unless it is not feasible despite the employee's diligent, good faith efforts.)

We request that you provide reasonable documentation or a statement to establish the relationship between you and your family member, including *in loco parentis* relationships (as explained on page one). The information requested must be returned to us by _____ (mm/dd/yyyy). You may choose to provide a simple statement of the relationship or provide documentation such as a child's birth certificate, a court document, or documents regarding foster care or adoption-related activities. Official documents submitted for this purpose will be returned to you after examination.

- Other information needed (e.g. documentation for military family leave): _____
The information requested must be returned to us by _____ (mm/dd/yyyy).

If you have any questions, please contact: _____ (Name of employer representative)
at _____ (Contact information).

SECTION III – NOTICE OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Part A: FMLA Leave Entitlement

You have a right under the FMLA to take unpaid, job-protected FMLA leave in a 12-month period for certain family and medical reasons, including up to **12 weeks** of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for the birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care, for leave related to your own or a family member's serious health condition, or for certain qualifying exigencies related to the deployment of a military member to covered active duty. You also have a right

Employee Name: _____

under the FMLA to take up to **26 weeks** of unpaid, job-protected FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness (*Military Caregiver Leave*).

The 12-month period for FMLA leave is calculated as: (*Select as appropriate*)

- The calendar year (January 1st - December 31st)
- A fixed leave year based on _____
(*e.g., a fiscal year beginning on July 1 and ending on June 30*)
- The 12-month period measured forward from the date of your first FMLA leave usage.
- A “rolling” 12-month period measured backward from the date of any FMLA leave usage. (*Each time an employee takes FMLA leave, the remaining leave is the balance of the 12 weeks not used during the 12 months immediately before the FMLA leave is to start.*)

If applicable, the single 12-month period for *Military Caregiver Leave* started on _____ (*mm/dd/yyyy*).

You (*are* / *are not*) **considered a key employee** as defined under the FMLA. Your FMLA leave cannot be denied for this reason; however, we may not restore you to employment following FMLA leave if such restoration will cause substantial and grievous economic injury to us.

We (*have* / *have not*) determined that restoring you to employment at the conclusion of FMLA leave will cause substantial and grievous economic harm to us. Additional information will be provided separately concerning your status as key employee and restoration.

Part B: Substitution of Paid Leave – When Paid Leave is Used at the Same Time as FMLA Leave

You have a right under the FMLA to request that your accrued paid leave be substituted for your FMLA leave. This means that you can request that your accrued paid leave run concurrently with some or all of your unpaid FMLA leave, provided you meet any applicable requirements of our leave policy. Concurrent leave use means the absence will count against both the designated paid leave and unpaid FMLA leave at the same time. If you do not meet the requirements for taking paid leave, you remain entitled to take available unpaid FMLA leave in the applicable 12-month period. Even if you do not request it, the FMLA allows us to require you to use your available sick, vacation, or other paid leave during your FMLA absence.

(*Check all that apply*)

- Some or all of your FMLA leave will not be paid.** Any unpaid FMLA leave taken will be designated as FMLA leave and counted against the amount of FMLA leave you have available to use in the applicable 12-month period.
- You have requested to use some or all of your available paid leave** (*e.g., sick, vacation, PTO*) during your FMLA leave. Any paid leave taken for this reason will also be designated as FMLA leave and counted against the amount of FMLA leave you have available to use in the applicable 12-month period.
- We are requiring you to use some or all of your available paid leave** (*e.g., sick, vacation, PTO*) during your FMLA leave. Any paid leave taken for this reason will also be designated as FMLA leave and counted against the amount of FMLA leave you have available to use in the applicable 12-month period.
- Other:** (*e.g., short- or long-term disability, workers' compensation, state medical leave law, etc.*) _____
Any time taken for this reason will also be designated as FMLA leave and counted against the amount of FMLA leave you have available to use in the applicable 12-month period.

The applicable conditions for use of paid leave include: _____.

For more information about conditions applicable to sick/vacation/other paid leave usage please refer to _____

_____ available at: _____.

Employee Name: _____

Part C: Maintain Health Benefits

Your health benefits must be maintained during any period of FMLA leave under the same conditions as if you continued to work. During any paid portion of FMLA leave, your share of any premiums will be paid by the method normally used during any paid leave. During any unpaid portion of FMLA leave, you must continue to make any normal contributions to the cost of the health insurance premiums. To make arrangements to continue to make your share of the premium payments on your health insurance while you are on any unpaid FMLA leave, contact _____ at _____.

You have a minimum grace period of (30-days or _____ *indicate longer period, if applicable*) in which to make premium payments. If payment is not made timely, your group health insurance may be cancelled, provided we notify you in writing at least 15 days before the date that your health coverage will lapse, or, at our option, we may pay your share of the premiums during FMLA leave, and recover these payments from you upon your return to work.

You may be required to reimburse us for our share of health insurance premiums paid on your behalf during your FMLA leave if you do not return to work following **unpaid** FMLA leave for a reason other than: the continuation, recurrence, or onset of your or your family member’s serious health condition which would entitle you to FMLA leave; or the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a covered servicemember’s serious injury or illness which would entitle you to FMLA leave; or other circumstances beyond your control.

Part D: Other Employee Benefits

Upon your return from FMLA leave, your other employee benefits, such as pensions or life insurance, must be resumed in the same manner and at the same levels as provided when your FMLA leave began. To make arrangements to continue your employee benefits while you are on FMLA leave, contact _____ at _____.

Part E: Return-to-Work Requirements

You must be reinstated to the same or an equivalent job with the same pay, benefits, and terms and conditions of employment on your return from FMLA-protected leave. An equivalent position is one that is virtually identical to your former position in terms of pay, benefits, and working conditions. At the end of your FMLA leave, all benefits must also be resumed in the same manner and at the same level provided when the leave began. You do not have return-to-work rights under the FMLA if you need leave beyond the amount of FMLA leave you have available to use.

Part F: Other Requirements While on FMLA Leave

While on leave you (will be / will not be) required to furnish us with periodic reports of your status and intent to return to work every _____.
(Indicate interval of periodic reports, as appropriate for the FMLA leave situation).

If the circumstances of your leave change and you are able to return to work earlier than expected, you will be required to notify us at least two workdays prior to the date you intend to report for work.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT NOTICE AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT

It is mandatory for employers to provide employees with notice of their eligibility for FMLA protection and their rights and responsibilities. 29 U.S.C. § 2617; 29 C.F.R. § 825.300(b), (c). It is mandatory for employers to retain a copy of this disclosure in their records for three years. 29 U.S.C. § 2616; 29 C.F.R. § 825.500. Persons are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The Department of Labor estimates that it will take an average of 10 minutes for respondents to complete this collection of information, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. If you have any comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, send them to the Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-3502, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210.

DO NOT SEND THE COMPLETED FORM TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR. EMPLOYEE INFORMATION.

**Certification of Health Care Provider for
Employee's Serious Health Condition
under the Family and Medical Leave Act**

**U.S. Department of Labor
Wage and Hour Division**



DO NOT SEND COMPLETED FORM TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.
RETURN TO THE PATIENT.

OMB Control Number: 1235-0003
Expires: 6/30/2023

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides that an employer may require an employee seeking FMLA protections because of a need for leave due to a serious health condition to submit a medical certification issued by the employee's health care provider. 29 U.S.C. §§ 2613, 2614(c)(3); 29 C.F.R. § 825.305. The employer must give the employee **at least 15 calendar days** to provide the certification. If the employee fails to provide complete and sufficient medical certification, his or her FMLA leave request may be denied. 29 C.F.R. § 825.313. Information about the FMLA may be found [on the WHD website at www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla).

SECTION I – EMPLOYER

Either the employee or the employer may complete Section I. While use of this form is optional, this form asks the health care provider for the information necessary for a complete and sufficient medical certification, which is set out at 29 C.F.R. § 825.306. **You may not ask the employee to provide more information than allowed under the FMLA regulations, 29 C.F.R. §§ 825.306-825.308.** Additionally, you **may not** request a certification for FMLA leave to bond with a healthy newborn child or a child placed for adoption or foster care.

Employers must generally maintain records and documents relating to medical information, medical certifications, recertifications, or medical histories of employees created for FMLA purposes as confidential medical records in separate files/records from the usual personnel files and in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1630.14(c)(1), if the Americans with Disabilities Act applies, and in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1635.9, if the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act applies.

- (1) Employee name: _____
First
Middle
Last
- (2) Employer name: _____ Date: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)
(List date certification requested)
- (3) The medical certification must be returned by _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)
(Must allow at least 15 calendar days from the date requested, unless it is not feasible despite the employee's diligent, good faith efforts.)
- (4) Employee's job title: _____ Job description (is / is not) attached.
 Employee's regular work schedule: _____
 Statement of the employee's essential job functions: _____

(The essential functions of the employee's position are determined with reference to the position the employee held at the time the employee notified the employer of the need for leave or the leave started, whichever is earlier.)

SECTION II - HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

Please provide your contact information, complete all relevant parts of this Section, and sign the form. Your patient has requested leave under the FMLA. The FMLA allows an employer to require that the employee submit a timely, complete, and sufficient medical certification to support a request for FMLA leave due to the serious health condition of the employee. For FMLA purposes, a "serious health condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves *inpatient care* or *continuing treatment by a health care provider*. For more information about the definitions of a serious health condition under the FMLA, see the chart on page 4.

You may, but are **not required** to, provide other appropriate medical facts including symptoms, diagnosis, or any regimen of continuing treatment such as the use of specialized equipment. Please note that some state or local laws may not allow disclosure of private medical information about the patient's serious health condition, such as providing the diagnosis and/or course of treatment.

Employee Name: _____

Health Care Provider's name: (Print) _____

Health Care Provider's business address: _____

Type of practice / Medical specialty: _____

Telephone: (____) _____ Fax: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

PART A: Medical Information

Limit your response to the medical condition(s) for which the employee is seeking FMLA leave. Your answers should be your **best estimate** based upon your medical knowledge, experience, and examination of the patient. **After completing Part A, complete Part B to provide information about the amount of leave needed.** Note: For FMLA purposes, "incapacity" means the inability to work, attend school, or perform regular daily activities due to the condition, treatment of the condition, or recovery from the condition. Do not provide information about genetic tests, as defined in 29 C.F.R. § 1635.3(f), genetic services, as defined in 29 C.F.R. § 1635.3(e), or the manifestation of disease or disorder in the employee's family members, 29 C.F.R. § 1635.3(b).

(1) State the approximate date the condition started or will start: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

(2) Provide your **best estimate** of how long the condition lasted or will last: _____

(3) Check the box(es) for the questions below, as applicable. For all box(es) checked, the amount of leave needed must be provided in Part B.

Inpatient Care: The patient (has been / is expected to be) admitted for an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility on the following date(s): _____

Incapacity plus Treatment: (e.g. outpatient surgery, strep throat)
Due to the condition, the patient (has been / is expected to be) incapacitated for *more than* three consecutive, full calendar days from _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) to _____ (mm/dd/yyyy).

The patient (was / will be) seen on the following date(s): _____

The condition (has / has not) also resulted in a course of continuing treatment under the supervision of a health care provider (e.g. prescription medication (other than over-the-counter) or therapy requiring special equipment)

Pregnancy: The condition is pregnancy. List the expected delivery date: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy).

Chronic Conditions: (e.g. asthma, migraine headaches) Due to the condition, it is medically necessary for the patient to have treatment visits at least twice per year.

Permanent or Long Term Conditions: (e.g. Alzheimer's, terminal stages of cancer) Due to the condition, incapacity is permanent or long term and requires the continuing supervision of a health care provider (even if active treatment is not being provided).

Conditions requiring Multiple Treatments: (e.g. chemotherapy treatments, restorative surgery) Due to the condition, it is medically necessary for the patient to receive multiple treatments.

None of the above: If none of the above condition(s) were checked, (i.e., inpatient care, pregnancy) no additional information is needed. Go to page 4 to sign and date the form.

Employee Name: _____

- (4) If needed, briefly describe other appropriate medical facts related to the condition(s) for which the employee seeks FMLA leave. (e.g., use of nebulizer, dialysis) _____

PART B: Amount of Leave Needed

For the medical condition(s) checked in Part A, complete all that apply. Several questions seek a response as to the frequency or duration of a condition, treatment, etc. Your answer should be your **best estimate** based upon your medical knowledge, experience, and examination of the patient. Be as specific as you can; terms such as “lifetime,” “unknown,” or “indeterminate” may not be sufficient to determine FMLA coverage.

- (5) Due to the condition, the patient (had / will have) **planned medical treatment(s)** (scheduled medical visits) (e.g. psychotherapy, prenatal appointments) on the following date(s): _____

- (6) Due to the condition, the patient (was / will be) **referred to other health care provider(s)** for evaluation or treatment(s).

State the nature of such treatments: (e.g. cardiologist, physical therapy) _____

Provide your **best estimate** of the beginning date _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) and end date _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) for the treatment(s).

Provide your **best estimate** of the duration of the treatment(s), including any period(s) of recovery (e.g. 3 days/week)

- (7) Due to the condition, it is medically necessary for the employee to work a **reduced schedule**.

Provide your **best estimate** of the reduced schedule the employee is able to work. From _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) to _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) the employee is able to work: (e.g., 5 hours/day, up to 25 hours a week)

- (8) Due to the condition, the patient (was / will be) **incapacitated for a continuous period of time**, including any time for treatment(s) and/or recovery.

Provide your **best estimate** of the beginning date _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) and end date _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) for the period of incapacity.

- (9) Due to the condition, it (was / is / will be) medically necessary for the employee to be absent from work on an **intermittent basis** (periodically), including for any episodes of incapacity i.e., episodic flare-ups. Provide your **best estimate** of how often (frequency) and how long (duration) the episodes of incapacity will likely last.

Over the next 6 months, episodes of incapacity are estimated to occur _____ times per (day / week / month) and are likely to last approximately _____ (hours / days) per episode.

Employee Name: _____

PART C: Essential Job Functions

If provided, the information in Section I question #4 may be used to answer this question. If the employer fails to provide a statement of the employee’s essential functions or a job description, answer these questions based upon the employee’s own description of the essential job functions. An employee who must be absent from work to receive medical treatment(s), such as scheduled medical visits, for a serious health condition is considered to be *not able* to perform the essential job functions of the position during the absence for treatment(s).

(10) Due to the condition, the employee (was not able / is not able / will not be able) to perform *one or more* of the essential job function(s). Identify at least one essential job function the employee is not able to perform:

Signature of Health Care Provider _____ Date _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

Definitions of a Serious Health Condition (See 29 C.F.R. §§ 825.113-.115)
Inpatient Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An overnight stay in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility.• Inpatient care includes any period of incapacity or any subsequent treatment in connection with the overnight stay.
Continuing Treatment by a Health Care Provider (any one or more of the following)
<p><u>Incapacity Plus Treatment:</u> A period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also involves either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Two or more in-person visits to a health care provider for treatment within 30 days of the first day of incapacity unless extenuating circumstances exist. The first visit must be within seven days of the first day of incapacity; or,○ At least one in-person visit to a health care provider for treatment within seven days of the first day of incapacity, which results in a regimen of continuing treatment under the supervision of the health care provider. For example, the health provider might prescribe a course of prescription medication or therapy requiring special equipment.
<p><u>Pregnancy:</u> Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy or for prenatal care.</p>
<p><u>Chronic Conditions:</u> Any period of incapacity due to or treatment for a chronic serious health condition, such as diabetes, asthma, migraine headaches. A chronic serious health condition is one which requires visits to a health care provider (or nurse supervised by the provider) at least twice a year and recurs over an extended period of time. A chronic condition may cause episodic rather than a continuing period of incapacity.</p>
<p><u>Permanent or Long-term Conditions:</u> A period of incapacity which is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective, but which requires the continuing supervision of a health care provider, such as Alzheimer’s disease or the terminal stages of cancer.</p>
<p><u>Conditions Requiring Multiple Treatments:</u> Restorative surgery after an accident or other injury; or, a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days if the patient did not receive the treatment.</p>

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT NOTICE AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT

If submitted, it is mandatory for employers to retain a copy of this disclosure in their records for three years. 29 U.S.C. § 2616; 29 C.F.R. § 825.500. Persons are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The Department of Labor estimates that it will take an average of 15 minutes for respondents to complete this collection of information, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. If you have any comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, send them to the Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-3502, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210.

DO NOT SEND COMPLETED FORM TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR. RETURN TO THE PATIENT.

Employee Name: _____

(3) Briefly describe the care you will provide to your family member: *(Check all that apply)*

- Assistance with basic medical, hygienic, nutritional, or safety needs Transportation
 Physical Care Psychological Comfort Other: _____

(4) Give your **best estimate** of the amount of leave needed to provide the care described: _____

(5) If a **reduced work schedule** is necessary to provide the care described, give your **best estimate** of the reduced schedule you are able to work. From _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) to _____ (mm/dd/yyyy), I am able to work _____ (hours per day) _____ (days per week).

Employee Signature _____ Date _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

SECTION III - HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

Please provide your contact information, complete all relevant parts of this Section, and sign the form below. A family member of your patient has requested leave under the FMLA to care for your patient. The FMLA allows an employer to require that the employee submit a timely, complete, and sufficient medical certification to support a request for FMLA leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition. For FMLA purposes, a “serious health condition” means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that *involves inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider*. For more information about the definitions of a serious health condition under the FMLA, see the chart at the end of the form.

You also may, but are **not required** to, provide other appropriate medical facts including symptoms, diagnosis, or any regimen of continuing treatment such as the use of specialized equipment. Please note that some state or local laws may not allow disclosure of private medical information about the patient’s serious health condition, such as providing the diagnosis and/or course of treatment.

Health Care Provider’s name: *(Print)* _____

Health Care Provider’s business address: _____

Type of practice / Medical specialty: _____

Telephone: (____) _____ Fax: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

PART A: Medical Information

Limit your response to the medical condition for which the employee is seeking FMLA leave. Your answers should be your **best estimate** based upon your medical knowledge, experience, and examination of the patient. **After completing Part A, complete Part B to provide information about the amount of leave needed.** Note: For FMLA purposes, “incapacity” means the inability to work, attend school, or perform regular daily activities due to the condition, treatment of the condition, or recovery from the condition. Do not provide information about genetic tests, as defined in 29 C.F.R. § 1635.3(f), genetic services, as defined in 29 C.F.R. § 1635.3(e), or the manifestation of disease or disorder in the employee’s family members, 29 C.F.R. § 1635.3(b).

(1) Patient’s Name: _____

(2) State the approximate date the condition started or will start: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

(3) Provide your **best estimate** of how long the condition lasted or will last: _____

(4) For FMLA to apply, care of the patient must be medically necessary. Briefly describe the type of care needed by the patient *(e.g., assistance with basic medical, hygienic, nutritional, safety, transportation needs, physical care, or psychological comfort)*.

Employee Name: _____

(5) Check the box(es) for the questions below, as applicable. For all box(es) checked, the amount of leave needed must be provided in Part B.

Inpatient Care: The patient (has been / is expected to be) admitted for an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility on the following date(s): _____

Incapacity plus Treatment: (e.g. outpatient surgery, strep throat)

Due to the condition, the patient (has been / is expected to be) incapacitated for *more than three* consecutive, full calendar days from _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) to _____ (mm/dd/yyyy).

The patient (was / will be) seen on the following date(s): _____

The condition (has / has not) also resulted in a course of continuing treatment under the supervision of a health care provider (e.g. prescription medication (other than over-the-counter) or therapy requiring special equipment)

Pregnancy: The condition is pregnancy. List the expected delivery date: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy).

Chronic Conditions: (e.g. asthma, migraine headaches) Due to the condition, it is medically necessary for the patient to have treatment visits at least twice per year.

Permanent or Long Term Conditions: (e.g. Alzheimer's, terminal stages of cancer) Due to the condition, incapacity is permanent or long term and requires the continuing supervision of a health care provider (even if active treatment is not being provided).

Conditions requiring Multiple Treatments: (e.g. chemotherapy treatments, restorative surgery) Due to the condition, it is medically necessary for the patient to receive multiple treatments.

None of the above: If none of the above condition(s) were checked, (i.e., inpatient care, pregnancy) no additional information is needed. Go to page 4 to sign and date the form.

(6) If needed, briefly describe other appropriate medical facts related to the condition(s) for which the employee seeks FMLA leave. (e.g., use of nebulizer, dialysis) _____

PART B: Amount of Leave Needed

For the medical condition(s) checked in Part A, complete all that apply. Several questions seek a response as to the frequency or duration of a condition, treatment, etc. Your answer should be your **best estimate** based upon your medical knowledge, experience, and examination of the patient. Be as specific as you can; terms such as "lifetime," "unknown," or "indeterminate" may not be sufficient to determine if the benefits and protections of the FMLA apply.

(7) Due to the condition, the patient (had / will have) **planned medical treatment(s)** (scheduled medical visits) (e.g. psychotherapy, prenatal appointments) on the following date(s): _____

(8) Due to the condition, the patient (was / will be) **referred to other health care provider(s)** for evaluation or treatment(s).

State the nature of such treatments: (e.g. cardiologist, physical therapy) _____

Provide your **best estimate** of the beginning date _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) and end date _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) for the treatment(s).

Provide your **best estimate** of the duration of the treatment(s), including any period(s) of recovery _____ (e.g. 3 days/week)

Employee Name: _____

- (9) Due to the condition, the patient (was / will be) **incapacitated for a continuous period of time**, including any time for treatment(s) and/or recovery.

Provide your **best estimate** of the beginning date: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) and end date _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) for the period of incapacity.

- (10) Due to the condition it, (was / is / will be) medically necessary for the employee to be absent from work to provide care for the patient on an **intermittent basis** (periodically), including for any episodes of incapacity i.e., episodic flare-ups. Provide your **best estimate** of how often (frequency) and how long (duration) the episodes of incapacity will likely last.

Over the next 6 months, episodes of incapacity are estimated to occur _____ times per (day / week / month) and are likely to last approximately _____ (hours / days) per episode.

Signature of Health Care Provider _____ Date _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

Definitions of a Serious Health Condition (See 29 C.F.R. §§ 825.113-.115)

Inpatient Care

- An overnight stay in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility.
- Inpatient care includes any period of incapacity or any subsequent treatment in connection with the overnight stay.

Continuing Treatment by a Health Care Provider (any one or more of the following)

Incapacity Plus Treatment: A period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also involves either:

- Two or more in-person visits to a health care provider for treatment within 30 days of the first day of incapacity unless extenuating circumstances exist. The first visit must be within seven days of the first day of incapacity; or,
- At least one in-person visit to a health care provider for treatment within seven days of the first day of incapacity, which results in a regimen of continuing treatment under the supervision of the health care provider. For example, the health provider might prescribe a course of prescription medication or therapy requiring special equipment.

Pregnancy: Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy or for prenatal care.

Chronic Conditions: Any period of incapacity due to or treatment for a chronic serious health condition, such as diabetes, asthma, migraine headaches. A chronic serious health condition is one which requires visits to a health care provider (or nurse supervised by the provider) at least twice a year and recurs over an extended period of time. A chronic condition may cause episodic rather than a continuing period of incapacity.

Permanent or Long-term Conditions: A period of incapacity which is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective, but which requires the continuing supervision of a health care provider, such as Alzheimer's disease or the terminal stages of cancer.

Conditions Requiring Multiple Treatments: Restorative surgery after an accident or other injury; or, a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive, full calendar days if the patient did not receive the treatment.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT NOTICE AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT

If submitted, it is mandatory for employers to retain a copy of this disclosure in their records for three years. 29 U.S.C. § 2616; 29 C.F.R. § 825.500. Persons are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The Department of Labor estimates that it will take an average of 15 minutes for respondents to complete this collection of information, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. If you have any comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, send them to the Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-3502, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210.

DO NOT SEND COMPLETED FORM TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR. RETURN TO THE PATIENT.

**Certification for Military Family Leave for
Qualifying Exigency
under the Family and Medical Leave Act**

**U.S. Department of Labor
Wage and Hour Division**



**DO NOT SEND FORM TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.
RETURN THE COMPLETED FORM TO THE EMPLOYER.**

OMB Control Number: 1235-0003
Expires: 6/30/2023

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides that eligible employees may take FMLA leave for a qualifying exigency while the employee's spouse, child, or parent (the military member) is on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty. The FMLA allows an employer to require an employee seeking FMLA leave due to a qualifying exigency to submit a certification. 29 U.S.C. §§ 2613, 2614(c)(3). The employer must give the employee **at least 15 calendar days** to provide the certification. 29 C.F.R. § 825.305(b). If the employee fails to provide complete and sufficient certification, the employee's FMLA leave request may be denied. 29 C.F.R. § 825.313. Information about the FMLA may be found [on the WHD website at http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla).

SECTION I - EMPLOYER

Either the employee or the employer may complete Section I. While use of this form is optional, it asks the employer for the information necessary for a complete and sufficient qualifying exigency certification, which is set out at 29 C.F.R. § 825.309. **You may not ask the employee to provide more information than allowed under the FMLA regulations, 29 C.F.R. § 825.309.**

- (1) Employee name: _____
First Middle Last
- (2) Employer name: _____ Date: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)
(List date certification requested)
- (3) This certification must be returned by _____ (mm/dd/yyyy).
(Must allow at least 15 calendar days from the date requested, unless it is not feasible despite the employee's diligent, good faith efforts.)

SECTION II - EMPLOYEE

Please complete all Parts of Section II and sign the form before returning it to your employer. The FMLA allows an employer to require that you submit a timely, complete, and sufficient certification to support a request for FMLA leave due to a qualifying exigency. If requested by your employer, your response is required to obtain the benefits and protections of the FMLA. 29 C.F.R. § 825.309. Failure to provide a complete and sufficient certification may result in a denial of your FMLA leave request. A complete and sufficient certification to support a request for FMLA leave due to a qualifying exigency includes written documentation confirming a military member's covered active duty or call to covered active duty status. **You are responsible for making sure the certification is provided to your employer within the time frame requested, which must be at least 15 calendar days.** 29 C.F.R. § 825.313.

- (1) Provide the name of the military member on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status:

_____ *First Middle Last*

- (2) Select your relationship of the military member. The military member is your:

Spouse Parent Child, of any age

Spouse means a husband or wife as defined or recognized in the state where the individual was married, including a common law marriage or same-sex marriage. The terms "child" and "parent" include *in loco parentis* relationships in which a person assumes the obligations of a parent to a child. An employee may take FMLA leave for a qualifying exigency related a military member who assumed the obligations of a parent to the employee when the employee was a child. An employee may also take FMLA leave for a qualifying exigency related a military member for whom the employee has assumed the obligations of a parent. No legal or biological relationship is necessary.

Employee Name: _____

PART A: COVERED ACTIVE DUTY STATUS

Covered active duty or call to covered active duty in the case of a member of the Regular Armed Forces means duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country. Covered active duty or call to covered active duty in the case of a member of the Reserve components means duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country under a Federal call or order to active duty in support of a contingency operation pursuant to: Section 688 of Title 10 of the United States Code; Section 12301(a) of Title 10 of the United States Code; Section 12302 of Title 10 of the United States Code; Section 12304 of Title 10 of the United States Code; Section 12305 of Title 10 of the United States Code; Section 12406 of Title 10 of the United States Code; chapter 15 of Title 10 of the United States Code; or, any other provision of law during a war or during a national emergency declared by the President or Congress so long as it is in support of a contingency operation. 10 U.S.C. § 101(a)(13)(B).

An employer may require the employee to provide a copy of the military member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military which indicates that the military member is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status, and the dates of the military member's covered active duty service. **This information need only be provided to the employer once, unless additional leave is needed for a different military member or different deployment.**

- (3) Provide the dates of the military member's covered active duty service: _____
- (4) Please check one of the following and attach the indicated written document to support that the military member is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status:
 - A copy of the military member's covered active duty orders
 - Other documentation from the military indicating that the military member is on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call to covered active duty, such as official military correspondence from the military member's chain of command
 - I have previously provided my employer with sufficient written documentation confirming the military member's covered active duty or call to covered active duty status

PART B: APPROPRIATE FACTS

Under the FMLA, leave can be taken for a number of qualifying exigencies. 29 C.F.R. § 825.126(b). Complete and sufficient certification to support a request for FMLA leave due to a qualifying exigency includes available written documentation which supports the need for leave such as a copy of a meeting announcement for informational briefings sponsored by the military, a document confirming the military member's Rest and Recuperation leave, or other documentation issued by the military which indicates that the military member has been granted Rest and Recuperation leave, or a document confirming an appointment with a third party (e.g., a counselor or school official, or staff at a care facility, a copy of a bill for services for the handling of legal or financial affairs). Please provide appropriate facts related to the particular qualifying exigency to support the FMLA leave request, including information on the type of qualifying exigency and any available written documentation of the exigency event.

- (5) Select the appropriate **Qualifying Exigency Category** and, if needed, provide additional information related to the event:
 - Short notice deployment (*i.e.*, deployment within seven or fewer days of notice)
 - Military events and related activities (*e.g.*, *official ceremonies or events, or family support and assistance programs*):

 - Childcare related activities for the child of the military member (*e.g.*, *arranging for alternative childcare*):

Employee Name: _____

- Care for the military member's parent (e.g., admitting or transferring the parent to a new care facility):

- Financial and legal arrangements related to the deployment (e.g., obtaining military identification cards)
- Counseling related to the deployment (i.e., counseling provided by someone other than a health care provider)
- Military member's short-term, temporary Rest and Recuperation leave (R&R) (leave for this reason is limited to 15 calendar days for each instance of R&R)
- Post deployment activities (e.g., arrival ceremonies, or reintegration briefings and events): _____
- Any other event that the employee and employer agree is a qualifying exigency: _____

(6) Available written documentation supporting this request for leave is (attached / not attached / not available).

PART C: AMOUNT OF LEAVE NEEDED

Provide information concerning the amount of leave that will be needed. Several questions in this section seek a response as to the frequency or duration of the qualifying exigency leave needed. Be as specific as you can; terms such as "unknown" or "indeterminate" may not be sufficient to determine FMLA coverage.

(7) List the approximate date exigency started or will start: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

(8) Provide your best estimate of how long the exigency lasted or will last:

From _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) to _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

(9) Due to a qualifying exigency, I need to work a **reduced schedule**. Provide your **best estimate** of the reduced schedule you are able to work:

From _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) to _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

I am able to work _____
(e.g., 5 hours/day, up to 25 hours a week)

(10) Due to a qualifying exigency, I will need to be absent from work for a **continuous period of time**. Provide your **best estimate** of the beginning and ending dates for the period of absence:

From _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) to _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

Employee Name: _____

(11) Due to a qualifying exigency, I will need to be absent from work on an **intermittent basis** (periodically).

Provide your **best estimate** of the frequency (how often) and duration (how long) of each appointment, meeting, or leave event, including any travel time.

Over the next 6 months, absences on an **intermittent basis** are estimated to occur: _____ times per
(day / week / month) and are likely to last approximately _____ (hours / days) per episode.

(12) My leave is due to a qualifying exigency that involves **Rest and Recuperation leave** (R & R) of the military member (leave for this reason is limited to 15 calendar days for each instance of R & R leave).

List the dates of the military member's R & R leave:

From _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) to _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

PART D: THIRD PARTY INFORMATION

If applicable, please provide information below that may be used by your employer to verify meetings or appointments with a third party related to the qualifying exigency. Examples of meetings with third parties include: arranging for childcare or parental care, to attend non-medical counseling, to attend meetings with school, childcare or parental care providers, to make financial or legal arrangements, to act as the military member's representative before a federal, state, or local agency for purposes of obtaining, arranging or appealing military service benefits, or to attend any event sponsored by the military or military service organizations. This information may be used by your employer to verify that the information contained on this form is accurate.

Individual (e.g., name and title) or Entity / Organization: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (____) _____ Fax: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

Describe purpose of meeting: _____

Employee
Signature _____ Date _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT NOTICE AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT

If submitted, it is mandatory for employers to retain a copy of this disclosure in their records for three years. 29 U.S.C. § 2616; 29 C.F.R. § 825.500. Persons are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The Department of Labor estimates that it will take an average of 15 minutes for respondents to complete this collection of information, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. If you have any comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, send them to the Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-3502, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210.

**DO NOT SEND THE COMPLETED FORM TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.
RETURN FORM TO THE EMPLOYER.**

**Designation Notice
under the Family and Medical Leave Act**

**U.S. Department of Labor
Wage and Hour Division**



**DO NOT SEND TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.
PROVIDE TO EMPLOYEE.**

OMB Control Number: 1235-0003

Expires: 6/30/2023

Leave covered under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) must be designated as FMLA-protected and the employer must inform the employee of the amount of leave that will be counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. In order to determine whether leave is covered under the FMLA, the employer may request that the leave be supported by a certification. If the certification is incomplete or insufficient, the employer must state in writing what additional information is necessary to make the certification complete and sufficient. While use of this form is optional, a fully completed Form WH-382 provides employees with the information required by 29 C.F.R. §§ 825.300(d), 825.301, and 825.305(c), which must be provided within five business days of the employer having enough information to determine whether the leave is for an FMLA-qualifying reason. Information about the FMLA may be found [on the WHD website at www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla).

SECTION I - EMPLOYER

The employer is responsible in **all** circumstances for designating leave as FMLA-qualifying and giving notice to the employee. Once an eligible employee communicates a need to take leave for an FMLA-qualifying reason, an employer may not delay designating such leave as FMLA leave, and neither the employee nor the employer may decline FMLA protection for that leave.

Date: _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

From: _____ (Employer) To: _____ (Employee)

On _____ (mm/dd/yyyy) we received your most recent information to support your need for leave due to:
(Select as appropriate)

- The birth of a child, or placement of a child with you for adoption or foster care, and to bond with the newborn or newly-placed child
- Your own serious health condition
- The serious health condition of your spouse, child, or parent
- A qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that your spouse, child, or parent is on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty with the Armed Forces
- A serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember where you are the servicemember's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin (*Military Caregiver Leave*)

We have reviewed information related to your need for leave under the FMLA along with any supporting documentation provided and decided that your FMLA leave request is: (Select as appropriate)

- Approved.** All leave taken for this reason will be designated as FMLA leave. Go to Section III for more information.
- Not Approved:** (Select as appropriate)
 - The FMLA does not apply to your leave request.
 - As of the date the leave is to start, you do not have any FMLA leave available to use.
 - Other _____
- Additional information** is needed to determine if your leave request qualifies as FMLA leave. (Go to Section II for the specific information needed. If your FMLA leave request is approved and no additional information is needed, go to Section III.)

SECTION II – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NEEDED

We need additional information to determine whether your leave request qualifies under the FMLA. Once we obtain the additional information requested, we will inform you **within 5 business days** if your leave will or will not be designated as FMLA leave and count towards the amount of FMLA leave you have available. **Failure to provide the additional information as requested may result in a denial of your FMLA leave request.**

If you have any questions, please contact: _____ at _____
(Name of employer FMLA representative) (Contact information)

Incomplete or Insufficient Certification

The certification you have provided is incomplete and/or insufficient to determine whether the FMLA applies to your leave request.
(Select as applicable)

- The certification provided is incomplete and we are unable to determine whether the FMLA applies to your leave request. "Incomplete" means one or more of the applicable entries on the certification have not been completed.

Employee Name: _____

- The certification provided is insufficient to determine whether the FMLA applies to your leave request. “Insufficient” means the information provided is vague, unclear, ambiguous or non-responsive.

Specify the information needed to make the certification complete and/or sufficient: _____

You must provide the requested information no later than (provide at least 7 calendar days) _____ (mm/dd/yyyy), unless it is not practicable under the particular circumstances despite your diligent good faith efforts, or your leave may be denied.

Second and Third Opinions

- We request that you obtain a (second / third opinion) medical certification at our expense, and we will provide further details at a later time. Note: The employee or the employee’s family member may be requested to authorize the health care provider to release information pertaining only to the serious health condition at issue.

SECTION III – FMLA LEAVE APPROVED

As explained in Section I, your FMLA leave request is approved. All leave taken for this reason will be designated as FMLA leave and will count against the amount of FMLA leave you have available to use in the applicable 12-month period. The FMLA requires that you notify us as soon as practicable if the dates of scheduled leave change, are extended, or were initially unknown. Based on the information you have provided to date, we are providing the following information about the amount of time that will be counted against the total **amount of FMLA leave** you have available to use in the applicable 12-month period: (Select as appropriate)

- Provided there is no change from your **anticipated FMLA leave schedule**, the following number of hours, days, or weeks will be counted against your leave entitlement: _____.
- Because the leave you will need will be **unscheduled**, it is not possible to provide the hours, days, or weeks that will be counted against your FMLA entitlement at this time. You have the right to request this information once in a 30-day period (if leave was taken in the 30-day period).

Please be advised: (check all that apply)

- Some or all of your FMLA leave will not be paid.** Any unpaid FMLA leave taken will be designated as FMLA leave and counted against the amount of FMLA leave you have available to use in the applicable 12-month period.
- Based on your request, some or all of your available paid leave** (e.g., sick, vacation, PTO) **will be used during your FMLA leave.** Any paid leave taken for this reason will also be designated as FMLA leave and counted against the amount of FMLA leave you have available to use in the applicable 12-month period.
- We are requiring you to use some or all of your available paid leave** (e.g., sick, vacation, PTO) **during your FMLA leave.** Any paid leave taken for this reason will also be designated as FMLA leave and counted against the amount of FMLA leave you have available to use in the applicable 12-month period.
- Other:** _____
(e.g., Short- or long-term disability, workers’ compensation, state medical leave law, etc.) Any time taken for this reason will also be designated as FMLA leave and counted against the amount of FMLA leave you have available to use in the applicable 12-month period.

Return-to-work requirements. To be restored to work after taking FMLA leave, you (will be / will not be) required to provide a certification from your health care provider (fitness-for-duty certification) that you are able to resume work. This request for a fitness-for-duty certification is *only* with regard to the particular serious health condition that caused your need for FMLA leave. **If such certification is not timely received, your return to work may be delayed until the certification is provided.**

A list of the essential functions of your position (is / is not) attached. If attached, the fitness-for-duty certification must address your ability to perform the essential job functions.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT NOTICE AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT

It is mandatory for employers to inform employees in writing whether leave requested under the FMLA has been determined to be covered under the FMLA. 29 U.S.C. § 2617; 29 C.F.R. § 825.300(d), (e). It is mandatory for employers to retain a copy of this disclosure in their records for three years. 29 U.S.C. § 2616; 29 C.F.R. § 825.500. Persons are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The Department of Labor estimates that it will take an average of 10 minutes for respondents to complete this collection of information, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. If you have any comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, send them to the Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-3502, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210.

DO NOT SEND THE COMPLETED FORM TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR. EMPLOYEE INFORMATION.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Frozen Leave</i>
<i>Policy Number 231.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide procedures and guidelines for receiving compensation of the former Loss Leave Annual and Loss Leave Sick registers that were converted to Frozen Leave effective July 1, 1995.

II. DEFINITIONS

Frozen Leave

Employees who had loss leave time converted to Frozen Leave were offered an option to transfer the value of the Frozen Leave as of December 17, 2002 to the employee's 401(a) or to transfer the value of the Frozen Leave as of December 17, 2002 to a non-interest bearing account where the funds will be held until the employee meets retirement, disability retirement or County initiated elimination of his/her position.

Retirement

Retirement for purposes of this section, other than disability, shall mean any termination of employment after the latter of fifteen (15) or more years of service as an Employee of Columbia County. If an Employee dies while a Regular Full-time Employee or Regular Part-time Employee of the County, the deceased Employee's estate will be compensated for the accrued current Personal Time Off, Catastrophic Leave Incentive and any Frozen Leave funds that are held in a non-interest bearing account.

Disability Retirement

Disability Retirement shall mean that the Employee retired from employment with the County because the Employee was unable to engage in any substantial activity required to perform his/her job with the County by reason of medically determinable physical or mental impairment which can be expected to result in death or to be of a long, continued and indefinite duration. The permanent nature and degree of such disability shall be supported by medical evidence.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 17, 2014 August 16, 2016 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Holiday</i>
<i>Policy Number 232.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

HOLIDAY

I. PURPOSE

To provide Employees of Columbia County with approved Holidays.

II. POLICY

Subject to amendment by the Board of Commissioners, the County shall recognize the following Holidays that shall constitute time off with pay for Regular and Probationary Full-time and Part-time Employees:

New Year’s Day	January	Veterans Day	November
Martin Luther King Day	January	Thanksgiving Day	November
Memorial Day	May	Thanksgiving Holiday	November
Independence Day	July	Christmas Eve	December
Labor Day	September	Christmas Day	December
		Personal Holiday	One Day

In the event a holiday, other than a personal holiday, falls upon a Sunday, the following Monday shall be deemed to be the holiday. If the holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be deemed the holiday.

Regular Part-time and Probationary Part-time Employees shall receive a Pro Rata share of compensation at their regular straight time hourly rate for each approved holiday.

If any holiday mentioned above, with the exception of a Personal Holiday, falls on an Employee's regularly scheduled day off, the day of leave may be taken on a future date.

When a holiday falls within a period of paid Personal Time Off or Catastrophic Leave, the holiday shall not be counted as a leave day.

An Employee who is absent without approved paid or unpaid leave on the day immediately preceding or following a holiday shall not be paid for the holiday.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 17, 2014 August 16, 2016 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Holiday</i>
<i>Policy Number 232.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Personal Holiday

A Personal Holiday is a personal day of leave available to Regular and Probationary Full-time and Part-time Employees for purposes of use such as time off for birthday, anniversary, religious, holiday, special occasion or for County designated closures.

- 1) Regular and Probationary Full-time and Part-time Employees shall receive one day Personal Holiday each calendar year.
- 2) The Employee must receive supervisor approval prior to using the Personal Holiday.
- 3) Disapproval of use of the Personal Holiday should be in writing.
- 4) Personal Holiday approvals by Department Heads and the County Manager shall be made only when efficiency of County operations will not be adversely affected.
- 5) Personal Holidays must be taken during the calendar year of entitlement, and, if not used, will be forfeited.
- 6) The Personal Holiday is earned as a day of leave and must be used as a day of leave and may not be split into hours to be used at a later time.

The following criteria shall be used to determine which requests are allowed when the number of requests for a particular day would impair department operations, if granted:

- 1) First, the holiday request shall be considered in the order in which the requests for a holiday date are submitted, with the earliest request receiving first priority.
- 2) Second, if two or more requests are submitted simultaneously, the requests within that group shall be considered in order by employment seniority with the most senior Employee receiving the first priority within the group.
- 3) Final authority for approving or disapproving Personal Holiday requests shall rest with the Department Head. Any disapproval shall be communicated in writing to the Employee involved as soon as possible.
- 4) Personal Holiday usage must be recorded on the Non-exempt and Exempt Employee time sheet.

The Personal Holiday in the current year may be combined and used with Personal Time Off or other leaves. Employees, who resign, will be compensated for any unused Personal Holiday on the

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 17, 2014 August 16, 2016 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Holiday</i>
<i>Policy Number 232.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

final paycheck. Employees who are terminated for cause, or who do not return County owned equipment or property, will not be compensated for the Personal Holiday. Exceptions must be approved by the County Manager.

The Board of Commissioners may modify, amend, increase or decrease the number of paid holidays at its discretion or due to budgetary constraints.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Jury Duty or Subpoena as Witness</i>
<i>Policy Number 233.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for Employees performing Jury or Civil Duty.

II. POLICY

Jury Duty or Subpoena as Witness

Any Regular Full-time Employee or Regular Part-Time Employee who is required to serve on a jury, or as a result of official Employer duties is required to appear before a court, legislative committee or quasi-judicial body as a witness in response to a subpoena or other directive, shall be allowed authorized leave with pay for such service. An Employee who receives notice of jury duty or subpoena of summons must notify his/her Supervisor immediately. Court payments for travel time and meal expenses may be retained by the Employee.

Time away will not affect Personal Time Off or Catastrophic Leave accruals.

Plaintiff or Defendant

Employees who appear in court as the plaintiff or defendant in any action not related to their official duties, or for investigative proceedings such as before a grand jury where the Employee is a target of the investigation, shall not be paid for time away from work unless that time is taken as accrued Personal Time Off.

Return to Work

Employees are to return to work after jury duty. If excused as a juror or witness on any given day, the Employee is expected to contact his/her Supervisor and to report to work as instructed.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Leave of Absence without Pay</i>
<i>Policy Number 234.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

- 1) To establish procedures by which an Employee may request a leave of absence from employment with the County without pay.
- 2) To establish criteria for considering requests for leave of absence without pay.

II. POLICY

Requests for leave of absence without pay shall be in writing and shall state specifically the reasons for the leave requested and the date on which the leave would begin and end. The request shall be submitted by the Employee to the immediate Supervisor. The Supervisor may recommend to the Department Manager whether the request should be granted, modified or denied. The Department Manager, with the approval of the Human Resources Director, shall then make a decision based upon the best interest of the County, giving due consideration to the reasons given by the Employee, and the requirements of any applicable state and Federal laws.

The Department Manager may grant a Regular Employee a leave of absence without pay not to exceed ninety (90) days for non-medical purposes. Non-medical leave is unpaid leave time for career advancement or personal reasons. Such leaves may be granted only after all available Personal Time Off has been exhausted. Catastrophic leave may not be used in lieu of leave without pay for non-medical reasons.

Leave without pay for medical reasons may be granted for a period not to exceed twelve (12) weeks and in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act. Leave of absence may be used for disability/illnesses (including maternity related disabilities) which extend beyond the period of accrued Catastrophic Leave. Personal Time Off accruals may be used after Catastrophic Leave accruals are exhausted and before starting a leave of absence without pay for medical reasons.

Requests for leave of absence without pay due to reasons of health must be accompanied by documentation from the Employee's attending physician supporting the request. All leave of absence without pay requests must be approved by the Department Manager. Approved requests shall be forwarded to the Human Resources Director for review and concurrence.

The request for leave of absence without pay should not be approved until it has received the approval of the Human Resources Director. Under no circumstances may an Employee use a leave of absence without pay to work for another Employer or to pursue self-employment.

No Catastrophic Leave, Holiday, Personal Time Off benefits or any other fringe benefits, except as set out below, shall accrue while the Employee is on a leave of absence without pay.

Any Employee on an approved leave of absence may continue his or her medical, life insurance, and supplemental insurance coverage by paying the Employee cost to the County on a bi-weekly basis.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Leave of Absence without Pay</i>
<i>Policy Number 234.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

The Immediate Supervisor is required to notify the Human Resources Department when the Employee returns to work after the Leave of Absence without Pay has expired. Upon expiration of the leave of absence, the Employee shall be reinstated in the position held at the time the leave was granted or another equivalent position, if available.

Upon extenuating circumstances, the Human Resources Director may grant an extension of a leave without pay upon written request by the Employee. Such extension may not exceed ninety (90) days and will be based on departmental as well as Employee considerations.

Employees who fail to return to work on the date specified in the leave request without receiving an approved extension are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Military Leave</i>
<i>Policy Number 235.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To comply with the requirements of Federal Law under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) and the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.) §38-2-279 as they relate to Employees absent from work while engaged in the performance of ordered military duty and while going to and returning from such duty.

II. POLICY

Columbia County shall provide for the rights of public officers and Employees absent on military duty as members of organized militia or reserve forces by complying with the requirements of USERRA and O.C.G.A. §38-2-279 or as amended from time to time.

III. GUIDELINES

1) Protected Employees

USERRA protections apply to all employees on duty with a uniformed service. Duty includes (whether voluntary or involuntary) active duty, active duty for training, initial active duty for training, inactive duty training, full-time National Guard duty and an absence to determine fitness for duty. Uniformed Services include the U.S. armed forces, National Guard or the commissioned corps of the Public Health Services.

2) Reemployment Rights

An employee on duty with a uniformed service is entitled to reemployment if the duty lasted less than five (5) years (extensions apply in certain circumstances) and reports/applies for reemployment within a specific period of time based on the length of duty.

3) Employee Benefits

An employee who is on duty with a uniformed service is deemed to be on a leave of absence or furlough, and must receive the same employee benefits (other than health or retirement coverage) not based on seniority as other employees on leave or furlough. No benefits are required to be maintained under this provision if the employee knowingly provides the employer with a written statement that he or she will not be returning to employment with the employer following the absence for duty.

4) Health Benefits

USERRA provides separate rules for continued health care coverage of the employee and dependents during duty with a uniformed service. If the period of duty is less than thirty-one (31) days, coverage must be maintained if the employee pays required employee contribution.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Military Leave</i>
<i>Policy Number 235.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

If the duty is more than thirty-one (31) days, an employer must permit an employee to continue coverage under rules similar to COBRA.

5) Retirement Benefits

An employee who is reemployed pursuant to the USERRA requirements must be treated as not having incurred a break in service for defined benefit, defined contribution, 403(b), and 457 plan purposes. The least must count as service for vesting and benefit accrual purposes; all accruals that would have been made if the employee had not been absent for duty must be funded. Also, matching contributions must be made up if, on reemployment, the employee makes any necessary pre-tax or after-tax contributions within the lesser of three (3) times the period the employee was absent for duty or five (5) years.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 21, 2011 December 18, 2012 September 21, 2021 February 15, 2022 June 18, 2024</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Catastrophic Leave</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 236.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i></p>

I. PURPOSE

To establish Catastrophic Leave and the terms of the accrual and use thereof for Regular Full-Time Employees and Regular Part-Time Employees.

II. POLICY

It is the policy to grant Catastrophic Leave with pay to eligible Regular Full-Time Employees and Regular Part-Time Employees in accordance with the policy guidelines. Probationary, temporary and seasonal workers are not eligible for Catastrophic Leave.

III. GUIDELINES

- 1) Accrual
Regular Full-Time Employees may accrue Catastrophic Leave up to a maximum of one thousand fifty-six (1,056) hours; a Regular Part-Time Employee equivalent is prorated.
- 2) Excess Leave
Employees who have excess Personal Time Off Leave at the end of each calendar year will have the excess leave placed in his or her personal Catastrophic Leave account at the beginning of each new calendar year, in accordance with the Personal Time Off Policy, *Policy Number 237.1*.
- 3) Usage
Employees may use his or her Catastrophic Leave for personal illness or injury, work-related injury, medical examinations or treatment, or to care for an Immediate or Extended Family member who is sick or injured. The Employee may begin using the Leave after the fifth (5th) consecutive day of absence or forty (40) consecutive hours for a Full-Time Employee. A Part-Time employee equivalent is prorated. Employees with pre-approved or emergency medical leave requests who are expected to be out of work consecutively for more than forty (40) hours may be allowed to forego use of Personal Time Off first, subject to approval by the Human Resources Director.
- 4) Intermittent Usage
Intermittent usage of Catastrophic Leave may be approved to allow employees to obtain treatments that can only be given during working hours, i.e. chemotherapy, dialysis, radiation, etc. The Employee must be able to perform the essential functions of his or her position, must apply for and be approved for Family Medical Leave or Worker's Compensation, before he or she will be allowed to use Catastrophic Leave on an intermittent

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 21, 2011 December 18, 2012 September 21, 2021 February 15, 2022 June 18, 2024</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Catastrophic Leave</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 236.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i></p>

basis. Requests for intermittent usage and documentation supporting the request must be submitted to the employee’s immediate Supervisor, Department Head and Human Resources Director for review and approval. The information will be maintained in the employee confidential medical or Worker’s Compensation file.

- 5) Exclusions
 Catastrophic Leave may not be used under the following conditions:
 - a) Employment has been terminated either before or during such medical absence.
 - b) The absence is due to illness or injury attributable to:
 - (1) Intentional self-inflicted injury
 - (2) Drug or alcohol addiction, unless seeking professional care
 - (3) Illness or injury incurred while committing a crime
 - (4) Illness or injury resulting from paid employment or self-employment other than employment by Columbia County that was not approved by the major Department Head, County Manager or Division Director.

IV. LEAVE REQUEST

- 1) Procedures
 - a) Eligible Employees who use Catastrophic Leave shall submit medical status reports from the attending physician to his or her immediate supervisor during the course of the Employee medical recovery period. The report must be provided at a minimum every thirty (30) days and must provide a prognosis and tentative date of return to work.
 - b) The employee must provide a return to work statement from the attending physician indicating he/she is able to perform the essential functions of his or her position without restrictions or limitations. The statement must be presented to the immediate Supervisor, Department Manager, and the Human Resources Department prior to his or her return to work after a personal illness or injury.
 - c) No Catastrophic Leave will be granted to an eligible Employee in excess of the amount accrued and available to such employee.
 - d) Accrued Catastrophic Leave and Personal Time Off leave of absence may be exhausted before an eligible Employee takes leave of absence without pay for medical reasons.
 - e) The Employee may use Personal Time Off leave when his or her Catastrophic Leave has been exhausted.
 - f) All Employee medical documentation will be maintained in a confidential medical file secured in the Human Resources Department.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 21, 2011 December 18, 2012 September 21, 2021 February 15, 2022 June 18, 2024</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Catastrophic Leave</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 236.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i></p>

- 2) Department Responsibility
It is the responsibility of each Department Manager or designated Supervisor to ensure the provisions of this policy are observed. Corrective action should be taken in instances of suspected abuses or misinterpretation of the utilization of Catastrophic Leave. The Department Manager will ensure that use of Catastrophic Leave is recorded on the employee time sheet.
- 3) Leave Forfeiture
Unused accrued Catastrophic Leave shall be forfeited upon termination of employment unless the employee qualifies for the Catastrophic Leave Incentive.

V. CATASTROPHIC LEAVE INCENTIVE

1) Eligibility Criteria

Employees with 20 years or more, or your combination of age plus years of service equals 65 (e.g. 50 years of age with 15 years of service), or Contract Employees with the required equivalency and creditable County service, who separate employment for non-disciplinary reasons and who provide adequate notice of the separation to his or her supervisor, will be eligible for the Catastrophic Leave Incentive. Part-time employees with 20 years or more creditable County service are eligible for the pro-rata equivalent of a full-time employee.

2) Catastrophic Leave Incentive

Eligible Full-Time Employees as defined above will receive the following:

- a) A payroll distribution of 50% of the Catastrophic Leave balance in a final pay check at the then current hourly rate of pay.
A deposit of fifty percent (50%) of the then current hourly rate of pay of the Catastrophic Leave balance to an individual Retirement Health Savings (RHS) plan.
- b) Eligible Part-time employees as defined above will receive a prorated equivalency of the above incentive criteria.

Compensation under the provisions of the policy is contingent upon the continued policy approval and continued availability of funds as approved by the Board of Commissioners.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 18, 2012 June 17, 2014 May 19, 2015 March 20, 2018 September 21, 2021 February 15, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Personal Time Off</i>
<i>Policy Number 237.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a Personal Time Off policy and the terms of accrual and usage thereof for eligible Regular Full-time Employees and Regular Part-time Employees.

II. POLICY

It is the policy to grant Personal Time Off with pay to Regular Full-time Employees and Regular Part-time Employees in accordance with policy guidelines. Probationary, temporary and seasonal workers are not eligible for Personal Time Off.

III. GUIDELINES

Eligibility

Regular Full-time Employees and Regular Part-time Employees are eligible for Personal Time Off.

Accrual

January through December is the Personal Time Off accrual period. Eligible Employees accrue Personal Time Off each month based on the total years of previous and current creditable service.

Employees begin accruing Personal Time Off from the date of hire. Accruals are posted on or near the first day of each following month. Temporary and seasonal workers are not entitled to Personal Time Off leave accruals.

Contract Employees will receive Personal Time Off in accordance with the terms of his/her contract, if applicable. Eligible Employees accrue Personal Time Off as follows:

Years Svc	Accrual Per Month	Days Per Year @ 8 Hours
Hire Date-1	8 hours/month	12 days/year
1-5	12 hours/month	18 days/year
5-10	14 hours/month	21 days/year
10-15	16 hours/month	24 days/year
15-20	18 hours/month	27 days/year
20+	20 hours/month	30 days/year

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 18, 2012 June 17, 2014 May 19, 2015 March 20, 2018 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Personal Time Off</i>
<i>Policy Number 237.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Employees of the Fire Services Division, who are assigned to Fire Suppression and who work the 24/48 schedule, will accrue PTO at 150% of the normal rate based on years of service. Eligible Employees will accrue Personal Time Off as follows:

Years Svc	Accrual Per Month	Days Per Year @ 24 Hours
Hire Date-1	12 hours/month	6 days/year
1-5	18 hours/month	9 days/year
5-10	21 hours/month	10.5 days/year
10-15	24 hours/month	12 days/year
15-20	27 hours/month	13.5 days/year
20+	30 hours/month	15 days/year

Leave Carryover

A Regular Full-time Employee may carryover a maximum of 320 hours of unused PTO into the next calendar year; Regular Part-time Employees may carryover a prorated portion of the maximum hours for a Full-time Employee. Accumulated PTO hours exceeding 320 at the end of the calendar year shall be considered excess.

Excess Personal Time Off Annual Contributions

- 1) Employees must use a minimum of one hundred twenty (120) hours Personal Time Off during the calendar year when the time was earned to be eligible for rollover.
- 2) If one hundred twenty (120) hours PTO were used, the employee will be eligible to roll the balance of excess PTO leave to his/her personal Catastrophic Leave balance at the beginning of the succeeding calendar year; part-time employees must use and earn the pro-rated equivalent. Employees may earn up to 1,056 hours of catastrophic leave. Hours in excess of 1,056 will be forfeited.
- 3) Employees who cannot place excess unused Personal Time Off in his/her personal Catastrophic Leave account each year, will forfeit all excess Personal Time Off leave at the beginning of the succeeding calendar year.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 18, 2012 June 17, 2014 May 19, 2015 March 20, 2018 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Personal Time Off</i>
<i>Policy Number 237.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Personal Time Off Scheduling and Usage

Any Regular Full-time Employee or Regular Part-time Employee must request approval of Personal Time Off leave from his/her Department Manager or designated Supervisor in advance of the date to be used. Failure to receive approval for the Personal Time Off for unexpected emergencies within thirty (30) minutes after the beginning of the workday may result in denial of compensation for the absence and/or disciplinary action.

Terminated Employee Personal Time Off Compensation

A Regular Full-time or a Regular Part-time Employee, who resigns or terminates employment without cause, will be compensated for his/her unused Personal Time Off on his/her final pay period if notification of the separation is received by Human Resources prior to the end of the terminated employee last pay period. Employees, who are terminated for cause, or for failure to return County owned equipment or property, or for other policy violations considered unacceptable by the County, will not be eligible to be compensated for unused Personal Time Off. Exceptions must be approved by the Department Head, Human Resources Director or County Manager.

Non-eligible Employee

Temporary and seasonal employees are not considered to be a Regular Full-time Employee or Regular Part-time Employee and are not entitled to any payment for Personal Time Off because such person accrues no Personal Time Off.

Transfers

If an Employee transfers from one County department to another, the accumulated Personal Time Off shall also transfer.

Exceptions

Probationary employees may be allowed to use Personal Time Off accruals prior to completion of his/her probationary period. Approval of exceptions to the policy are at the discretion of the Department Head, however, the Human Resources Director must be advised of the exception or terms of the special arrangement.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 18, 2012 June 17, 2014 May 19, 2015 March 20, 2018 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Personal Time Off</i>
<i>Policy Number 237.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

General Information

Personal Time Off earned by a Regular Full-time Employee or a Regular Part-time Employee is recommended to not be transferred among Employees. Exceptions to the policy may be made under the provisions and guidelines of the Medical Leave Sharing Policy, *Policy 238.1*.

Personal Time Off will not accrue while a Regular Full-time Employee or Regular Part-time Employee is on leave of absence without pay.

Accrued and unused Personal Time Off may be used, subject to Department Head and Human Resources Director approvals, to supplement Catastrophic Leave if the Regular Full-time Employee or Regular Part-time Employee has exhausted his/her Catastrophic Leave. Paid holidays that occur during periods of Personal Time Off are not charged to the employee Personal Time Off balance.

III. ADMINISTRATION

- 1) Department Managers are responsible for managing the Personal Time Off schedules in their departments and for administering the provisions of this policy.
- 2) The County Manager shall approve all Personal Time Off schedules for Division Directors and other direct administrative support staff.
- 3) Division Directors will approve all Personal Time Off requests for direct Department Managers and other administrative support staff.
- 4) Department Managers will approve all Personal Time Off requests for department staff and direct reports.
- 5) It is recommended that a Division Director and the next ranking Department Manager not take Personal Time Off at the same time.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Medical Leave Sharing</i>
<i>Policy Number 238.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish Medical Leave Sharing and the terms thereof for Regular Full-time and Regular Part-time Employees to use for medical reasons.

II. POLICY

It is the policy to grant Medical Leave Sharing with pay to Regular Full-time Employees and Regular Part-time Employees in accordance with policy guidelines. Probationary, temporary and seasonal workers are not eligible for Medical Leave Sharing.

III. GUIDELINES

The Department Head or Division Director in conjunction with the Human Resources Director may permit a Regular Full-time or Regular Part-time Employee to receive Personal Time Off and Catastrophic Leave donations from other Employees under this subsection if:

- 1) An Employee suffers from an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition which is of an extraordinary or severe nature and which has caused, or is likely to cause, the Employee to:
 - a) Go on leave without pay status; or
 - b) Terminate County employment.
- 2) The Employee's absence and the use of shared Personal Time Off or Catastrophic Leave are justified;
- 3) The Employee has depleted or will shortly deplete his/her Personal Time Off and Catastrophic Leave accounts; and
- 4) The Employee has abided by all personnel rules regarding Personal Time Off and Catastrophic Leave use.

Donations

Full-time Employees may donate up to forty (40) hours from either his/her personal Catastrophic Leave or Personal Time Off account per year, but, no more than one-fourth (1/4) of the balance of his/her Catastrophic Leave or Personal Time Off account annually. Employee donations will be in eight (8) hour increments only. Part-time Employees may donate the Pro-rata equivalent.

Donation Procedure for Department/Division Co-Worker

- 1) Employee submits request in writing to his/her Department Head requesting a prescribed amount of Personal Time Off or Catastrophic Leave be transferred to a specific employee for Medical Leave Sharing within the Department/Division.
- 2) If disapproved, the Department Head returns the Medical Leave Sharing request to the requestor with an explanation for the denial.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Medical Leave Sharing</i>
<i>Policy Number 238.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

- 3) If approved, the request is forwarded to the Human Resources Director for review and approval or disapproval.
- 4) If approved, the leave will be transferred to the specified employee.
- 5) If disapproved, the request will be returned to the originating Department Head with a reason for the denial.

Donation Procedure for Non-Department/Non-Division Employee

- 1) Employee submits request in writing to Department Head requesting a prescribed amount of Personal Time Off or Catastrophic Leave be transferred to a specific employee for Medical Leave Sharing who works in another Department or Division.
- 2) The Department Head approves the request and forwards to Non-Department Employee Department Head for approval.
- 3) The receiving Department Head reviews the request for transfer of leave to his/her employee for medical reasons and approves or disapproves the request.
- 4) If disapproved, the request is returned to the requesting Department Head with an explanation of the denial.
- 5) If approved, the request is forwarded to the Human Resources Director for review.
- 6) If approved by Human Resources, the leave will be transferred to the specified employee.
- 7) If disapproved, the Medical Leave Sharing request will be returned to the originating Department Head with a reason for the denial.

Medical Review

The Human Resources Director shall determine the amount of Personal Time Off or Catastrophic Leave, if any, which may be donated to an Employee under this section. However, a Regular Full-time Employee may receive no more than six (6) weeks of donated leave contributions or for Regular Part-time Employees his/her prorated portion thereof, of donated leave. Medical hardships will be reviewed case by case and may result in exceptions to the recommended leave maximum. Requests for exceptions will be reviewed by the appropriate Department Head and Human Resources Director.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 17, 2014 December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017	TOPIC: <i>Workers' Compensation Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 239.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To comply with Georgia State Workers' Compensation Insurance Law O.C.G.A. (34-9-81.1) and provide for payment for employee medical treatment and to supplement a portion of any income the employee may lose while recovering from an on-the-job illness or injury.

II. POLICY

Columbia County complies with Georgia State Worker Compensation Insurance Law and provides payment for employee medical treatment and lost income while recovering from work related illness or injury. The Family Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") allows an employer to run Family Medical Leave concurrent with Workers' Compensation related absences. The FMLA paperwork is provided and maintained by the Human Resources Department.

III. GUIDELINES

Specific benefits are prescribed by law depending on the circumstances of each case. It is against the law for a company to terminate or punish an employee for reporting an accident or injury. All reports of first aid, accidents, illness (due to work) and injury **must** be reported within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident. The Columbia County Report of Work Injury, Incidents and Accident Investigations form must be used in reporting all accidents/incidents. The forms are available on-line, may be obtained from Department administrative or management staff, or by calling the Human Resources Department.

Workers' Compensation benefits are the employee's exclusive remedy for accidental injury, occupational disease or death arising out of and in the course of employment. Eligible employees may receive benefits including medical, surgical, vocational rehabilitation services and certain supplies, as well as compensation from medically authorized lost time due to disability.

Human Resources administers the Workers' Compensation Program for the Columbia County Board of Commissioners. All workers' compensation claims are handled by a third party administrator, ACCG (Association of County Commissioners of Georgia), PO Box 922608, Norcross, Georgia 30010.

IV. RETURN TO WORK

The County is committed to returning employees with work-related injuries to work, within safe and healthy medical practices, as soon as practical. As soon as possible after the injury, and when the employee is medically able to return to work, a written medical release from the designated

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 17, 2014 December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017	TOPIC: <i>Workers' Compensation Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 239.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

medical service provider must be received to the County Human Resources Department. If the medical release specifies that the employee may return to work, the employee will be returned to work immediately or as soon as practical.

The County reserves the right to require any treating physician to review the employee's job description and work duties, and to express an opinion as to whether the employee may safely perform the essential job duties, before putting the employee back to work with or without temporary job modifications.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Americans with Disabilities Act of 2008</i>
<i>Policy Number 240.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To provide policy that will ensure 1) equal opportunities for disabled persons to participate in and benefit from services, programs or activities sponsored by the County; 2) a bias free environment for disabled Employees or for disabled persons who seek employment with the County; and 3) prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of a disability.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

The Human Resources Director is responsible for interpretation and oversight of this Policy and will serve as the ADA Coordinator.

III. POLICY

Columbia County Board of Commissioners will not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or the provision of services. It is the intent of the County to guarantee disabled persons equal opportunity to participate in or enjoy the benefits of County services, programs or activities, and to allow disabled Employees a bias free work environment as required by the ADA and ADA Amendments Act of 2008. The County, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation in compliance with the ADA.

The ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (the “Act”) became effective January 1, 2009. As part of the Act, Section 4 amended the ADA to redefine the term “disability”, by also defining “major life activities” and “being regarded as having such impairment”. The Act was further amended by final rule effective October 11, 2016. The final rule added new sections to its title II (nondiscrimination in State and local government services) and title III (nondiscrimination by public accommodations and commercial facilities) of the ADA regulations to set forth the proper meaning and interpretation of the definition of “disability” and to make related changes required by the ADA Amendments Act in other sections of the regulations.

The revised language clarifies that the term “disability” shall be interpreted broadly and explains that the primary object of attention should be whether covered entities have complied with their obligations not to discriminate based on disability and that the question of whether an individual’s impairment is a disability under the ADA should not demand extensive analysis. The revised regulations expand the definition of “major life activities” by providing a non-exhaustive list of major activities that specifically includes the operation of major bodily functions. The revisions also add rules of construction to be applied when determining whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity including that:

- 1) such term shall be construed in favor of broad coverage of individuals under the Act;
- 2) an impairment that substantially limits one major life activity in order to be a disability;

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Americans with Disabilities Act of 2008</i>
<i>Policy Number 240.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

- 3) an impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active;
- 4) the determination of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity shall be made without regard to mitigating measures.

The County is committed to creating an environment in which facilities for public meetings and *General Information* public use are accessible. Furthermore, the County will provide auxiliary aids and services, if necessary, and if such reasonable accommodation can be provided without undue hardship to the County.

The County has a commitment to ensure equal opportunities for disabled Employees. Every reasonable effort will be made to provide an accessible work environment and additional accommodations as required by the ADA as amended.

Employment practices (e.g. hiring, training, testing, transfer, promotion, compensation, benefits, termination, etc.) will be administered in such manner as to not discriminate against disabled Employees as required by the ADA as amended.

Employees or other participants in the County's programs, services and activities who feels the County has violated their rights under the ADA as amended may submit written complaints to the ADA Coordinator.

County staff will ensure that disabled persons may participate in and benefit from County programs, services and activities as required by the ADA as amended.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Military Caregiver Family Medical Leave</i>
<i>Policy Number 241.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a policy and guidelines for the use of family or medical leave for County Employees.

II. POLICY

An eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of a current service member may take up to twenty-six (26) weeks of leave to care for such service member with a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty for which the covered service member is undergoing medical treatment, including veterans who are undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy for a serious injury or illness that occurred by the service member in the line of duty on active duty and manifested itself before or after the service member became a veteran. Such leave is designated "Military Caregiver Family Medical Leave."

Leave is permitted to care for current members of the Regular Armed Forces, National Guard, Reserves, those on the temporary disability retired list, and veterans who are undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy for serious injury or illness.

The current service member or veteran must have or have had a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty, as determined by the U. S. Department of Defense, that may render him/her medically unfit to perform the roles of his current or prior office, grade, rank or rating and for which he/she is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, therapy or outpatient treatment.

In order to care for a covered service member or covered veteran, an eligible employee must be the spouse, parent, son or daughter, or next of kin of the covered service member or covered veteran.

"Next of kin" is defined as the covered service member's nearest blood relative – other than the service member's spouse, parent, son or daughter – in the following order of priority:

- Blood relatives who have been granted legal custody
- Brothers and sisters
- Grandparents
- Aunts and uncles
- First cousins

A service member has the right to designate in writing another blood relative as his or her next of kin.

The Employee must submit completed FMLA paperwork to Human Resources when taking paid or unpaid non-work-related Military Caregiver or Veteran Military Caregiver Family Medical Leave.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Military Caregiver Family Medical Leave</i>
<i>Policy Number 241.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Employee eligibility. An Employee shall be eligible for Military Caregiver or Veteran Military Caregiver FMLA leave when:

- 1) The Employee has worked for at least twelve (12) months for the County. The twelve months need not have been consecutive. (If the Employee was on the payroll for part of a week, the County will count the entire week. The County considers 52 weeks to be equal to twelve months.)
- 2) The Employee has worked for the County for at least 1,250 hours over the previous twelve (12) months before the leave would begin, not including paid or unpaid leave.
- 3) When both spouses are employed by the County, they are jointly entitled to a combined total of twenty-six (26) work weeks of Military Caregiver or Veteran Military Caregiver FMLA leave.

Calculation of Leave. Eligible Employees can use up to twenty-six (26) weeks of leave during a single twelve (12) month period. The 12-month period begins on the first day the employee takes leave for this purpose and ends 12 months thereafter.

Maintenance of Benefits. During a family or medical leave under this Policy an Employee shall be entitled to maintain group health insurance coverage on the same basis as if he/she had continued to work at the County. To maintain uninterrupted coverage, the Employee will have to continue to pay his or her share of insurance premium payments. This payment shall be made either in person or by mail to the Human Resources Department. If the Employee fails to make the premium payment and it becomes more than 30 days overdue, insurance coverage will be discontinued.

If the Employee informs the County that he/she does not intend to return to work at the end of the leave period, the Employee's rights to any health care benefits shall be only to the extent provided for by the then current health care plan, if any, provided by the County for its Employees. If the Employee chooses not to return to work for reasons other than a continued serious health condition, the County will require the Employee to reimburse the County the amount the County contributed towards the Employee's health insurance during the leave period.

If the Employee contributes to life insurance or supplemental plans, the County will continue making payroll deductions while the Employee is on paid leave. While the Employee is on unpaid leave, the Employee must make arrangements to continue to make those premium payments. If the Employee does not continue these payments, the County will recover the payments at the end of the leave period in a manner consistent with the law. Certain types of earned benefits received prior to the start of an Employee's leave shall not be lost. Leave may not accrue during the leave period if the employee has exhausted all Personal Time and Catastrophic Leave. The use of family or medical leave will not be considered a break in service for vesting or benefits program purposes.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Military Caregiver Family Medical Leave</i>
<i>Policy Number 241.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Job Restoration. An Employee who utilizes Military Caregiver or Veteran Military Caregiver Leave under this policy will be restored to the same job or a job with equivalent status, pay, benefits and other employment terms. Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an Employee's leave.

The County may choose to exempt certain highly compensated Key Employees from this job restoration requirement and not return them to the same or similar position at the completion of FMLA leave. Employees who may be exempted will be informed of this status when they request leave. If the County deems it necessary to deny job restoration for a Key Employee on FMLA leave, the County will inform the Employee of its intention and will offer the Employee the opportunity to return to work immediately.

Use of Paid and Unpaid Leave. The Employee may use Paid Leave first and take the remainder of the leave as Unpaid Leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, Employees must comply with the County's normal leave policies.

Intermittent Leave and Reduced Work Schedules. In certain cases, intermittent use of the twenty-six weeks (26) of Military Caregiver Leave or a modified work schedule may be allowed if the Employee has received approval by the Department Head, Human Resources Director and the County Manager. The use of intermittent leave should be scheduled so that this leave does not unduly disrupt the County's operations. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, Employees must comply with the County's normal leave policies.

In some cases, the County may temporarily transfer an Employee who is using intermittent leave or a modified work schedule to a different job with equivalent pay and benefits if another position would better accommodate the intermittent or modified work schedule.

III. PROCEDURES

Procedure for requesting leave. Employees requesting leave under this policy must provide 30 days advance notice, if the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable. If the need for FMLA leave is not foreseeable, Employees must notify the County of the need for leave as soon as possible. The Military Caregiver or Veteran Military Caregiver Family Medical Leave package is available in the Human Resources Department.

Upon receiving an Employee's request for leave, the County will provide the Employee a Notice of Eligibility and Rights and Responsibilities (Form WH-381).

An Employee taking leave under this policy for Military Caregiver Leave must submit a complete and sufficient Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of Covered Service member – for Military

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 June 16, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Military Caregiver Family Medical Leave</i>
<i>Policy Number 241.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Family Leave (Form WH-385).

An Employee taking leave under this policy for Veteran Military Caregiver Leave must submit a complete and sufficient Certification for Serious Injury or Illness of a Veteran for Military Caregiver Leave (Form WH-385-V).

The required certification should be provided within fifteen (15) calendar days or the Employee should provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. If the employee fails to provide complete and sufficient certification, the County may deny the request for Military Caregiver or Veteran Military Caregiver Leave.

After the County has received the required notice and certification, it will inform the employee within five (5) business days whether the leave will be designated Military Family Leave. The employee will receive a Designation Notice (Form WH-382) indicating the amount of leave that will be counted against the employee's FMLA entitlement, if determinable at that time.

While on leave, Employees are required to report to their Department Head on a bi-weekly basis regarding their status and their intent to return to work. Employees are required to give at least two business days' notice if their anticipated date of return to work changes.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Job Posting</i>
<i>Policy Number 242.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To ensure that all employees are made aware and have the opportunity to apply for open positions either before or concurrent with the consideration of external candidates for employment. Business conditions permitting, all regular full-time and part-time positions will be posted when a vacancy occurs unless a Job Posting waiver has been approved by the Human Resources Director.

II. POLICY

Position vacancies will be posted to provide opportunities to hire new employees and for promotion or transfer of current employees. Several methods of Job Posting may be utilized based on current business needs.

III. POSTING DEFINITIONS

Internal Postings – Postings offered to and supports the professional development of current regular employees. Successful candidates must meet the position minimum qualifications. Typically, internal candidates will be considered for positions that are a higher grade and considered to be a promotion. There may be instances where a lateral transfer may provide career development opportunities that will enhance an employee’s skills and abilities. Vacancies that occur as a result of an internal promotion may be posted externally.

Candidates must be eligible regular employees, have completed the new hire probationary period, and employed for a minimum of twelve (12) months in their current position with a satisfactory performance.

The Job Posting opportunity will be made available only to County government internal applicants. The job will be posted internally a minimum of five (5) business days. Eligible employees must submit a letter of interest, a completed application and supporting documentation by the closing date.

External Postings – Postings offered to recruit external and internal candidates for the applicant pool. Position vacancies will be posted a minimum of five (5) business days on the County Job Opportunities website. Additional advertisements including the local newspaper, professional journals and websites may be utilized to recruit candidates for the applicant pool.

The Human Resources Department notifies employees of position vacancies through email distribution to all employees and posting on various bulletin boards throughout the County.

Each posting includes the posting date, posting deadline, position number, position title, department, salary grade and minimum entry rate.

Intradepartmental Posting – Postings offered within a Department only, indicating only candidates within the Department where the vacancy exists will be considered. The job will be

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Job Posting</i>
<i>Policy Number 242.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

posted within the Department a minimum of five (5) business days. Eligible employees must submit a letter of interest, a completed County application for employment and supporting documentation by the closing date to the Division Director.

Waivers to the Job Posting Policy – In rare instances, the posting policy may not apply. The Division Director may request a waiver of the job posting requirement by submitting a statement justifying the request and must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- 1) The Division Director has qualified candidates within the Department that may be considered for a position vacancy and the Employees in the Department are allowed an opportunity to place a Job Bid on the vacant position.
- 2) An employee in the department where the vacancy exists has been determined by the Division Director to have certifications, skills and abilities to meet the requirements of the vacancy and the individual is uniquely qualified to be promoted into the position. The application and any supporting documentation will be submitted to the Human Resources Director for review and final approval.
- 3) Reorganization or restructuring of the department results in a promotion opportunity, but no additional authorized position is created to add to total staff. Therefore, one of the current department employees meeting the qualifications for the promotion may be recommended.

Employment Offer Notification – Human Resources will, if requested, extend the employment offer on behalf of the hiring department. If the first offer is rejected, the hiring department will decide whether to extend an offer to another candidate within the applicant pool or to re-advertise the position.

If the candidate accepts the employment and salary offer, all other candidates are notified in writing by the interviewer that they were not selected for the position.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Job Bidding</i>
<i>Policy Number 243.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To ensure that all eligible employees are provided an opportunity to bid on position vacancies prior to advertising externally for applicants.

II. POLICY

To ensure that all eligible employees are provided an opportunity to bid on position vacancies. Qualifications, past performance, skills and abilities are considered in the selection process. When a position vacancy occurs, employees may use the bidding process to indicate their interest in being considered for the vacant position.

Recruitment for a position may occur internally and externally simultaneously. When a position vacancy occurs within a department and an employee of that department meets the minimum qualifications, the employee may be promoted and the job bid process may be waived. It is intended that the job bid process will be used as often as practicable as a means of filling vacant positions.

The Human Resources Director will ensure compliance with this policy and procedure.

III. PROCEDURES

Employees who have satisfactorily completed probation and been employed a minimum of one (1) year in his or her current position, are eligible to apply for a posted position under this procedure.

Position vacancies will be posted unless it is determined to be in the best interest of the County to waive the posting period. Examples of such waivers include placing misplaced employees due to layoff, department reorganizations or vacancies where the hiring Managers want to consider internal or original applicant pool candidates only. All posting waivers must be reviewed by the Human Resources Director.

If the hiring department has a vacant position and a qualified candidate or candidates within the department, the position may be excluded from the County posting requirement. In such circumstances, the Department Manager must advise the Human Resources Director of the waiver request. If approved, the position will be posted as an Intradepartmental Posting indicating that only candidates within the department will be considered and interested candidates external to the hiring department need not apply.

If it is determined that a position vacancy will be announced, the announcement will be posted on the Human Resources Career Opportunities website for a minimum of five (5) business days, excluding weekends and holidays.

To ensure fairness for all employees utilizing the job bidding process, no commitment can be made to a current employee or external applicant prior to the completion of the review and selection process.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Job Bidding</i>
<i>Policy Number 243.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Employees may apply for a vacant position by completing the electronic application form located on the County website prior to the position vacancy closing deadline. The County will not accept resumes in lieu of a completed application.

The selected candidate's supervisor will be notified and a transfer date, if necessary, will be determined. Any employee not selected for a Job Bid should first discuss the reasons with the hiring Department Manager or Division Director and if not satisfied, may contact the Human Resources Director.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Administration of Employee Personnel Records</i>
<i>Policy Number 244.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures and responsibilities for the maintenance of Employee Personnel Records.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

The Human Resources Department is responsible for establishing and maintaining an official personnel file for each Employee of the County.

III. POLICY

1) Establishment of procedures and responsibilities for the maintenance of personnel records.

- a. Access to the personnel files may be allowed if the Manager and/or Department Head feel access would be helpful, necessary or warranted for administrative purposes.
- b. Department Heads are responsible for the forwarding of documents for inclusion in the personnel files of those Employees assigned to their department.
- c. Each Employee is responsible for the verification of information contained in the personnel file through periodic audit. A Human Resources representative must be present when a file is audited. Only the Human Resources Director may remove items from the respective files.

All audit appointments should be with the Human Resources Director or Human Resources representative. The purpose of the audit or inspection is to ensure accuracy and completeness of the file.

- d. Separate personnel files shall not be maintained by individual departments; however, working files may be utilized by departments.

2) Information to be included in the Employee's personnel file:

Permanent Documents. Documents retained in the folder throughout the employment association of an Employee with the County, including:

- a. Employee application
- b. Job description and specification information
- c. Job performance ratings and evaluations
- d. Education / training information
- e. Disciplinary action forms and documents
- f. Personnel action forms

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Administration of Employee Personnel Records</i>
<i>Policy Number 244.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

Permanent records are maintained during the tenure of the Employee and for five (5) years after the Employee leaves employment with the County. Pension files are kept for 70 years in retention after an Employee terminates employment.

Temporary Documents. Documents which have limited retention of three (3) calendar years or less, unless otherwise provided, include:

- a. Administrative correspondence relating to leave/vacation requests.
- b. All other administrative documents of limited informational life span.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Court Ordered Community Service</i>
<i>Policy Number 245.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a policy and procedure for placing individuals ordered by a court to perform community service activities.

II. POLICY

The County shall cooperate with the Magistrate Court, Superior Court and Department of Corrections in providing opportunities for individuals to satisfy their community service hours to which they were sentenced.

Acceptance and placement will depend on the individual's background, skills and nature of the order.

III. PROCEDURES

Departments may contact the Human Resources Department to advise of projects or assignments which can be accomplished by those sentenced to perform community service. The Human Resources Department will keep the courts informed of such projects or assignments.

Those sentenced to community service should be able to complete such projects and assignments in a relatively short period of time with little supervision, as hours available for such work are generally for short durations.

The Department Manager / Supervisor shall complete all forms required by the court.

The County shall maintain Workers' Compensation insurance on all court-appointed volunteers unless otherwise arranged between the referring agency and the County.

If a volunteer is unable or unwilling to complete the designated assignment, the Department Manager / Supervisor shall notify the Court.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 16, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Employee Identification Cards</i>
<i>Policy Number 246.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures for the issuance and usage of County employee identification cards.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

The Human Resources Department is responsible for establishing and maintaining an official personnel file and for issuing employee identification cards for each Employee of the County.

III. POLICY

It is the policy of the County to issue Employee identification cards to all regular full-time and regular part-time employees. Cards may also be issued to temporary service Employees, volunteers and consultants who may require County identification while working on job sites. The card contains the following information:

- a. Employee name
- b. Position
- c. Department
- d. Employee number
- e. Photo

The card should be carried at all times when an Employee is acting in an official capacity. The card shall be used as identification if requested by a member of the public or another County Employee. It also provides information should an Employee become injured or incapacitated on the job.

Unauthorized or inappropriate use of the employee identification card is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or termination of employment.

The Sheriff's Office shall issue its own department identification card.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 16, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Employee Identification Cards</i>
<i>Policy Number 246.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

III. PROCEDURES

Each Employee is responsible for possession of his/her identification card and should take care to protect it from loss, theft or misuse. It shall be the Employee's responsibility to ensure accurate and timely updates of information are contained on the Employee identification card.

Should a card be lost, damaged or destroyed, it should be immediately reported to the Human Resources Department. All requests for reissuance of Employee identification cards shall be made by the Employee's Supervisor or Department Manager to the Human Resources Department.

All identification cards remain the property of the County and shall be returned to the Human Resources Department upon termination of employment or by special request by the Employee's Division Director or the Human Resources Department.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Visitors in the Workplace</i>
<i>Policy Number 247.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish policies and procedures regarding visitors to County offices and work sites.

II. POLICY

To provide for the safety and security of both visitors and Employees and the facilities of Columbia County, only authorized visitors are permitted beyond office reception areas. Restricting unauthorized visitors assists the County to maintain safety standards, protects against theft, assures security of equipment, helps secure confidential information, preserves Employee welfare and avoids potential disruptions and intrusions.

All visitors should enter County premises at the main entrance of each respective facility or department. Authorized visitors will receive directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees are responsible for the conduct and safety of their visitors.

If a visitor is observed in an unauthorized or non-public area of County Facilities, Employees should immediately notify their Supervisor.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Acknowledgement, Memorial and Sympathy</i>
<i>Policy Number 248.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

I. PURPOSE

The Board of Commissioners will maintain effective Employee relations by acknowledging and recognizing active and retired Employees through an Employee Relations Program. The Employee Relations Program will be administered and implemented by the Human Resources Department.

II. PROCEDURES

Communication of Employee or Retiree Death

- 1) The Department Head or immediate Supervisor will notify Human Resources as soon as practical of an active or retired Employee's death.
- 2) Employees will receive communication of the notice by his or her Department Manager or Supervisor.
- 3) Human Resources Department Personnel comply with HIPAA Privacy Practices, effective April 14, 2003 and cannot disclose any employee protected health information.

Cards of Acknowledgement, Recognition, Recovery and Sympathy

- 1) The Department Head or immediate Supervisor will notify Human Resources as soon as practical of (a) an active or retired Employee, the active or retired Employee's spouse or immediate children's hospitalization or death and (b) job-related achievements or other significant event of an active Employee.
- 2) County Administration /County Clerk will send cards of acknowledgement, recognition, get well or sympathy on behalf of the Board of Commissioner and Employees.

Flowers or Memorial

- 1) The Department Head or immediate Supervisor will notify Human Resources as soon as practical of an active or retired Employee's death.
- 2) County Administration/County Clerk will send flowers or memorials on behalf of the Board of Commissioners and Employees.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Acknowledgement, Memorial and Sympathy</i>
<i>Policy Number 248.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Human Resources</i>

- 3) A maximum of \$100.00 will be disbursed for flowers or a maximum of \$100.00 memorial will be submitted on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, Employees and Citizens of Columbia County.
- 4) Additional memorials may be made at the discretion and approval of the Board of Commissioners.

III. SOURCE OF FUNDS

- 1) Funds to support the Employee Relations Program are budgeted by the Board of Commission.
- 2) Expenditures above \$100.00 must be approved by the County Manager.
- 3) The Board of Commissioners may discontinue support of the program at any time.



	CONDUCT
301.1	Disciplinary Action
302.1	Grievance Procedure
303.1	Conflicts of Interest/Ethics
304.1	Contributions and Honorariums
305.1	Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program
306.1	Drug-Free Workplace
307.1	Employee Conduct
308.1	Unlawful Harassment Policy
309.1	Personal Appearance
310.1	Personal Use of Telephone
311.1	Political Activities
312.1	Blank
313.1	Solicitations
314.1	Violence in the Workplace
315.1	Whistleblower Policy
316.1	Requests for Use of County Personnel, Equipment and Material
317.1	Smoking in the Workplace

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Disciplinary Action</i>
<i>Policy Number 301.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish policies and procedures related to disciplinary action for County Employees.

II. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the County to administer discipline fairly, reasonably and impartially. Except as set forth in the following sentence, all disciplinary actions involving suspensions without pay or termination, require concurrence of the Human Resources Director and approval by the affected Employee's Division Director prior to discipline being administered. All such disciplinary actions against a Division Director, the County Manager or any other person who reports directly to the Board of Commissioners must be approved by the Board of Commissioners.

III. INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The tenure of County Employees shall be based on reasonable standards of job performance and personal and professional conduct. Failure or refusal to meet these standards shall constitute just cause for disciplinary action including oral or written reprimands, suspensions, demotions and dismissals.

Disciplinary action is not primarily intended to be punitive, but rather to maintain the efficiency and integrity of County service. The nature and severity of the offense and the Employee's prior record shall be considered.

In any major disciplinary action, the pertinent information shall be reviewed with the Employee specifying the following:

- a) The cause for discipline.
- b) The specific reasons supporting the cause.
- c) The discipline to be imposed, the effective date and the right of the Employee to be heard.

Employees may be disciplined for behavior detailed in the *Conduct* Policy Section. The degree of discipline administered will depend on the severity of the infraction and shall be in accordance with any applicable rules and regulations, County policies and procedures, as well as local, state or federal laws and regulations.

It is the responsibility of each supervisor and Division Director to evaluate thoroughly the circumstances and facts as objectively as possible and then apply the most suitable form of discipline.

Investigatory suspension with or without pay may be dependent on the circumstances of the situation. Immediate removal of an Employee from the job site pending review for suspension or

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Disciplinary Action</i>
<i>Policy Number 301.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

tentative discharge may be warranted in instances involving significant employee insubordination, theft, serious illegal or destructive acts while on the job, or other substantial reasons deemed appropriate by the Division Director or Human Resources Director.

This suspension gives the supervisor the opportunity to discuss the problem with his or her superior to determine an appropriate course of action when the situation is serious enough for the Employee to be removed from the work environment. If after investigation, it is determined that the Employee was not guilty of any violation, he or she will normally be returned to his or her position, paid for any lost time and a letter exonerating the Employee will be placed in his or her official personnel file. If, however, the Employee is found in violation, then the appropriate disciplinary action will take effect on the date that the investigatory suspension began.

Suspension with pay may be used at the discretion of the Division Director or his or her designee. An Employee of the County may be suspended with pay and benefits pending investigation of allegations of misconduct, when the nature of the allegation compromises the ability of the Employee to perform his or her duties, and when a substantial period of time will be required to complete an investigation or legal action. Such suspension is not a disciplinary action and may not be appealed. If the charges are substantiated, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the nature of the offense, and may include recovery of salary and benefits paid during the suspension. If the charges are unfounded, the Employee will be restored to duty and a letter of exoneration will be placed in the Employee's official personnel file.

Types of disciplinary action may include but are not limited to the following:

1) Oral Warning

Oral warnings should be applied to infractions of a relatively minor nature or in situations where the Employee's performance needs to be discussed. An oral warning is recommended to be given in private. Supervisors should inform the Employee that the supervisor is issuing an oral warning, that the Employee is being given an opportunity to correct the behavior, and if the behavior is not corrected, the person will be subject to more severe disciplinary action.

- a) A notation that an oral warning was given should be placed in the Employee's personnel file.

2) Written Warning/Reprimand

A written warning or reprimand will be issued in the event the Employee continues to disregard an oral warning or if the infraction is severe enough to warrant a written reprimand in the Employee's personnel file. Written warnings or reprimands must be issued within ten (10) days after the occurrence of the violation claimed by the supervisor or within ten (10) days after the supervisor learns of such occurrence.

- a) The written warning/reprimand shall state the nature of the infraction in sufficient details

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Disciplinary Action</i>
<i>Policy Number 301.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

to put the Employee on notice of the behavior or condition being complained about and appropriate corrective action must be taken by the Employee to avoid further disciplinary action.

- b) A copy of the written warning/reprimand is to be handed to the Employee at the time of the discussion of the discipline. The Employee shall sign the written warning to acknowledge receipt. A copy, signed by the Employee, will be placed in the Employee's personnel file. If the Employee refuses to sign the acknowledgment, the Supervisor and one other witness shall note on the reprimand that the Employee received a copy thereof and refused to sign it.

3) Suspension

A suspension should be administered as a result of a severe infraction of policies or for repeated violation of rules and regulations. For minor infractions, a suspension is often given after the Employee has received a written warning or reprimand but has continued to engage in the complained of behavior. An Employee will be suspended without pay when the offense is serious enough for immediate discharge but the circumstances related to an Employee's overall performance would not warrant immediate discharge. The length of a suspension should not exceed ten (10) working days; however, circumstances may support a longer suspension.

4) Demotion

Demotion may be used in those instances where an Employee has been promoted to a position where they are unwilling or unable to perform the responsibilities of that position. Demotion is not to be used as a substitute for dismissal when dismissal is warranted. Demotion may be used in cases of serious offenses where dismissal may be considered too severe.

5) Transfer in Lieu of Termination/Dismissal

A transfer may be implemented in those instances where an Employee has been reprimanded and in the best interest of the department and or employee, a transfer is the best course of action. An Employee may be transferred to another department if there is an intradepartmental agreement reached between the major Division Directors and there is adequate work or projects to justify the transfer. A probationary period may be imposed to evaluate the performance of the employee after the transfer has been enacted. If the employee does not perform satisfactorily before the end of the probationary period, the Division Director may move forward with dismissal of the Employee.

6) Dismissal

A Division Director may dismiss an Employee for multiple or serious offenses. A written statement setting forth the reason(s) for dismissal and any supporting documentation shall be

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Disciplinary Action</i>
<i>Policy Number 301.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

sent to the Human Resources Director for review and a copy placed in the personnel file.

- a) Probationary Employees may be terminated at any time without cause and without the right of appeal. Notification of dismissal in writing shall be provided the Probationary Employee and a copy filed in his or her personnel file. Dismissals of Probationary Employees also require the concurrence of the Human Resources Director.
- b) Contractual Employees shall be governed by a separation agreement within the contract.

IV. EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINARY REPORT

The original copy of the Employee Disciplinary Report is to be signed by the Employee, the immediate Supervisor and Division Director, sent to the Human Resources Director for signature then placed in the Employee's official personnel file. A copy of the Disciplinary Report should be given to the Employee. Any refusal to sign a Disciplinary Report form should be witnessed and noted by the employee immediate supervisor and Department Manager or Division Director.

COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: March 15, 2011 December 15, 2015 September 21, 2021 December 16, 2025	TOPIC: <i>Grievance Procedure</i>
<i>Policy Number 302.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE:

To establish standardized Employee grievance procedures.

II. POLICY:

Regular Full-Time Employees who have been terminated or who have been subjected to any alleged discriminatory action shall be permitted the right to notice and a hearing regarding grievances involving termination or alleged discrimination and shall receive prompt consideration and equitable resolution thereof. The procedures set forth herein shall provide for fair, equitable, and expeditious review of grievances involving termination or alleged discrimination without fear, coercion, or discrimination.

III. PROCEDURES

Grievance Resolution

Any Employee in the Career Service having a Regular Full-Time Employment Position and having been terminated with or without cause, or who has been subjected to any alleged discriminatory action shall have the right to utilize the grievance and appeal procedure hereinafter set forth. Board of Commissioner approved Division or Department Restructuring, Position Transfers or Reclassifications without adverse action, Probationary Employees, Regular Part-Time Employees, Temporary Employees and Contractual Employees shall not have the right to utilize the grievance and appeal procedure herein set forth. However, these employees can contact Human Resources to discuss their employment experience. No part of this Grievance Policy shall be construed to create a property interest in any employment, nor shall it be construed to create an expectancy of continued employment at any time.

- 1.) Upon the termination or alleged discrimination of any Regular Full-time Employee at any time, with or without cause, the Human Resources Director shall provide written notice to the aggrieved Regular Full-Time Employee within ten (10) working days after the date of the termination or the alleged discrimination. The notice shall provide: (i)

an explanation of the Supervisor's reasoning for terminating the Employee, or information regarding the alleged discrimination, (ii) documents and evidence, if any, that support the termination or alleged discrimination, and (iii) notice of the Regular Full-Time Employee's right to a hearing. The most efficient method of delivery shall be utilized in providing notice and may be sent through standard and certified mail to the aggrieved Regular Employee's personal mail address on file with the County. Notice is timely if it is post-marked by the tenth working day following the termination or alleged discrimination.

- 2.) If the Regular Employee wishes to invoke his or her right to a hearing, he/she must notify the Human Resources Director within ten (10) working days of receipt of the Notice. Failure of the Regular Full-Time Employee to provide this timely written notice will result in a waiver of his or her right to a hearing.

Civil Service Commission

- 3) Once the Regular Employee invokes his or her right to a hearing, the Human Resources Director shall appoint the case to the Civil Service Commission within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of the Employee's notice.

The Civil Service Commission shall set the date of the hearing in its discretion within this same fifteen (15) daytime period. Said hearing date must be held no earlier than ten (10) working days from the time the Civil Service Commission convenes to set such date.

Members of the Civil Service Commission must recuse himself or herself from the case in the event that he or she (i) is the Supervisor, (ii) has a pecuniary interest in the outcome of the hearing, or (iii) has been the target of personal abuse or criticism from the Regular Full-Time Employee.

- a.) Prior to the hearing, the Human Resources Director shall direct an investigation to locate and obtain information from witnesses and other sources of facts surrounding the circumstances of the termination. Should a written request be submitted, the Human Resources Director must make any factual findings available to the terminated Regular Full-Time Employee, the Supervisor, County Manager, and County Attorney no less than five (5) working days before the date of the hearing.

- b) The Regular-Full-Time Employee shall be afforded the right to counsel (at the employee's expense) at the hearing. Any Regular-Full-Time Employee who elects to exercise their right to counsel must notify the Human Resources Director and the County Attorney no less than five (5) working days before the date of the hearing and provide the contact information for the Legal Counsel.

- c) During the hearing, the aggrieved Regular Full-Time Employee, Supervisor, and their representatives and witnesses shall have the right to appear before the Civil Service Commission for the purpose of presenting facts, information, and relevant

evidence. The Regular Full-Time Employee shall ~~also~~ be allowed to cross-examine the Supervisor's and the County's witnesses. The hearing shall be scheduled during normal working hours, open to the public, and held in accordance with Section 50-14-1, *et. seq.* of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated; provided that discussions or deliberations concerning disciplinary action, dismissal, or other matters as provided in Section 50-14-3(6) may take place in executive session.

d) The hearing shall be held in accordance with Section 2-368 of the Code of Ordinances of Columbia County. The Civil Service Commission shall have the power to administer oaths and call witnesses and may compel the production of relevant books, records, and documents.

e) The Civil Service Commission shall come to a decision at the close of the hearing. A copy of the decision of the Civil Service Commission shall be given to the terminated Regular Full-Time Employee or his/her Legal Counsel, the Supervisor, the Human Resources Director, the County Manager, the Board of Commissioners, and the County Attorney within three (3) working days after the completion of the hearing. The most efficient method of delivery will be utilized to inform each party as expeditiously as possible of the Civil Service Commission's decision. A copy of the decision may be sent through standard and certified mail to the aggrieved Regular Full-Time Employee's personal mailing address on file with the County. In rendering its decision, the Civil Service Commission shall not make any monetary awards to the Regular Full-Time Employee.

- 4) Should the Regular Full-Time Employee still be aggrieved after a decision has been rendered by the Civil Service Commission, he or she may appeal to the Board of Commissioners of Columbia County. On the other hand, should the Civil Service Commission enter a decision in favor of the Regular Full-Time Employee, the Supervisor may appeal to the Board of Commissioners of Columbia County.

Appeals shall be requested in writing within ten (10) working days following the decision of the Civil Service Commission. If neither the Regular Full-Time Employee nor the Supervisor requests an appeal within this timeframe, the parties shall be deemed to have elected not to appeal, and the decision of the Civil Service Commission shall be final.

Board of Commissioners

The Board of Commissioners shall have the sole discretion to determine whether to grant an appeal. If the Board of Commissioners denies hearing the appeal, the decision of the Civil Service Commission shall be final. If the Board of Commissioners grants the appeal, the hearing shall be held on a date to be set by the Board of Commissioners which shall be not less than ten (10) days and no more than thirty (30) days following the filing of the appeal.

The appeal to the Board of Commissioners shall be conducted as set forth in Section 2-368 of the Code of Ordinances of Columbia County. The decision of the Board of Commissioners shall be final. A copy of the decision of the Board of Commissioners shall be given to the aggrieved Regular Full-Time Employee or his/her Legal Counsel, the Supervisor, the Human Resources Director, the County Manager, and the County Attorney within five (5) working days following the completion of the hearing.

The most efficient method of delivery will be utilized to inform each party as expeditiously as possible of the Board of Commissioners' decision. A copy of the decision may be sent through standard and certified mail to the aggrieved Regular Full-Time Employee's personal mailing address on file with the County. In rendering the decision, the Board of Commissioners shall not make any monetary awards to the Regular Full-Time Employee.

5) No punitive, discriminatory or adverse action shall be taken against a Regular Full-Time Employee in retaliation for exercising any rights under this Grievance Policy.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 19, 2018 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Conflicts of Interest/Ethic</i>
<i>Policy Number 303.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct that shall govern County Employees in the performance of County business and the duties of their respective jobs. This Policy is intended to provide positive direction to County Employees in order to prevent potential conflicts of interest.

Columbia County operates under a culture that encourages open communication, feedback and trust between employees, county administration and human resources. Employees are free to speak with any supervisor or manager at any time and they are free to approach county administration with any concerns.

An Employee Reporting Hotline has been established as an additional form of communication for employees to anonymously report any form of unethical or suspicious behavior. It does not serve as a substitute for routine communication within our organization between employees and their supervisors, or managers, particularly as it relates to workplace duties. Employees can access the Employee Reporting Hotline through the Employee Center located on the County webpage.

Regular business matters that do not require anonymity should continue to be directed to the employee's supervisor, department manager, division director, human resources, or county administration and should not be submitted using the Employee Reporting Hotline. For any issues pertaining to benefits, the employee will need to communicate with Human Resources.

This Policy is not all-encompassing in its definition of conflict of interest. The "prudent man" theory can and will be applied; action deemed inappropriate by a reasonable person, whether specifically cited in this policy or not, will be subject to inquiry and discipline if found to be inappropriate.

II. DEFINITIONS

- 1) Interest. Interest is any direct or indirect monetary or material benefit accruing to a County Employee or a member of a County Employee's family as a result of a Contract or transaction which is or may be the subject of an official act or action by or with the County (except for such transactions which would confer similar benefits to all other persons and/or property similarly situated).
- 2) Family. For purposes of this Policy, family includes spouse, child, parent, parent-in-law, brother, sister, grandparent, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandchildren and other persons residing in the Employee's residence who are financially dependent upon the Employee.
- 3) Contract. Contract shall include any contact or agreement, sale, lease, purchase or a purchase order.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 19, 2018 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Conflicts of Interest/Ethic</i>
<i>Policy Number 303.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

III. POLICY

1) Conflicts of Interest

No County Employee shall engage in any act which is in conflict or creates an appearance of impropriety or a conflict with the performance of duties by the Employee for the County or the interests of the County in a particular matter or transaction. An Employee shall be deemed to have a conflict if:

- a) The Employee has any financial interest in any property or services to be acquired by the County that is not disclosed to the Board of Commissioners immediately after the Employee becomes aware of the situation. In such situation, the Employee shall not seek to influence any decisions by the County relative to such transactions.
- b) Solicits, accepts or seeks a gift, gratuity or favor from any person, firm or corporation involved in a contract or transaction which is or may be the subject of official action by the County.

Recognizing that personal friendships often precede and can evolve from official contact between Employees and persons engaged in business with the County, reasonable exceptions to this section are permitted for those occasions which are social in nature and are not predicated on the Employee's ability to influence directly or indirectly any matter before the County. The Employee will be guided in interpretation of this section by the distinction between a gift, gratuity or favor given or received which has significant monetary value and is offered or accepted in expectation of preferential treatment and an expression of courtesy.

Examples of acceptable courtesies include a meal or social event; exchanges of floral offerings or gifts of food to commemorate events such as illness, death, birth, holidays or promotions; a sample or promotional gift of nominal value.

- c) Participates in his/her capacity as a County Employee in the issuing of a purchase order or contract in which he/she has a private pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, or performs in regard to such contract some function breaching the exercise of discretion on behalf of the County.
- d) Engages in, accepts employment from, or renders services for private interests for any compensation or consideration having monetary value when employment or service is incompatible with the proper discharge of official duties or would tend to impair independence of judgment or action in performance of official duties or give the appearance of the above.

An Employee should not make a unilateral decision if there is any doubt about his/her private employment and should first consult with his/her Department Head, the Human Resources Director or the County Manager.

- e) Except for courtesies as provided in item "b" above, no Employee shall directly or indirectly, give or receive, or agree to receive any compensation, gift, reward, commission or gratuity from any source except the County for any matter directly connected with or related to his/her services as such Employee with this County.
- f) Discloses or uses without authorization confidential information concerning property or

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 19, 2018 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Conflicts of Interest/Ethic</i>
<i>Policy Number 303.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

affairs of the County to advance a private interest with respect to any contract or transaction which is or may be the subject of official action of the County.

- g) Gives a financial interest or personal interest in any legislation coming before the County Commission and participates in discussion with or gives an official opinion to the County unless the Employee discloses on the record of the Commission the nature and extent of such interest.
- 2) **Use of Public Property**
No Employee of the County shall use or permit the use of County-owned vehicles, clothing, equipment, materials or other property for unauthorized personal convenience, for profit, for private use or as part of secondary employment. Use of such County property is to be restricted to such services as are available to the County and for the conduct of official County business. Authorized personal uses include taking an assigned County vehicle to lunch on workdays, use of a County copy machine at cost, stopping to run personal errands when the destination point is in conjunction with official or authorized business and other nominal personal uses as permitted by the appropriate Manager.
- 3) **Discipline**
Any Employee who is found to abuse authorized privileges or to be in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment.

IV. PROCEDURES

- 1) **Interpretation**
To the extent this Policy conflicts with the provisions of Article V, Section 2 of the Code of Ordinances of Columbia County, the Code of Ordinances shall control and shall be referred to the County Manager for interpretation. Provided, however, it is recognized that said Section 2 of the Code of Ordinances does not apply to all Employees of Columbia County.
- 2) **Investigation**
The County Manager shall investigate, or cause to be investigated, all suspicions, allegations and written complaints of behavior that suggests violations of this Policy.
 - a) Complaints that are considered by the County Manager to be serious may be referred to an Ethics Panel, composed of County Employees appointed by the County Manager.
 - b) An Ethics Panel, when constituted, shall investigate and hear the complaint and recommend to the County Manager any action deemed appropriate.
 - c) Complaints or allegations that may be criminal in nature may be referred to an appropriate outside agency for investigation.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Contributions and Honorariums</i>
<i>Policy Number 304.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a policy and procedure for reporting contributions and honorariums.

II. POLICY

Speeches and presentations that are related to County services delivered by County Employees to community and professional organizations are made without charge. If an organization wishes to give an honorarium or contribution for such a presentation, the remuneration must be made to the County, not to the individual Employee.

An honorarium or contribution for a speech or other presentation made by a County Employee to a group outside the County, either during working time or for which the County provided travel expenses, will also be made to the County.

Such contributions and honorariums shall be turned over to the Finance Department for disposition.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 20, 2011 November 15, 2011 May 12, 2012 January 15, 2013 August 18, 2015 December 15, 2015 October 18, 2016 May 16, 2017 February 20, 2018 September 21, 2021 December 21, 2021 July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. POLICY

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners is dedicated to providing safe, dependable, economical transportation services to our transit system passengers. Transit system employees are our most valuable resource and it is our goal to provide a healthy, satisfying working environment that promotes personal opportunities for growth. In meeting these goals, it is our policy to (1) assure that employees are not impaired in their ability to perform assigned duties in a safe, productive, and healthy manner; (2) create a workplace environment free from the adverse effects of drug and alcohol use; (3) prohibit the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of controlled substances; and (4) encourage employees to seek professional assistance anytime personal problems, including alcohol or drug dependency, adversely affect their ability to perform their assigned duties.

II. PURPOSE

- 1) The Columbia County Public Transit provides public transit and paratransit services for the residents of Columbia County. Part of our mission is to ensure that this service is delivered safely, efficiently, and effectively by establishing a drug and alcohol-free work environment, and to ensure that the workplace remains free from the effects of drugs and alcohol in order to promote the health and safety of employees and the general public. In keeping with this mission, Columbia County Public Transit declares that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispense, possession, or use of controlled substances or misuse of alcohol is prohibited for all employees.
- 2) Additionally, the purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to maintain a drug and alcohol-free workplace in compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, and the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991. This policy is intended to comply with all applicable Federal regulations governing workplace anti-drug and alcohol programs in the transit industry. Specifically, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) of the U.S. Department of Transportation has published 49 CFR Part 655, as amended, that mandates urine drug testing and breath alcohol testing for safety-sensitive positions, and prohibits performance of safety-sensitive functions when there is a positive test result, or a refusal to test. The U. S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) has also published 49

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

CFR Part 40, as amended, that sets standards for the collection and testing of urine and breath specimens.

- 3) Any provisions set forth in this policy that are included under the sole authority of Columbia County Public Transit and are not provided under the authority of the above named Federal regulations are underlined. Tests conducted under the sole authority of Columbia County Public Transit will be performed on non-USDOT forms and will be separate from USDOT testing in all respects.

III. APPLICABILITY

This Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy applies to all safety-sensitive employees (full- or part-time) when performing safety sensitive duties. See Attachment A for a list of employees and the authority under which they are included.

A safety-sensitive function is operation of public transit service including the operation of a revenue service vehicle (whether or not the vehicle is in revenue service), maintenance of a revenue service vehicle or equipment used in revenue service, security personnel who carry firearms, dispatchers or persons controlling the movement of revenue service vehicles and any transit employee who operates a non-revenue service vehicle that requires a Commercial Driver's License to operate. Maintenance functions include the repair, overhaul, and rebuild of engines, vehicles and/or equipment used in revenue service. A list of safety-sensitive positions who perform one or more of the above mentioned duties is provided in Attachment A. Supervisors are only safety sensitive if they perform one of the above functions. Volunteers are considered safety sensitive and subject to testing if they are required to hold a CDL, or receive remuneration for service in excess of actual expense.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Accident: An occurrence associated with the operation of a vehicle even when not in revenue service, if as a result:

- a. An individual dies;
- b. An individual suffers a bodily injury and immediately receives medical treatment away from the scene of the accident; or,
- c. One or more vehicles incur disabling damage as the result of the occurrence and is transported away from the scene by a tow truck or other vehicle. For purposes of this definition, disabling damage means damage which precludes departure of any vehicle from the scene of the occurrence in its usual manner in daylight after simple repairs. Disabling damage includes damage to vehicles that could have been operated but would have been further damaged if so operated, but does not include damage which can be remedied temporarily at the scene of the occurrence without special tools or parts, tire disablement without other damage even if no spare tire is available, or damage to headlights, taillights, turn signals, horn, or windshield wipers that makes them inoperative.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

Adulterated specimen: A specimen that has been altered, as evidence by test results showing either a substance that is not a normal constituent for that type of specimen or showing an abnormal concentration of an endogenous substance.

Alcohol: The intoxicating agent in beverage alcohol, ethyl alcohol, or other low molecular weight alcohols contained in any beverage, mixture, mouthwash, candy, food, preparation or medication.

Alcohol Concentration: Expressed in terms of grams of alcohol per 210 liters of breath as indicated by a breath test under 49 CFR Part 40.

Aliquot: A fractional part of a specimen used for testing, It is taken as a sample representing the whole specimen.

Canceled Test: A drug or alcohol test that has a problem identified that cannot be or has not been corrected, or which is cancelled. A canceled test is neither positive nor negative.

Confirmatory Drug Test: A second analytical procedure performed on a different aliquot of the original specimen to identify and quantify the presence of a specific drug or metabolite.

Confirmatory Validity Test: A second test performed on a different aliquot of the original urine specimen to further support a validity test result.

Covered Employee Under FTA Authority: An employee who performs a safety-sensitive function including an applicant or transferee who is being considered for hire into a safety-sensitive function (See Attachment A for a list of covered employees).

Designated Employer Representative (DER): An employee authorized by the employer to take immediate action to remove employees from safety-sensitive duties and to make required decisions in testing. The DER also receives test results and other communications for the employer, consistent with the requirements of 49 CFR Parts 40 and 655.

DOT, The Department, DOT Agency: These terms encompass all DOT agencies, including, but not limited to, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), and the Office of the Secretary (OST). For purposes of 49 CFR Part 40, the United States Coast Guard (USCG), in the Department of Homeland Security, is considered to be a DOT agency for drug testing purposes. These terms include any designee of a DOT agency.

Dilute specimen: A urine specimen with creatinine and specific gravity values that are lower than expected for human urine.

Disabling damage: Damage which precludes departure of any vehicle from the scene of the occurrence in its usual manner in daylight after simple repairs. Disabling damage includes damage to vehicles that could have been operated but would have been further damaged if so operated, but

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

does not include damage which can be remedied temporarily at the scene of the occurrence without special tools or parts, tire disablement without other damage even if no spare tire is available, or damage to headlights, taillights, turn signals, horn, or windshield wipers that makes them inoperative.

Evidentiary Breath Testing Device (EBT): A device approved by the NHTSA for the evidential testing of breath at the 0.02 and the 0.04 alcohol concentrations, and appears on ODAPC's Web page for "Approved Evidential Breath Measurement Devices" because it conforms with the model specifications available from NHTSA.

Initial Drug Test: (Screening Drug Test) The test used to differentiate a negative specimen from one that requires further testing for drugs or drug metabolites.

Initial Specimen Validity Test: The first test used to determine if a urine specimen is adulterated, diluted, substituted, or invalid

Invalid Result: The result reported by an HHS-certified laboratory in accordance with the criteria established by the HHS Mandatory Guidelines when a positive, negative, adulterated, or substituted result cannot be established for a specific drug or specimen validity test.

Laboratory: Any U.S. laboratory certified by HHS under the National Laboratory Certification program as meeting standards of Subpart C of the HHS Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Workplace Drug Testing Programs; or, in the case of foreign laboratories, a laboratory approved for participation by DOT under this part.

Limit of Detection (LOD): The lowest concentration at which a measurand can be identified, but (for quantitative assays) the concentration cannot be accurately calculated.

Limit of Quantitation: For quantitative assays, the lowest concentration at which the identity and concentration of the measurand can be accurately established.

Medical Review Officer (MRO): A licensed physician (medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy) responsible for receiving laboratory results generated by the drug testing program who has knowledge of substance abuse disorders, and has appropriate medical training to interpret and evaluate an individual's confirmed positive test result, together with his/her medical history, and any other relevant bio-medical information.

Negative Dilute: A drug test result which is negative for the five drug/drug metabolites but has creatinine and specific gravity values that are lower than expected for human urine.

Negative result: The result reported by an HHS-certified laboratory to an MRO when a specimen contains no drug or the concentration of the drug is less than the cutoff concentration for the drug or drug class and the specimen is a valid specimen. An alcohol concentration of less than 0.02 BAC is a negative test result.

Non-negative test result: A urine specimen that is reported as adulterated, substituted, invalid, or positive for drug/drug metabolites.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

Oxidizing Adulterant: A substance that acts alone or in combination with other substances to oxidize drugs or drug metabolites to prevent the detection of the drug or metabolites, or affects the reagents in either the initial or confirmatory drug test.

Performing (a safety-sensitive function): A covered employee is considered to be performing a safety-sensitive function and includes any period in which he or she is actually performing, ready to perform, or immediately available to perform such functions.

Positive result: The result reported by an HHS- Certified laboratory when a specimen contains a drug or drug metabolite equal or greater to the cutoff concentrations.

Prohibited drug: Identified as marijuana, cocaine, opioids, amphetamines, or phencyclidine as specified in 49 CFR Part 40, as amended.

Reconfirmed: The result reported for a split specimen when the second laboratory is able to corroborate the original result reported for the primary specimen.

Rejected for Testing: The result reported by an HHS- Certified laboratory when no tests are performed for specimen because of a fatal flaw or a correctable flaw that has not been corrected.

Revenue Service Vehicles: All transit vehicles that are used for passenger transportation service.

Safety-sensitive functions: Employee duties identified as:

- (1) The operation of a transit revenue service vehicle even when the vehicle is not in revenue service.
- (2) The operation of a non-revenue service vehicle by an employee when the operation of such a vehicle requires the driver to hold a Commercial Drivers License (CDL).
- (3) Maintaining a revenue service vehicle or equipment used in revenue service.
- (4) Controlling the movement of a revenue service vehicle and
- (5) Carrying a firearm for security purposes.

Split Specimen Collection: A collection in which the urine collected is divided into two separate bottles, the primary specimen (Bottle A) and the split specimen (Bottle B).

Substance Abuse Professional (SAP): A licensed physician (medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy) or licensed or certified psychologist, social worker, employee assistance professional, state-licensed or certified marriage and family therapist, or drug and alcohol counselor (certified by an organization listed at <https://www.transportation.gov/odapc/sap>) with knowledge of and clinical experience in the diagnosis and treatment of drug and alcohol related disorders.

Substituted specimen: A urine specimen with creatinine and specific gravity values that are so diminished or so divergent that they are not consistent with normal human urine.

Test Refusal: The following are considered a refusal to test if the employee:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

- (1) Fail to appear for any test (except a pre-employment test) within a reasonable time, as determined by the employer.
- (2) Fail to remain at the testing site until the testing process is complete. An employee who leaves the testing site before the testing process commences for a pre-employment test has not refused to test.
- (3) Fail to attempt to provide a breath or urine specimen. An employee who does not provide a urine or breath specimen because he or she has left the testing site before the testing process commenced for a pre-employment test has not refused to test.
- (4) In the case of a directly-observed or monitored urine drug collection, fail to permit monitoring or observation of your provision of a specimen.
- (5) Fail to provide a sufficient quantity of urine or breath without a valid medical explanation.
- (6) Fail or decline to take a second test as directed by the collector or the employer for drug testing.
- (7) Fail to undergo a medical evaluation as required by the MRO or the employer's Designated Employer Representative (DER).
- (8) Fail to cooperate with any part of the testing process.
- (9) Fail to follow an observer's instructions to raise and lower clothing and turn around during a directly-observed test.
- (10) Possess or wear a prosthetic or other device used to tamper with the collection process.
- (11) Admit to the adulteration or substitution of a specimen to the collector or MRO.
- (12) Refuse to sign the certification at Step 2 of the Alcohol Testing Form (ATF).
- (13) Fail to remain readily available following an accident.
- (14) As a covered employee, if the MRO reports that you have a verified adulterated or substituted test result, you have refused to take a drug test.

Vehicle: A bus, electric bus, van, automobile, rail car, trolley car, trolley bus, or vessel. A public transit vehicle is a vehicle used for public transportation or for ancillary services.

Verified negative test: A drug test result reviewed by a medical review officer and determined to have no evidence of prohibited drug use at or above the minimum cutoff levels established by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Verified positive test: A drug test result reviewed by a medical review officer and determined to have evidence of prohibited drug use at or above the minimum cutoff levels specified in 49 CFR Part 40 as revised.

Validity testing: The evaluation of the specimen to determine if it is consistent with normal human urine. Specimen validity testing will be conducted on all urine specimens provided for testing under DOT authority. The purpose of validity testing is to determine whether certain adulterants or foreign substances were added to the urine, if the urine was diluted, or if the specimen was substituted.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

V. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- 1) Every covered employee will receive a copy of this policy and will have ready access to the corresponding federal regulations including 49 CFR Parts 655 and 40, as amended. In addition, all covered employees will undergo a minimum of 60 minutes of training on the signs and symptoms of drug use including the effects and consequences of drug use on personal health, safety, and the work environment. The training also includes manifestations and behavioral cues that may indicate prohibited drug use.
- 2) All supervisory personnel or company officials who are in a position to determine employee fitness for duty will receive 60 minutes of reasonable suspicion training on the physical, behavioral, and performance indicators of probable drug use and 60 minutes of additional reasonable suspicion training on the physical, behavioral, speech, and performance indicators of probable alcohol misuse.

VI. PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

- 1) Prohibited substances addressed by this policy include the following.
 - a. Illegally Used Controlled Substance or Drugs Under the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 any drug or any substance identified in Schedule I through V of Section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C. 812), and as further defined by 21 CFR 1308.11 through 1308.15 is prohibited at all times in the workplace unless a legal prescription has been written for the substance. This includes, but is not limited to: marijuana, amphetamines, opioids, phencyclidine (PCP), and cocaine, as well as any drug not approved for medical use by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration or the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Illegal use includes use of any illegal drug, misuse of legally prescribed drugs, and use of illegally obtained prescription drugs. It is important to note that the use of marijuana in any circumstances remains completely prohibited for any safety-sensitive employee subject to drug testing under USDOT regulations. The use of marijuana in any circumstance (including under state recreational and/or medical marijuana laws) by a safety-sensitive employee is a violation of this policy and a violation of the USDOT regulation 49 CFR Part 40, as amended.

Federal Transit Administration drug testing regulations (49 CFR Part 655) require that all employees covered under FTA authority be tested for marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, opioids, and phencyclidine as described in this policy. Illegal use of these five drugs is prohibited at all times and thus, covered employees may be tested for these drugs anytime that they are on duty.

- b. Legal Drugs: The appropriate use of legally prescribed drugs and non-prescription medications is not prohibited. However, the use of any substance which carries a warning label that indicates that mental functioning, motor skills, or judgment may be adversely affected must be reported to a Columbia County Public Transit supervisor and the employee is required to provide a written release from his/her doctor or pharmacist indicating that the employee can perform his/her safety-sensitive functions.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

- c. Alcohol: The use of beverages containing alcohol (including mouthwash, medication, food, candy) or any other substances containing alcohol in a manner which violates the conduct listed in this policy is prohibited.

VII. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

- 1) Illegal use of the drugs listed in this policy and as defined in 49 CFR Part 40, as amended is prohibited at all times. All covered employees are prohibited from reporting for duty or remaining on duty if they have used a prohibited drug as defined in 49 CFR Part 40, as amended.
- 2) Each covered employee is prohibited from consuming alcohol while performing safety-sensitive job functions or while on-call to perform safety-sensitive job functions. If an on-call employee has consumed alcohol, they must acknowledge the use of alcohol at the time that they are called to report for duty. The covered employee will subsequently be relieved of his/her on-call responsibilities and subject to discipline for not fulfilling his/her on-call responsibilities.
- 3) The Transit Department shall not permit any covered employee to perform or continue to perform safety-sensitive functions if it has actual knowledge that the employee is using alcohol
- 4) Each covered employee is prohibited from reporting to work or remaining on duty requiring the performance of safety-sensitive functions while having an alcohol concentration of 0.04 or greater regardless of when the alcohol was consumed.
 - a. An employee with a breath alcohol concentration which measures 0.02-0.039 is not considered to have violated the USDOT-FTA drug and alcohol regulations, provided the employee hasn't consumed the alcohol within four (4) hours of performing a safety-sensitive duty. However, if a safety-sensitive employee has a breath alcohol concentration of 0.02-0.039, USDOT-FTA regulations require the employee to be removed from the performance of safety-sensitive duties until:
 - i. The employee's alcohol concentration measures less than 0.02; or
 - ii. The start of the employee's next regularly scheduled duty period, but not less than eight hours following administration of the test.
- 5) No covered employee shall consume alcohol for eight (8) hours following involvement in an accident or until he/she submits to the post-accident drug/alcohol test, whichever occurs first.
- 6) No covered employee shall consume alcohol within four (4) hours prior to the performance of safety-sensitive job functions.
- 7) Columbia County Public Transit, under its own authority, also prohibits the consumption of alcohol at all times the employee is on duty, or anytime the employee is in uniform.
- 8) Consistent with the Drug-free Workplace Act of 1988, all Columbia County Public Transit employees are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of prohibited substances in the work place including transit system premises and transit vehicles.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

VIII. DRUG STATUTE CONVICTION

Consistent with the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1998, all employees are required to notify the Columbia County Public Transit management of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace within five days after such conviction. Failure to comply with this provision shall result in disciplinary action as defined in Section XVIII of this policy.

IX. TESTING REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Analytical urine drug testing and breath testing for alcohol will be conducted as required by 49 CFR Part 40 as amended. All employees covered under FTA authority shall be subject to testing prior to performing safety-sensitive duty, for reasonable suspicion, following an accident, and random as defined in Section XII, XIII, XIV, and XV of this policy, and return to duty/follow-up.
- 2) A drug test can be performed any time a covered employee is on duty. A reasonable suspicion, random, or follow-up alcohol test can only be performed just before, during, or after the performance of a safety-sensitive job function. Under Columbia County Public Transit authority, a non-DOT alcohol test can be performed any time a covered employee is on duty.
- 3) All covered employees will be subject to urine drug testing and breath alcohol testing as a condition of ongoing employment with Columbia County Public Transit. Any safety-sensitive employee who refuses to comply with a request for testing shall be removed from duty and subject to discipline as defined in Section XVIII of this policy.

X. DRUG TESTING PROCEDURES

- 1) Testing shall be conducted in a manner to assure a high degree of accuracy and reliability and using techniques, equipment, and laboratory facilities which have been approved by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service (HHS). All testing will be conducted consistent with the procedures set forth in 49 CFR Part 40, as amended. The procedures will be performed in a private, confidential manner and every effort will be made to protect the employee, the integrity of the drug testing procedure, and the validity of the test result.
- 2) The drugs that will be tested for include marijuana, cocaine, opioids, amphetamines, and phencyclidine. After the identity of the donor is checked using picture identification, a urine specimen will be collected using the split specimen collection method described in 49 CFR Part 40, as amended. Each specimen will be accompanied by a DOT Custody and Control Form and identified using a unique identification number that attributes the specimen to the correct individual. The specimen analysis will be conducted at a HHS certified laboratory. An initial drug screen and validity test will be conducted on the primary urine specimen. For those specimens that are not negative, a confirmatory Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectrometry (GC/MS) or Liquid Chromatography/Mass Spectrometry (LC/MS) test will be performed. The test will be considered positive if the

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

amounts of the drug(s) and/or its metabolites identified by the GC/MS or LC/MS test are at or above the minimum thresholds established in 49 CFR Part 40, as amended.

- 3) The test results from the HHS certified laboratory will be reported to a Medical Review Officer. A Medical Review Officer (MRO) is a licensed physician with detailed knowledge of substance abuse disorders and drug testing. The MRO will review the test results to ensure the scientific validity of the test and to determine whether there is a legitimate medical explanation for a confirmed positive, substitute, or adulterated test result. The MRO will attempt to contact the employee to notify the employee of the non-negative laboratory result, and provide the employee with an opportunity to explain the confirmed laboratory test result. The MRO will subsequently review the employee's medical history/medical records as appropriate to determine whether there is a legitimate medical explanation for a non-negative laboratory result. If no legitimate medical explanation is found, the test will be verified positive or refusal to test and reported to Columbia County Public Transit. If a legitimate explanation is found, the MRO will report the test result as negative.
- 4) If the test is invalid without a medical explanation, a retest will be conducted under direct observation. Employees do not have access to a test of their split specimen following an invalid result.
- 5) Any covered employee who questions the results of a required drug test may request that the split sample be tested. The split sample test must be conducted at a second HHS-certified laboratory. The test must be conducted on the split sample that was provided by the employee at the same time as the primary sample. The method of collecting, storing, and testing the split sample will be consistent with the procedures set forth in 49 CFR Part 40, as amended. The employee's request for a split sample test must be made to the Medical Review Officer within 72 hours of notice of the original sample verified test result. Requests after 72 hours will only be accepted at the discretion of the MRO if the delay was due to documentable facts that were beyond the control of the employee. Columbia County Public Transit will ensure that the cost for the split specimen analysis is covered in order for a timely analysis of the sample, however Columbia County Public Transit will seek reimbursement for the split sample test from the employee.
- 6) If the analysis of the split specimen fails to confirm the presence of the drug(s) detected in the primary specimen, if the split specimen is not able to be analyzed, or if the results of the split specimen are not scientifically adequate, the MRO will declare the original test to be canceled.
- 7) The split specimen will be stored at the initial laboratory until the analysis of the primary specimen is completed. If the primary specimen is negative, the split will be discarded. If the primary specimen is positive, it will be retained in frozen storage for one year and the split specimen will also be retained for one year. If the primary is positive, the primary and the split will be retained for longer than one year for testing if so requested by the employee through the Medical Review Officer, or by the employer, by the MRO, or by the relevant DOT agency.
- 8) Observed collections
 - a. Consistent with 49 CFR Part 40, as amended, collection under direct observation (by a person of the same gender) with no advance notice will occur if:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

- i. The laboratory reports to the MRO that a specimen is invalid, and the MRO reports to Columbia County Public Transit that there was not an adequate medical explanation for the result;
- ii. The MRO reports to Columbia County Public Transit that the original positive, adulterated, or substituted test result had to be cancelled because the test of the split specimen could not be performed;
- iii. The laboratory reported to the MRO that the specimen was negative-dilute with a creatinine concentration greater than or equal to 2 mg/dL but less than or equal to 5 mg/dL, and the MRO reported the specimen as negative-dilute and that a second collection must take place under direct observation (see §40.197(b)(1)).
- iv. The collector observes materials brought to the collection site or the employee's conduct clearly indicates an attempt to tamper with a specimen;
 - v. The temperature on the original specimen was out of range;
 - vi. Anytime the employee is directed to provide another specimen because the original specimen appeared to have been tampered with.
- vii. All follow-up-tests; or
- viii. All return-to-duty tests

XI. ALCOHOL TESTING PROCEDURES

- 1) Tests for breath alcohol concentration will be conducted utilizing a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)-approved Evidential Breath Testing device (EBT) operated by a trained Breath Alcohol Technician (BAT). A list of approved EBTs can be found on ODAPC's Web page for "Approved Evidential Breath Measurement Devices". Alcohol screening tests may be performed using a non-evidential testing device (alcohol screening device (ASD)) which is also approved by NHTSA. A list of approved ASDs can be found on ODAPC's Web page for "Approved Screening Devices to Measure Alcohol in Bodily Fluids". If the initial test indicates an alcohol concentration of 0.02 or greater, a second test will be performed to confirm the results of the initial test. The confirmatory test must occur on an EBT. The confirmatory test will be conducted no sooner than fifteen minutes after the completion of the initial test. The confirmatory test will be performed using a NHTSA-approved EBT operated by a trained BAT. The EBT will identify each test by a unique sequential identification number. This number, time, and unit identifier will be provided on each EBT printout. The EBT printout, along with an approved alcohol testing form, will be used to document the test, the subsequent results, and to attribute the test to the correct employee. The test will be performed in a private, confidential manner as required by 49 CFR Part 40, as amended. The procedure will be followed as prescribed to protect the employee and to maintain the integrity of the alcohol testing procedures and validity of the test result.
- 2) A confirmed alcohol concentration of 0.04 or greater will be considered a positive alcohol test and in violation of this policy. The consequences of a positive alcohol test are described in Section XVIII. of this policy. Even though an employee who has a confirmed alcohol concentration of 0.02 to 0.039 is not considered positive, the employee shall still

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

be removed from duty for at least eight hours or for the duration of the work day whichever is longer and will be subject to the consequences described in Section XVIII of this policy. An alcohol concentration of less than 0.02 will be considered a negative test.

- 3) Columbia County Public Transit affirms the need to protect individual dignity, privacy, and confidentiality throughout the testing process. If at any time the integrity of the testing procedures or the validity of the test results is compromised, the test will be canceled. Minor inconsistencies or procedural flaws that do not impact the test result will not result in a cancelled test.
- 4) The alcohol testing form (ATF) required by 49 CFR Part 40 as amended, shall be used for all FTA required testing. Failure of an employee to sign step 2 of the ATF will be considered a refusal to submit to testing.

XII. PRE-EMPLOYMENT TESTING

- 1) All applicants for covered transit positions shall undergo urine drug testing prior to performance of a safety-sensitive function.
 - a. All offers of employment for covered positions shall be extended conditional upon the applicant passing a drug test. An applicant will not be allowed to perform safety-sensitive functions unless the applicant takes a drug test with verified negative results.
 - b. An employee shall not be placed, transferred or promoted into a position covered under FTA authority or company authority until the employee takes a drug test with verified negative results.
 - c. If an applicant fails a pre-employment drug test, the conditional offer of employment shall be rescinded and the applicant will be provided with a list of at least two (2) USDOT qualified Substance Abuse Professionals. Failure of a pre-employment drug test will disqualify an applicant for employment for a period of at least one year. Before being considered for future employment the applicant must provide the employer proof of having successfully completed a referral, evaluation and treatment plan as described in section 655.62 of subpart G. The cost for the assessment and any subsequent treatment will be the sole responsibility of the applicant.
 - d. When an employee being placed, transferred, or promoted from a non-covered position to a position covered under FTA authority or company authority submits a drug test with a verified positive result, the employee shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Section XVIII herein.
 - e. If a pre-employment test is canceled, Columbia County Public Transit will require the applicant to take and pass another pre-employment drug test.
 - f. In instances where a FTA covered employee does not perform a safety-sensitive function for a period of 90 consecutive days or more regardless of reason, and during that period is not in the random testing pool the employee will be required to take a pre-employment drug test under 49 CFR Part 655 and have negative test results prior to the conduct of safety-sensitive job functions.
 - g. Following a negative dilute the employee will be required to undergo another test. Should this second test result in a negative dilute result, the test will be considered

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

a negative and no additional testing will be required unless directed to do so by the MRO.

- h. Applicants are required (even if ultimately not hired) to provide Columbia County Public Transit with signed written releases requesting USDOT drug and alcohol records from all previous, USDOT-covered, employers that the applicant has worked for within the last two years. Failure to do so will result in the employment offer being rescinded. Columbia County Public Transit is required to ask all applicants (even if ultimately not hired) if they have tested positive or refused to test on a pre-employment test for a USDOT covered employer within the last two years. If the applicant has tested positive or refused to test on a pre-employment test for a USDOT covered employer, the applicant must provide Columbia County Public Transit proof of having successfully completed a referral, evaluation and treatment plan as described in section 655.62 of subpart G.

XIII. REASONABLE SUSPICION TESTING

- 1) All Columbia County Public Transit FTA covered employees will be subject to a reasonable suspicion drug and/or alcohol test when the employer has reasonable suspicion to believe that the covered employee has used a prohibited drug and/or engaged in alcohol misuse. Reasonable suspicion shall mean that there is objective evidence, based upon specific, contemporaneous, articulable observations of the employee's appearance, behavior, speech or body odor that are consistent with possible drug use and/or alcohol misuse. Reasonable suspicion referrals must be made by one or more supervisors who are trained to detect the signs and symptoms of drug and alcohol use, and who reasonably concludes that an employee may be adversely affected or impaired in his/her work performance due to possible prohibited substance abuse or alcohol misuse. A reasonable suspicion alcohol test can only be conducted just before, during, or just after the performance of a safety-sensitive job function. However, under Columbia County Public Transit' authority, a non-DOT reasonable suspicion alcohol test may be performed any time the covered employee is on duty. A reasonable suspicion drug test can be performed any time the covered employee is on duty.
- 2) Columbia County Public Transit shall be responsible for transporting the employee to the testing site. Supervisors should avoid placing themselves and/or others into a situation which might endanger the physical safety of those present. The employee shall be placed on administrative leave pending disciplinary action described in Section XVIII of this policy. An employee who refuses an instruction to submit to a drug/alcohol test shall not be permitted to finish his or her shift and shall immediately be placed on administrative leave pending disciplinary action as specified in Section XVIII of this policy.
- 3) A written record of the observations which led to a drug/alcohol test based on reasonable suspicion shall be prepared and signed by the supervisor making the observation. This written record shall be submitted to the Columbia County Public Transit.
- 4) When there are no specific, contemporaneous, articulable objective facts that indicate current drug or alcohol use, but the employee (who is not already a participant in a treatment program) admits the abuse of alcohol or other substances to a supervisor in his/her chain of command, the employee shall be referred for assessment and treatment consistent with Section XVIII of this policy. Columbia County Public Transit shall place

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

the employee on administrative leave in accordance with the provisions set forth under Section XVIII of this policy. Testing in this circumstance would be performed under the direct authority of the Columbia County Public Transit. **Since the employee self-referred to management, testing under this circumstance would not be considered a violation of this policy or a positive test result under Federal authority.** However, self-referral does not exempt the covered employee from testing under Federal authority as specified in Sections XIII through XV of this policy or the associated consequences as specified in Section XVIII.

XIV. POST-ACCIDENT TESTING

- 1) **FATAL ACCIDENTS** – A covered employee will be required to undergo urine and breath testing if they are involved in an accident with a transit vehicle, whether or not the vehicle is in revenue service at the time of the accident, that results in a fatality. This includes all surviving covered employees that are operating the vehicle at the time of the accident and any other whose performance could have contributed to the accident, as determined by the employer using the best information available at the time of the decision.
- 2) **NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS** – A post-accident test of the employee operating the public transportation vehicle will be conducted if an accident occurs and at least one of the following conditions is met:
 - a. The accident results in injuries requiring immediate medical treatment away from the scene, unless the covered employee can be completely discounted as a contributing factor to the accident.
 - b. One or more vehicles incurs disabling damage as a result of the occurrence and must be transported away from the scene, unless the covered employee can be completely discounted as a contributing factor to the accident

In addition, any other covered employee whose performance could have contributed to the accident, as determined by the employer using the best information available at the time of the decision, will be tested.

As soon as practicable following an accident, as defined in this policy, the transit supervisor investigating the accident will notify the transit employee operating the transit vehicle and all other covered employees whose performance could have contributed to the accident of the need for the test. The supervisor will make the determination using the best information available at the time of the decision.

The appropriate transit supervisor shall ensure that an employee, required to be tested under this section, is tested as soon as practicable, but no longer than eight (8) hours of the accident for alcohol, and no longer than 32 hours for drugs. If an alcohol test is not performed within two hours of the accident, the Supervisor will document the reason(s) for the delay. If the alcohol test is not conducted within (8) eight hours, or the drug test within 32 hours, attempts to conduct the test must cease and the reasons for the failure to test documented.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

Any covered employee involved in an accident must refrain from alcohol use for eight (8) hours following the accident, or until he/she undergoes a post-accident alcohol test.

An employee who is subject to post-accident testing who fails to remain readily available for such testing, including notifying a supervisor of his or her location if he or she leaves the scene of the accident prior to submission to such test, may be deemed to have refused to submit to testing.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the delay of necessary medical attention for the injured following an accident, or to prohibit an employee from leaving the scene of an accident for the period necessary to obtain assistance in responding to the accident, or to obtain necessary emergency medical care.

In the rare event that Columbia County Public Transit is unable to perform an FTA drug and alcohol test (i.e., employee is unconscious, employee is detained by law enforcement agency), Columbia County Public Transit may use drug and alcohol post-accident test results administered by local law enforcement officials in lieu of the FTA test. The local law enforcement officials must have independent authority for the test and the employer must obtain the results in conformance with local law.

XV. RANDOM TESTING

- 1) All covered employees will be subjected to random, unannounced testing. The selection of employees shall be made by a scientifically valid method of randomly generating an employee identifier from the appropriate pool of safety-sensitive employees. Employees who may be covered under company authority will be selected from a pool of non-DOT-covered employees.
- 2) The dates for administering unannounced testing of randomly selected employees shall be spread reasonably throughout the calendar year, day of the week and hours of the day.
- 3) The number of employees randomly selected for drug/alcohol testing during the calendar year shall be not less than the percentage rates set each year by the FTA administrator. The current year testing rates can be viewed online at <https://www.transportation.gov/odapc/random-testing-rates>.
- 4) Each covered employee shall be in a pool from which the random selection is made. Each covered employee in the pool shall have an equal chance of selection each time the selections are made. Employees will remain in the pool and subject to selection, whether or not the employee has been previously tested. There is no discretion on the part of management in the selection.
- 5) Covered transit employees that fall under the Federal Transit Administration regulations will be included in one random pool maintained separately from the testing pool of non-safety-sensitive employees that are included solely under Columbia County Public Transit authority.
- 6) Random tests can be conducted at any time during an employee's shift for drug testing. Alcohol random tests can only be performed just before, during, or just after the performance of a safety sensitive duty. However, under Columbia County Public Transit

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

authority, a non-DOT random alcohol test may be performed any time the covered employee is on duty. Testing can occur during the beginning, middle, or end of an employee's shift.

- 7) Employees are required to proceed immediately to the collection site upon notification of their random selection.

XVI. RETURN-TO-DUTY TESTING

Columbia County Public Transit will terminate the employment of any employee that tests positive or refuses a test as specified in Section XVIII of this policy. However, in the rare event an employee is reinstated with court order or other action beyond the control of the transit system, the employee must complete the return-to-duty process prior to the performance of safety-sensitive functions. All covered employees who previously tested positive on a drug or alcohol test or refused a test, must test negative for drugs, alcohol (below 0.02 for alcohol), or both and be evaluated and released by the Substance Abuse Professional before returning to work. Following the initial assessment, the SAP will recommend a course of rehabilitation unique to the individual. The SAP will recommend the return-to-duty test only when the employee has successfully completed the treatment requirement and is known to be drug and alcohol-free and there are no undue concerns for public safety. The SAP will determine whether the employee returning to duty will require a return-to-duty drug test, alcohol test, or both.

XVII. FOLLOW-UP TESTING

Covered employees that have returned to duty following a positive or refused test will be required to undergo frequent, unannounced drug and/or alcohol testing following their return-to-duty test. The follow-up testing will be performed for a period of one to five years with a minimum of six tests to be performed the first year. The frequency and duration of the follow-up tests (beyond the minimums) will be determined by the SAP reflecting the SAP's assessment of the employee's unique situation and recovery progress. Follow-up testing should be frequent enough to deter and/or detect a relapse. Follow-up testing is separate and in addition to the random, post-accident, reasonable suspicion and return-to-duty testing.

In the instance of a self-referral or a management referral, the employee will be subject to non-USDOT follow-up tests and follow-up testing plans modeled using the process described in 49 CFR Part 40. However, all non-USDOT follow-up tests and all paperwork associated with an employee's return-to-work agreement that was not precipitated by a positive test result (or refusal to test) does not constitute a violation of the Federal regulations will be conducted under company authority and will be performed using non-DOT testing forms.

XVIII. RESULT OF DRUG/ALCOHOL TEST

- 1) Any covered employee that has a verified positive drug or alcohol test, or test refusal, will be removed from his/her safety-sensitive position, informed of educational and rehabilitation programs available, and will be provided with a list of at least two (2)

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

USDOT qualified Substance Abuse Professionals (SAP) for assessment, and will be terminated.

- 2) Following a negative dilute the employee will be required to undergo another test. Should this second test result in a negative dilute result, the test will be considered a negative and no additional testing will be required unless directed to do so by the MRO.
- 3) Refusal to submit to a drug/alcohol test shall be considered equivalent to a positive test result and a direct act of insubordination and shall result in termination and referral to a list of USDOT qualified SAPs. A test refusal is defined as any of the following circumstances:
 - a. Fail to appear for any test (except a pre-employment test) within a reasonable time, as determined by the employer.
 - b. Fail to remain at the testing site until the testing process is complete. An employee who leaves the testing site before the testing process commences for a pre-employment test has not refused to test.
 - c. Fail to attempt to provide a breath or urine specimen. An employee who does not provide a urine or breath specimen because he or she has left the testing site before the testing process commenced for a pre-employment test has not refused to test.
 - d. In the case of a directly-observed or monitored urine drug collection, fail to permit monitoring or observation of your provision of a specimen.
 - e. Fail to provide a sufficient quantity of urine or breath without a valid medical explanation.
 - f. Fail or decline to take a second test as directed by the collector or the employer for drug testing.
 - g. Fail to undergo a medical evaluation as required by the MRO or the employer's Designated Employer Representative (DER).
 - h. Fail to cooperate with any part of the testing process.
 - i. Fail to follow an observer's instructions to raise and lower clothing and turn around during a directly-observed test.
 - j. Possess or wear a prosthetic or other device used to tamper with the collection process.
 - k. Admit to the adulteration or substitution of a specimen to the collector or MRO.
 - l. Refuse to sign the certification at Step 2 of the Alcohol Testing Form (ATF).
 - m. Fail to remain readily available following an accident.
 - n. As a covered employee, if the MRO reports that you have a verified adulterated or substituted test result, you have refused to take a drug test.
- 4) An alcohol test result of ≥ 0.02 to ≤ 0.039 BAC shall result in the removal of the employee from duty for eight hours or the remainder or the work day whichever is longer. The employee will not be allowed to return to safety-sensitive duty for his/her next shift until he/she submits to a NONDOT alcohol test with a result of less than 0.02 BAC.
- 5) In the instance of a self-referral or a management referral, disciplinary action against the employee shall include:
 - a. Mandatory referral for an assessment by an employer approved counseling professional for assessment, formulation of a treatment plan, and execution of a return-to-work agreement;
 - b. Failure to execute, or remain compliant with the return-to-work agreement shall result in termination from Columbia County Public Transit employment.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

- i. Compliance with the return-to-work agreement means that the employee has submitted to a drug/alcohol test immediately prior to returning to work; the result of that test is negative; the employee is cooperating with his/her recommended treatment program; and, the employee has agreed to periodic unannounced follow-up testing as described in Section XVII of this policy; however, all follow-up testing performed as part of a return-to-work agreement required under Section XVIII of this policy is under the sole authority of Columbia County Public Transit and will be performed using non-DOT testing forms.
- c. Refusal to submit to a periodic unannounced follow-up drug/alcohol test shall be considered a direct act of insubordination and shall result in termination. **All tests conducted as part of the return-to-work agreement will be conducted under company authority and will be performed using non-DOT testing forms.**
- d. **A self-referral or management referral to the employer's counseling professional that was not precipitated by a positive test result does not constitute a violation of the Federal regulations and will not be considered as a positive test result in relation to the progressive discipline defined in Section XVIII of this policy.**
- e. Periodic unannounced follow-up drug/alcohol testing conducted as a result of a self-referral or management referral which results in a verified positive shall be considered a positive test result in relation to the progressive discipline defined in Section XVIII of this policy.
- f. A Voluntary Referral does not shield an employee from disciplinary action or guarantee employment with Columbia County Public Transit.
- g. A Voluntary Referral does not shield an employee from the requirement to comply with drug and alcohol testing.
- 6) Failure of an employee to report within five days a criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace shall result in termination.

XIX. GRIEVANCE AND APPEAL

The consequences specified by 49 CFR Part 40.149 (c) for a positive test or test refusal is not subject to arbitration.

XX. PROPER APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

Columbia County Public Transit is dedicated to assuring fair and equitable application of this substance abuse policy. Therefore, supervisors/managers are required to use and apply all aspects of this policy in an unbiased and impartial manner. Any supervisor/manager who knowingly disregards the requirements of this policy, or who is found to deliberately misuse the policy in regard to subordinates, shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

XXI. INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

- 1) Drug/alcohol testing records shall be maintained by the Columbia County Public Transit Drug and Alcohol Program Manager and, except as provided below or by law, the results of any drug/alcohol test shall not be disclosed without express written consent of the tested employee.
- 2) The employee, upon written request, is entitled to obtain copies of any records pertaining to their use of prohibited drugs or misuse of alcohol including any drug or alcohol testing records. Covered employees have the right to gain access to any pertinent records such as equipment calibration records, and records of laboratory certifications. Employees may not have access to SAP follow-up testing plans.
- 3) Records of a verified positive drug/alcohol test result shall be released to the Drug and Alcohol Program Manager, and other transit system management personnel on a need-to-know basis.
- 4) Records will be released to a subsequent employer only upon receipt of a written request from the employee.
- 5) Records of an employee's drug/alcohol tests shall be released to the adjudicator in a grievance, lawsuit, or other proceeding initiated by or on behalf of the tested individual arising from the results of the drug/alcohol test. The records will be released to the decision maker in the proceeding.
- 6) Records will be released to the National Transportation Safety Board during an accident investigation.
- 7) Information will be released in a criminal or civil action resulting from an employee's performance of safety-sensitive duties, in which a court of competent jurisdiction determines that the drug or alcohol test information is relevant to the case and issues an order to the employer to release the information. The employer will release the information to the decision maker in the proceeding with a binding stipulation that it will only be released to parties of the proceeding.
- 8) Records will be released to the DOT or any DOT agency with regulatory authority over the employer or any of its employees.
- 9) Records will be released if requested by a Federal, state or local safety agency with regulatory authority over Columbia County Public Transit or the employee.
- 10) If a party seeks a court order to release a specimen or part of a specimen contrary to any provision of Part 40 as amended, necessary legal steps to contest the issuance of the order will be taken
- 11) In cases of a contractor or sub-recipient of a state department of transportation, records will be released when requested by such agencies that must certify compliance with the regulation to the FTA.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

Attachment A

<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Job Duties</u>	<u>Testing Authority</u>
Public Transit Manager V	Revenue Vehicle Manager	FTA
Public Transit Supervisor	Revenue Vehicle Driver	FTA
Communications Officer	Revenue Vehicle Dispatcher	FTA
Van Driver I	Revenue Vehicle Driver	FTA
Van Driver II	Revenue Vehicle Driver	FTA
Fleet Services Mgr	Revenue Vehicle Service Manager	FTA
Fleet Supervisor	Revenue Vehicle Service Supervisor	FTA
Fleet Mechanic	Revenue Vehicle Service Mechanic Repair	FTA
<hr/>		
R&B Manager V	CDL	FMCSA
R&B Manager III	CDL	FMCSA
R&B Supervisor	CDL	FMCSA
R&B Foreman	CDL	FMCSA
R&B Crew Leader	CDL	FMCSA
R&B Heavy Equip Operator	CDL	FMCSA
R&B Light Equip Operator	CDL	FMCSA
R&B Inventory Control	CDL	FMCSA
R&B Technician	CDL	FMCSA
<hr/>		
Stormwater Manager III	CDL	FMCSA
Stormwater Supervisor	CDL	FMCSA
Stormwater Crew Leader	CDL	FMCSA
Stormwater Heavy Equip Operator	CDL	FMCSA
<hr/>		
Traffic Manager V	CDL	FMCSA
Traffic Supervisor	CDL	FMCSA
Traffic Signal Technician	CDL	FMCSA
Traffic Analyst	CDL	FMCSA
Traffic Coordinator	CDL	FMCSA
<hr/>		
Water Conveyance Foreman	CDL	FMCSA
Water Convey Heavy Equip Op	CDL	FMCSA
WW Distribution Foreman	CDL	FMCSA
WW Dist Heavy Equip Op	CDL	FMCSA
Vac Truck Driver	CDL	FMCSA

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

Attachment B Contacts

Any questions regarding this policy or any other aspect of the substance abuse policy should be directed to the following individual(s).

Columbia County Public Transit Drug and Alcohol Program Manager

Name: Jeff Carney Title: Human Resources Director
Address: PO Box 498, Evans, GA 30809
Telephone Number: (706) 868-3300 Facsimile: (706) 868-3301

Medical Review Officers

Name: Janelle A. Jaworski Title: Doctor of Medicine
Address: 300 Welsh Road, Suite 160, Horsham, PA 19044
Facsimile: (215) 443-0531

Name: Frank Bonikowski Title: Doctor of Medicine
Address: 300 Welsh Road, Suite 160, Horsham, PA 19044
Facsimile (215) 443-0531

Substance Abuse Professional #1

Name: Employee Assistance Plan Sandra Phillips, SAP
Available: 24 hours a day/7days per week www.theEAP.com
Telephone Number: (800) 252-4555

Substance Abuse Professional #2

Name: Employee Assistance Plan Christine A. Leonard
Available: 24 hours a day/7days per week www.theEAP.com
Telephone Number: (800) 252-4555

HHS Certified Laboratory Primary Specimen

Name: Quest Diagnostics, Inc.
Address: 1777 Montreal Circle, Tucker, GA 30084
Telephone Number: (800) 877-7484

HHS Certified Laboratory Primary Specimen

Name: Elsohly Laboratories, Inc.
Address: 5 Industrial Park Dr., Oxford, MS 38655
Telephone Number: (800) 800-2387

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

AMENDED: December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Department of Transportation Drug and Alcohol Testing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 305.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

Attachment B Contacts

Any questions regarding this policy or any other aspect of the substance abuse policy should be directed to the following individual(s).

Columbia County Public Transit Drug and Alcohol Program Manager

Name: Jeff Carney Title: Human Resources Director
Address: PO Box 498, Evans, GA 30809
Telephone Number: (706) 868-3300 Facsimile: (706) 868-3301

Medical Review Officers

Name: Janelle A. Jaworski Title: Doctor of Medicine
Address: 300 Welsh Road, Suite 160, Horsham, PA 19044
Facsimile: (215) 443-0531

Name: Frank Bonikowski Title: Doctor of Medicine
Address: 300 Welsh Road, Suite 160, Horsham, PA 19044
Facsimile: (215) 443-0531

Substance Abuse Professional #1

Name: Employee Assistance Plan Sandra Phillips, SAP
Available: 24 hours a day/7days per week www.theEAP.com
Telephone Number: (800) 252-4555

Substance Abuse Professional #2

Name: Employee Assistance Plan Christine A. Leonard
Available: 24 hours a day/7days per week www.theEAP.com
Telephone Number: (800) 252-4555

HHS Certified Laboratory Primary Specimen

Name: Quest Diagnostics, Inc.
Address: 1777 Montreal Circle, Tucker, GA 30084
Telephone Number: (800) 877-7484

HHS Certified Laboratory Primary Specimen

Name: Elsohly Laboratories, Inc.
Address: 5 Industrial Park Dr., Oxford, MS 38655
Telephone Number: (800) 800-2387

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 20, 2011 August 18, 2015 December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Drug-Free Workplace</i>
<i>Policy Number 306.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

To safeguard the health of Columbia County Employees and provide a safe, drug-free working environment for Employees.

II. POLICY

Columbia County Government Employees are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol in the workplace. Also prohibited is inappropriate use of prescription drugs. The only exception to this Policy will be when an Employee, under a physician's care, is using a prescription drug. It is the Employee's responsibility to notify the prescribing physician of the required job duties and to ensure that the physician approves the use of the prescription medication while at work. The Employee must inform his or her Supervisor of any prescribed drug or related job restrictions upon reporting to work.

III. CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND DRUG AND ALCOHOL TEST

All recommended candidates for employment by Columbia County will be required to have a physical examination performed by a doctor selected by Columbia County and a drug screen after the applicant has been informed that an offer of employment will be extended if the results of the physical examination and drug screen are satisfactory to Columbia County. The costs associated with the physical exam, drug and alcohol testing will be paid by Columbia County.

Such applicants will be asked to sign the *Acknowledgment* form. A copy is available from the Human Resources Department. If an applicant refuses, he or she will not be considered for further employment. Such testing is a condition of employment.

External and internal job applicants testing positive on employment drug screen will be denied the position and will not be eligible for employment opportunities until the applicant provides certification of successful completion of an accredited substance abuse program since last testing positive. Internal applicants testing positive to a post offer of employment drug screen may be subject to termination of employment or may be referred to an employee assistance program as a condition of continued employment.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 20, 2011 August 18, 2015 December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Drug-Free Workplace</i>
<i>Policy Number 306.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

The contents of the drug and alcohol guidelines are presented as statements of the County's current policy and may be changed and updated by the County from time to time. These guidelines are not intended to create an employment contract between the County and any employee or applicant and do not bind the County to a specific or definite periods of employment or to any specific policies, procedures, actions, rules or terms and conditions of employment.

IV. COLLECTION / REPORTING PROCEDURES

Non-DOT drug testing will be performed using the same collection procedures used for the regulated DOT testing. Non-DOT tests that require witnessed collections will be discussed with the Designated Employer Representative (DER) before proceeding with the collection. All collections will be performed utilizing split specimens (Bottle A and Bottle B). Testing of the split specimen (Bottle B) can only be requested by the donor and is performed at a certified laboratory chosen by the donor at the donor's expense. Quick screen testing techniques may be used for Non-DOT drug testing. If the quick screen is negative, no further testing is necessary. If the quick screen is positive, the collected urine will be sent to a certified laboratory for testing and confirmation before a result can be verified.

Medical review is performed by a certified Medical Review Officer (MRO). All verified results will be reported using standardized Non-DOT or DOT federally regulated criteria.

V. TESTING OF EMPLOYEE

1) Reasonable Suspicion Testing

An Employee will be tested, at the discretion of the County, when there is a reasonable suspicion that an Employee is impaired by drugs or alcohol on the job, has taken or consumed drugs or alcohol on the job or within four hours prior to reporting for work, or has otherwise violated this policy. The Employee's Supervisor must have the Employee sign the *Acknowledgment* form and escort the Employee to the testing facility where drug and alcohol reasonable suspicion testing is performed.

2) Post Accident Testing

An Employee may be required to be drug tested within thirty-two (32) hours or alcohol tested within two hours of any accident involving County vehicles or resulting in injuries or damage to property on the job. The Employee's supervisor must have the Employee sign the *Acknowledgment* form and must escort the Employee to the testing facility when drug and alcohol post-accident testing is performed.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 20, 2011 August 18, 2015 December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Drug-Free Workplace</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 306.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i></p>

3) Follow Up Testing

An Employee who has requested assistance for drug or alcohol problems and who has completed a Substance Abuse counseling program and then returned to work will be subject to unannounced follow-up tests for not more than sixty (60) months after return to duty.

4) Additional Testing

Additional testing may also be conducted as required by applicable state or federal laws, rules or regulations or as deemed necessary by the County. Each Employee must complete the requirements contained in, fill out and sign the *Confirmation of Receipt* form, as a condition of employment by Columbia County, or if such is requested after employment by Columbia County as a condition of continued employment.

5) Disciplinary Action

In the case of a first time violation of this *Drug Free Workplace Policy*, including a positive drug or alcohol test result (without evidence of use, sale, possession, distribution, dispensation or purchase of drugs or alcohol in the workplace or while on duty), the Employee will be subject to discipline up to and including discharge.

The County may suspend an Employee without pay under this policy pending the results of a drug or alcohol test or investigation. If the drug or alcohol test results are negative, the leave will be changed to with pay.

Any Employee using, selling, purchasing, possessing, distributing or dispensing drugs or alcohol illegally or contrary to county policy will be discharged.

All information, interviews, reports, statement memoranda and drug test results, written or otherwise, received by the County as part of this drug and alcohol testing program are confidential communications. Unless authorized by applicable laws, rules, regulations, the County will not release such information without written consent of the Employee tested; provided, however, that such material may be provided to Supervisors, Department Heads, Human Resources Director, County Commission or other county Employees who would have a need to know the matters contained therein of the Employee in question.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 20, 2011 August 18, 2015 December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Drug-Free Workplace</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 306.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i></p>

A *Consent for Alcohol / Drug Testing* form is a confidential report which must be filled out by job applicants and Employees at the authorized collection site before being drug tested. This form permits individuals to list all prescription and non-prescription drugs they are currently using or have used in the last month, as well as any other information they consider relevant to the test.

Any applicant who refuses to submit to the condition of employment physical examination and drug and alcohol tests will be ineligible for hire.

Any Employee who refuses to submit to drug and alcohol test, as herein provided for may be terminated from employment or otherwise disciplined by the County, in its sole discretion.

The County will provide the Employee with the telephone number and website of the employee assistance program and local alcohol and drug rehabilitation programs.

Each Employee will be provided educational training on drug use to include display and/or distribution of informational material.

Training of Supervisory personnel who may determine whether an Employee must be drug and alcohol tested based on reasonable suspicion will include one 60-minute period of training on the specific, contemporaneous physical, behavioral and performance indicators of probable drug and alcohol use.

A job applicant or Employee who receives a positive confirmed drug or alcohol test result may contest or explain the result to the designated Medical Review Officer at the designated testing facility, within 5 days after written notification of the positive test result.

Drug testing is conducted by analyzing the Employee or applicant's urine sample using a certified drug testing laboratory. The sample is obtained using privacy, identification, collection and chain of custody procedures. A "split sample" method collection is used which means one specimen is divided into two sealed containers.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 20, 2011 August 18, 2015 December 15, 2015 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Drug-Free Workplace</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 306.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i></p>

Following is the County approved program professionals and facilities authorized for use:

Program Manager

Name: Jeff Carney, Ed.D.
 Title: Human Resources Director
 Address: PO Box 498, Evans, GA 30809
 Telephone: (706) 868-3300
 Facsimile: (706) 868-3301

Substance Abuse Professional

Name: Employee Assistance Plan
www.theEAP.com
 Telephone: 1-800-252-4555

Medical Review Officers

Name: Frank Bonikowski
 Title: Doctor of Medicine
 Address: 6010 Olive Grove Dr
 Corpus Christi TX 78414
 Facsimile: (919) 490-1010

Laboratory

Quest Diagnostics
 Drugs of Abuse, Alcohol
 Morristown, PA

Name: Joseph DiMino
 Title: Doctor of Osteopathy
 Address: 1500 Plymouth Blvd
 Plymouth Meeting PA 19462
 Facsimile: (215) 443-0670

Quest Diagnostics
 Drugs of Abuse, Alcohol
 Morristown, PA

Off-Site Collector

MedNow Urgent Care
 104 N. Belair Rd, Suite 101, Evans, GA 30809
 Telephone: (706) 922-3669

The following is a list of some of the drugs (described by brand name, common name and/or chemical name) plus alcohol for which the County may test:

Alcohol (booze, drink); Amphetamines (Binhetamine, Desoxyn, Dexedrine); Cocaine (coke, blow, nose candy, snowflake, crack); Phencyclidine (CPC, angel dust, hog); Methaqualone Opiates (Opium, dover's powder, paregoric, parepectolin); Barbiturates (Phenobarbital, Tuinal, Amytal); Benzodiazepines (Activan, Azene, Clonopin, Dalmone, Diozepar, Halcion, Librium; Poxiparn, Restorail, Serax, Transene, Valium, Ventron, Xanax); Methodone (Dolophine, Methadose); Propoxyphene (Darvocet, Darvon, Dolene)

This list is by no means inclusive and the County can and will test for any other drugs the use of which is prohibited or controlled by State or Federal laws, rules or regulations.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Employee Conduct</i>
<i>Policy Number 307.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

To outline types of conduct by Employees that may result in Employee discipline.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

It shall be the duty of each Employee to maintain high standards of cooperation, efficiency and integrity in his/her work with the County. If an Employee's conduct falls below standard, he/she may be subject to Disciplinary Action.

III. POLICY

The types of conduct for which an Employee may be disciplined include but are not limited to the following:

- Reporting to work under the influence of intoxicants or non-prescription/illegal drugs or for using such substances while on County property.
- Failure to follow the orders of one's Supervisor(s).
- Being absent from work without permission or failure to report to the Supervisor or Department Head when one is absent.
- Being habitually absent or tardy for any reason.
- Failure to perform assigned work in an efficient and effective manner.
- Being wasteful of material, property or working time.
- Failure to get along with fellow Employees so that the work being done is hindered, impeded or not maintained at department standards.
- Failure to observe proper security procedures.
- Conduct on the job that violates the common decency or morality of the community.
- The conviction of a felony or of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude or conduct that is unbecoming of an Employee.
- Violating safety rules and regulations.
- Making false or slanderous accusations about Employees or Supervisors.
- Speaking critically or derogatorily about other Employees to anyone other than the appropriate

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Employee Conduct</i>
<i>Policy Number 307.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

County officials who are charged with receiving and acting upon such information.

- Removal of County money, property or property in custody of the County without proper authorization.
- Lying to Supervisors in connection with your job.
- Dishonesty, including intentionally giving false information, falsifying records, falsification of payroll time sheets or making false statements when applying for employment.
- Threatening other County Employees or members of the public, interfering with work of other County Employees, causing or participating in a disruption or confrontation which interferes with County business or the peace and decorum at the County buildings or facilities.
- Divulging or misusing confidential information, including removal from County premises, without proper authorization, any Employee lists, records, designs, drawings or confidential information of any kind.
- Accepting fees, gifts or other valuable items other than salary paid by the County in exchange for the performance of the Employee's duties which he/she has been hired to perform by the County.
- Failure or unwillingness to perform the assigned job.
- Abuse of leave privileges, including Personal Time Off, Catastrophic Leave, Medical Leave Sharing or Bereavement Leave that may result in denial of leave requests, suspension without pay or termination of employment.
- The use of profanity or abusive language towards a fellow Employee or member of the general public while performing official duties as a County Employee.

Violation of any other policies and procedures of Columbia County applicable to its Employees, including but not limited to the Anti-Harassment Policy, Drug Free Workplace Policy, Department of Transportation Fitness for Duty/Drug and Alcohol Testing Program Policy, Violence in the Workplace Policy or violation of any Financial, Procurement, Risk Management or other policies and procedures adopted by the Board of Commissioners.

Refer to *Policy 301.1, Disciplinary Action*, for additional information on procedures for and types of disciplinary action.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND AMENDED: June 17, 2014 December 15, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Unlawful Harassment Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 308.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a policy and procedures to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment in the working environment of Columbia County employees.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of Columbia County to maintain a work environment free from all forms of harassment. This includes the right of employees to be free of discrimination and unlawful harassment because of a person's race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status or any other characteristics protected by applicable federal or state law.

Unlawful harassment as prohibited by this Policy, not only includes harassment of employees by employees, it also encompasses harassment of employees by non-employees with whom County employees come into contact during work, such as employees of contractors, customers, vendors, suppliers and temporary employment staff. Employees are prohibited from engaging in unlawful harassment of non-employees with whom they come into contact, such as employees of contractors, customers, vendors, suppliers and temporary employment staff.

III. PROHIBITED FORMS OF HARASSMENT

Generally, unlawful harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct which denigrates or shows hostility or aversion to an individual because of his or her race, creed, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability or marital status, or that of his or her relatives, friends or associates, and which:

- 1) Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment;
- 2) Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance;
or
- 3) Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

For example, the following kinds of behavior or others with a similar harassing effect are absolutely prohibited:

- 1) Using epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts (even if claimed to be "jokes" or "pranks") which relate to race, creed, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability or marital status.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND AMENDED: June 17, 2014 December 15, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Unlawful Harassment Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 308.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

- 2) Written or graphic material which denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, creed, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability or marital status, and is displayed or circulated in the workplace.

Similarly, this Policy prohibits harassment of our employees by employees of (i) suppliers, vendors, temporary employment staff, contractors and those entities utilizing, visiting or working in our facilities, and (ii) other entities with whom our employees come into contact when working outside of the County’s facilities. This Policy also prohibits harassment by our employees toward employees of (i) customers, suppliers, vendors, temporary employment staff, contractors and those entities utilizing, visiting or working in our facilities, and (ii) other entities with whom our employees come into contact when working outside the County’s facilities.

Any harassment of or by County employees in violation of the foregoing rules is absolutely prohibited and will not be tolerated.

IV. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination that is specifically prohibited by this policy.

Unwelcomed sexual advances, unwelcomed requests for sexual favors and other unwelcomed verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- 1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment;
- 2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or
- 3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

The following kinds of behavior, or others with a similar harassing effect, are prohibited:

- 1) Insulting or degrading sexual remarks, jokes, innuendoes, or other sexually-oriented conduct (including among other things, graphic or descriptive comments relating to an individual’s body or physical appearance, sexually-oriented teasing or pranks, improper suggestions, objects or pictures, or unwanted physical contact); or

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND AMENDED: June 17, 2014 December 15, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Unlawful Harassment Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 308.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

2) Threats, demands or suggestions that an employee’s work status depends in any way upon tolerating or accepting sexual advances or sexually oriented conduct.

Similarly, sexual harassment of our employees by employees of (i) customer, suppliers, vendors, contractors, temporary employment staff and those utilizing, visiting or working in our facilities, and (ii) other entities with whom our employees come into contact when working outside of the County’s facilities is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Further, this Policy prohibits sexual harassment by our employees toward employees of (i) customers, suppliers, vendors, contractors, temporary employment staff and those utilizing, visiting or working in our facilities, and (ii) other entities with whom our employees come into contact when working outside of the County’s facilities.

Any harassment of or by County employees in violation of the foregoing rules is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Under no circumstances does any Department Head, Manager, Supervisor, Employee or any other person have any authority whatsoever to engage in discriminatory, harassing or retaliating conduct in violation of this Policy. If anyone claims to have such authority or you have any questions about whether conduct that you find objectionable is authorized by the County, please contact the Human Resources Director.

V. SOCIAL MEDIA HARASSMENT

Social media is changing the internal workplace, providing new ways for employees to socialize and interact with one another. The direct connection of social media allows co-workers to share their personal life with an instant connection and propels relationships forward quicker than a traditional office friendship. The boundaries of conduct can become easily blurred and potentially dangerous when this complicated overlapping of private and professional relationships intersect online. When the parameters get ambiguous, the probability of inappropriate behavior occurring creates the potential of social media harassment.

Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including personal postings or postings to another person’s web log or blog, journal or diary, personal web site, social networking or affinity web site, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with Columbia County, as well as any other forms of electronic communication. An employee’s virtual comments, even those made on their own time, may constitute actionable harassment in the workplace.

The same principles and guidelines found in this policy apply to an employee’s activities online. The employee is solely responsible for what is posted online; therefore, before creating online content, the employee should consider the risks and rewards that are involved. Conduct that could adversely affect personal job performance, the performance of fellow co-workers or otherwise adversely affect the employer, employees, citizens, vendors and others may result in disciplinary

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND AMENDED: June 17, 2014 December 15, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Unlawful Harassment Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 308.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

action up to and including termination.

Any harassment of or by County employees in violation of the foregoing rules is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Under no circumstances does any Department Head, Manager, Supervisor, Employee or any other person have any authority whatsoever to engage in discriminatory, harassing or retaliating conduct in violation of this Policy. If anyone claims to have such authority or you have any questions about whether conduct that you find objectionable is authorized by the County, please contact the Human Resources Director or County Manager.

VI. RETALIATION

Retaliation against an individual for exercising his/her rights under this Policy is also strictly prohibited and is a separate violation of this Policy. This includes any retaliation for inquiring about rights under this Policy, or reporting or complaining about possible violations, or assisting in a complaint investigation, including providing truthful information about a possible violation. Such retaliation against the County’s employees, or customers, suppliers, vendors, temporary agency employees, contractors or those utilizing our facilities or services is prohibited and will not be tolerated.

Overt or covert acts of reprisal, interference, restraint, penalty, discrimination, intimidation or harassment against an individual or group for exercising rights under this Policy will be subject to appropriate and prompt disciplinary or remedial action.

VII. COMPLAINT PROCEDURES AND CORRECTIVE ACTION

1) Reporting

All employees, the County’s customers, suppliers, vendors, agency employees, contractors and those utilizing our facilities or services should promptly report any conduct that they are subject to, or that they witness, which may violate this Policy. If the County does not know about the conduct, it cannot act.

Complaints or inquiries under this Policy may be made to an immediate Supervisor, Manager, Department Head, Human Resources Director, or County Manager who have overall responsibility for the enforcement of this Policy. It is our hope that by identifying different management levels, you can freely discuss your complaint or inquiry with one of them.

Alternatively, you may initially discuss the matter with any Supervisor, who will then bring your complaint to the attention of the Human Resources Director. You may also feel free to discuss the matter initially with any other employee; and if you wish, you may also involve that person as your

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND AMENDED: June 17, 2014 December 15, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Unlawful Harassment Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 308.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

advocate to help you in bringing your complaint forward. However, in all cases, the matter must be brought to the attention of the Human Resources Director, because of the need for consistency, investigation and centralized decision-making in the implementation and enforcement of this Policy.

Do not allow conduct that may violate this Policy to continue unreported. It is extremely important that this be reported so that the County can act to stop such conduct at the earliest possible time.

2) Confidentiality

Complaints and inquiries under this Policy will be kept confidential to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the County's need to conduct an adequate investigation so that it can take prompt and appropriate action and is subject to legal requirements.

3) Investigation

Complaints will be investigated promptly. The nature and details of the investigation process will vary depending on the details of the complaint. The County's objective in every instance is to make a fair determination of what happened so it can then take corrective action, if warranted, as soon as possible. The investigation may include, among other things, interviews of witnesses and the person who is the subject of the complaint.

4) Corrective Action

Any employee who is determined to have committed sexual harassment, harassment or retaliation in violation of this Policy will be subjected to appropriate disciplinary measures up to and including termination of employment. Similarly, appropriate action will be taken or suggested if the employee of a customer, vendor, supplier, agency, contractor or other entity with whom the County does business engages in conduct that violates this Policy.

When warranted, the County may retrain employees concerning this Policy and what it means. Other forms of corrective action may also be called for depending on the circumstances.

The types of conduct described in this Policy are strictly prohibited. Because of this, the County may treat instances of similarly offensive conduct as a violation of this Policy, regardless of the specific wording of this Policy or technical definitions in the law, and may deal with such conduct by any disciplinary measures or other forms of corrective action, including termination of employment of employees violating the Policy.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Personal Appearance</i>
<i>Policy Number 309.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish general guidelines related to personal appearances of County Employees.

II. POLICY

It shall be the responsibility of each Employee while on duty to have a neat, clean and well-groomed appearance consistent with the type of duties performed by such Employee.

The Employee's Supervisor will discuss the subject of personal appearance with the Employee if it does not positively reflect the image of the County.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Personal Use of Telephone</i>
<i>Policy Number 310.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

To identify permissible and impermissible use of the County's telephone system including facsimile machines for other than County business.

II. POLICY

County telephones and facsimiles are to be used for County business and may be used for personal business on a limited basis only.

III. PROCEDURES

Personal telephone calls received or made by an Employee during business hours must be held to both a minimum number and duration and must not interfere with the Employee's work.

It is the Employee's responsibility to ensure that no cost to the County results from his/her personal telephone or facsimile usage.

Violation of this policy will subject the Employee to Disciplinary Action.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Political Activities</i>
<i>Policy Number 311.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

- 1) To foster governmental efficiency and to ensure that Employees can perform their jobs without being pressured to support political candidates or to interpret regulations favorably for supporters of certain candidates or elected officials.
- 2) To allow Employee performance and advancement to be judged without regard to political activity.
- 3) To promote public confidence in the integrity of County government to the end that Elected Officials will not be perceived as making decision on the basis of political loyalties.

II. POLICY

Prohibited Activities during Working Hours

An Employee shall be subject to discipline up to and including immediate dismissal for violation of these provisions:

- 1) No Employee of Columbia County shall, while on duty (i) request or solicit contributions or anything of value for any political candidate or cause; (ii) participate in any political campaign by speaking in favor of any candidate or cause; (iii) distributing literature; (iv) picketing or demonstrating on behalf of or in opposition to any political candidate or cause; (v) making telephone calls in support of any candidate or cause; or (vi) organizing, planning or in any other way participating in the administration or carrying on of any political campaign.
- 2) No Employee of Columbia County or any volunteer shall, while on duty and/or in the uniform of the County, or while in or operating any County vehicle, display any badge, button, sign or sticker promoting or opposing any political cause or candidate
- 3) No Employee of the County shall use public funds, property or any other instrumentality or thing of value belonging to the County to promote or oppose any political cause or candidate.
- 4) Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to prohibit an Employee:
 - a) From stating any opinion regarding any political issue or cause in ordinary conversation during working hours providing that such a conversation does not interfere with the Employee's assigned job duties and is not repeated numerous times so as to become campaigning rather than casual ordinary conversation.
 - b) From supporting any political cause or candidate during non-working hours.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Political Activities</i>
<i>Policy Number 311.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

Coercion and/or Intimidation of Public Employees

No officer or Employee of the County shall use his/her public office or employment for the purpose of, or with the effect of:

- 1) Coercing or intimidating any County Employee or Employees with respect to contributing to, opposing or promoting, or refraining from contributing to, opposing or promoting any political cause of or candidate.
- 2) Obtaining a benefit as a result of any political activity by:
 - a) Intentionally committing an unauthorized act under color of law.
 - b) Intentionally refraining from performing a duty imposed upon him or her by law.

Illegal Political Activities

No officer or Employee of the County shall engage in any political activity which is prohibited under state or federal law. Any person engaging in such activity shall be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal. The following list of activities is included for illustrative purposes. Any illegal activity which is prohibited by state law but which fails to appear on this list is hereby incorporated by reference. No officer or employee shall:

- 1) Engage in any of the following activities within 150 feet of a polling place:
 - a) Electioneering
 - b) Circulating cards or handbills
 - c) Soliciting signatures
 - d) Interfering with voting or the administration of the polling place
 - e) Conducting an exit or public opinion poll
 - f) Obstruct or prevent access to a polling place.
 - g) Remove a ballot from a polling place or solicit a voter to show his or her ballot.
 - h) Attempt to intimidate, influence or bribe a voter by menace, force, threat or corrupt means.
 - i) Directly or indirectly offer a bribe or reward to induce a voter to vote for or against a person or proposition.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Political Activities</i>
<i>Policy Number 311.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

- j) Attempt to influence a voter to vote or not to vote, directly or indirectly, by menace or corrupt means.
- k) Hinder, disturb, persuade, threaten or intimidate any person from giving his/her vote.
- l) Knowingly and willfully make a false assertion or propagate a false report concerning a candidate which has a tendency to prevent his / her election.

Conflicts of Interest

If any County Employee seeks or accepts appointment or election to any public office when the seeking or holding of such office would be incompatible or would substantially interfere with the discharge of his/her duties as an Employee of Columbia County, such Employee shall request a leave of absence without pay while seeking such office and resign employment with Columbia County if such office is obtained.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 REMOVED: October 18, 2011	TOPIC: Notice of No Smoking
<i>Policy Number 312.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

This section left intentionally blank.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Solicitations</i>
<i>Policy Number 313.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish a uniform policy for solicitations or sales by County Employees in order to alleviate disruption of County Employees during normal working hours.

II. POLICY

With the exception of United Way and other County approved activities, peddling or soliciting for sale or donation of any kind by County Employees on County premises during normal working hours is not allowed. Exceptions may be granted by the County Manager.

Working hours include the working time of both the Employee doing the soliciting or distributing and the Employee to whom such activity is directed.

Employees are free to discuss these matters before or after normal working hours and during lunch or rest periods in non-work areas.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Violence in the Workplace</i>
<i>Policy Number 314.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

To provide management and Employees with guidance should they encounter in the workplace a situation they believe may result in violence and to provide information and training to management and Employees to minimize risk of injury or harm resulting from violence in the workplace environment.

"Workplace Violence" means any verbal or physical action that is communicated or perceived as a threat, harassment, abuse, intimidation or personal contact that produces fear of or causes bodily harm or damage to property. Workplace violence may involve family, friends, strangers, co-workers or citizens.

II. POLICY

Columbia County will not tolerate any acts of violence to persons or property. All acts of violence are treated seriously. Each act of violence will be dealt with promptly and appropriately utilizing administrative, managerial, legal and disciplinary actions to minimize risk to Employees, citizens and property.

III. PROCEDURES

1) Preventing Violence in the Workplace

Columbia County recognizes that most serious incidents of workplace violence represent a personal crisis that the individual is unable or unwilling to solve alone. Intervention at an early stage provides the individual with the necessary assistance to resolve these issues, prevent escalation and allow continued productive employment.

Employees have access to confidential and discretionary professional assistance through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The program provides advice, assessments and case review to help management develop intervention strategies and make decisions seeking to prevent violent incidents from occurring. The program can refer to outside professional agencies which can provide evaluations, diagnoses and treatment plans.

2) Awareness Training Programs

Awareness training programs will be developed to recognize threats and to assess the early warning signs of potentially violent situations. Training will be made available to all Employees. The Employee training program will cover such topics as awareness, reporting procedures, emergency preparedness, personal safety and conflict resolution. For management Employees the training program will include information on legal issues, reporting channels, investigation techniques, documentation requirements and physical security improvements.

All Employees are responsible for refraining from participating in violent actions and reporting to

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Violence in the Workplace</i>
<i>Policy Number 314.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

management any threatening or dangerous situations occurring within the workplace or that affect the work environment.

Management is responsible for responding to violent situations or circumstances which could lead to violent situations, depending upon the seriousness and nature of the incident. Management will conduct interviews and investigations, prepare documentation, and notify appropriate assistance agencies.

Department Heads will be responsible for developing his/her department crisis procedures and for creating simple action plans to follow in the event of a violent action occurring in the workplace.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Whistleblower Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 315.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose is to (i) encourage reporting by County Employees of improper governmental action taken by County or Employees, (ii) protect County Employees who have reported improper actions in accordance with County policies and procedures, (iii) act as a safeguard for legitimate County interests, and (iv) provide for speedy dispute resolution.

II. POLICY

The County strives to conduct its business with the utmost integrity and in strict accordance with all applicable federal, state and local law. Accordingly, Employees are encouraged to bring to the attention of the County any improper actions of County officials and Employees. The County will not retaliate against any Employee who makes such a disclosure in good faith and in accordance with the procedures set forth in this policy.

Improper actions are actions undertaken by an Employee of Columbia County in the performance of his or her duties which (i) are in violation of any federal, state or local law, or the Policies and Procedures of Columbia County, (ii) constitute an abuse of authority, (iii) create a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or (iv) grossly waste public funds. Improper actions do not include common personnel actions, such as the processing of grievances, decisions regarding hiring, promotion, firing and other discipline, or alleged violations of employment contracts or policies or procedures set forth in the County's policy manual.

III. PROCEDURES

- 1) Misconduct can often be corrected most expeditiously if handled internally. Accordingly, an Employee who has a good faith concern that improper action has occurred or is about to occur, must first raise that concern with the County. Specifically, the Employee must submit his or her concerns and related information ("complaint") in writing to the Department Head. In the event that the complaint concerns the Department Head, the complaint shall be submitted to the Department Head's Supervisor or the County Manager. The identity of a reporting Employee will be kept confidential to the fullest extent possible under law, unless the reporting Employees provide written authorization for disclosure. The Employee may report under this policy through an attorney.
- 2) The County shall have ten (10) working days to address the complaint raised by the reporting Employee and provide the reporting Employee with a written response which identifies the alleged improper action at issue, describes the scope and findings of the investigation, states what, if any, action will be taken against the offending Employee(s) and explains why such action is appropriate.
- 3) If the reporting Employee is not satisfied with the investigation and/or resolution of the complaint, the reporting Employee may request reconsideration in writing within five (5) working days of receipt of the County's written response. Written requests for reconsideration must be submitted to the County Manager or designee and must identify the specific elements of the County's investigation or written response which the reporting Employee finds

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Whistleblower Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 315.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

unsatisfactory.

The County has three (3) working days to advise the reporting Employee in writing whether reconsideration will be granted. Any reconsideration will be limited to examination of the specific issues raised by the reporting party in his or her written request. The County will have five (5) working days from the date reconsideration is granted to complete its additional investigation and provide the Employee with a written response.

If a reporting Employee is still dissatisfied with the County's investigation or response, the reporting Employee may disclose the complaint to an outside agency or organization for further review. Reporting Employees may disclose the complaint to outside agencies only after fully exhausting the reporting and reconsideration procedures set forth in this policy. All reporting Employees must strictly follow this policy. Employees who comply with the policy shall not be subject to discipline or discharge for reporting, disclosure or other activities subject to the policy.

- 4) Deviation from the reporting and reconsideration policy is permitted only in those rare cases where the reporting Employee can show that persons or property will be damaged if the alleged improper conduct is not immediately addressed.
- 5) Reporting Employees who, after exhausting the internal reporting and reconsideration procedures, may choose to continue to pursue their complaints may consider external federal or state agencies.
- 6) All County personnel are prohibited from taking any adverse employment action against an Employee who registers a complaint with a public body in accordance with this policy. If an Employee believes there has been retaliation for reporting improper actions in accordance with this policy, the Employee may seek redress as follows.
 - a) The Employee must provide written notice of the charge of retaliatory action to the County Manager or designee within thirty (30) days of the date the alleged retaliatory action occurred. The notice must describe the alleged retaliatory action and the persons allegedly involved and identify the relief requested.
 - b) The County Manager or designee must respond to the charge in writing within thirty (30) days of its submission. The response must: identify the alleged retaliatory action and persons involved; identify the relief requested; describe the investigation conducted; state and explain the disposition of the charge; and identify the relief, if any, that is being granted and explain why the relief is appropriate.
 - c) The charging party is entitled to a hearing if he or she so chooses. However, the hearing must be requested in writing within fifteen (15) days of delivery of the County's written response to the charge or, if the County fails to respond within the allotted thirty (30) day period, within fifteen (15) days of the last day upon which the County could have responded.
 - d) The Civil Service Commission will serve as the hearing board and provide final internal due process.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Requests for Use of County</i>
AMENDED: September 21, 2021	<i>Personnel, Equipment and Material</i>
<i>Policy Number 316.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. PURPOSE

To identify permissible and impermissible use of the County’s employees, equipment and material for non-County activities such as requests from citizens, businesses, non-profit organizations, other governments, authorities, boards, etc.

II. POLICY

County employees, equipment and materials are to be used for County business as prescribed by State law and County regulations and policies. Requests for services, equipment or material not currently authorized by the County will be evaluated according to the following procedure.

III. PROCEDURE

- 1) Individual or entity requesting County assistance (“Requestor”) must first complete and sign a “Request for Service” form (*Exhibit A*).
- 2) Appropriate Division Director evaluates request, estimates cost and recommends approval or denial.
- 3) County Manager reviews Director’s comments and recommends action to oversight committee of the Board of Commission (BOC).
- 4) The Division Director’s oversight committee members approve and deny the request on the form.
- 5) If denied, Requestor can ask for additional review at the next regularly scheduled Committee meeting, then the matter is presented to the BOC, if necessary. The decision of the BOC is final.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Requests for Use of County Personnel, Equipment and Material</i>
AMENDED: September 21, 2021	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>
<i>Policy Number 316.1</i>	

REQUEST FOR SERVICE

To: Division Director _____

From: ("Requestor") _____

Date of Request: _____ Date Needed: _____

Detailed Description of Project:

Justification: _____

Authorization to Enter Property: Requestor hereby authorizes Columbia County, its agents, employees and representatives to enter Requestor's property or property under the control of Requestor in order to provide the services and/or equipment sought hereunder.

Indemnification and Hold Harmless: Requestor shall indemnify and save harmless Columbia County, its agents, employees and representatives from and against all claims, demands, suits or judgments for sums of money to any person, corporation or firm accruing from loss of life, injury or damage to person or property resulting from negligence or other causes, including product liability, and arising from or in connection with the services to be performed or equipment provided by Columbia County, its employees, agents or representatives pursuant to this Request for Service. This indemnification shall include not only the sums of money recovered by the claimant but also all costs of defense and attorneys' fees related to such claims, demands, suits or judgments.

Authority: Requestor warrants and represents to Columbia County that Requestor has the right and authority to enter into this Request for Service and perform the obligations provided for herein and that Requestor's performance hereunder shall not conflict with rights granted any other party.

Signature: _____

Telephone number: _____

DIVISION DIRECTOR REVIEW

Cost Estimate:

Comments:

Recommendation: _____ Approve

_____ Disapprove

COUNTY MANAGER REVIEW

Comments:

Recommendation: _____ Approve

_____ Disapprove

APPROPRIATE BOC COMMITTEE

Comments:

Recommendation: Chairperson _____ Approve

_____ Disapprove

(please initial) Vice-Chairperson _____ Approve

_____ Disapprove

_____ If denied, applicant has asked that request be forwarded to Committee and BOC, if appropriate.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: September 20, 2011 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Smoking in the Workplace Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 317.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Conduct</i>

I. POLICY

The Board of Commissioners desires to promote a healthy environment for all persons including commissioners, officers, administrators, staff, employees, visitors, vendors and any other person who has occasion to visit County owned, leased or controlled property. In accordance with the Columbia County Code of Ordinances, Section 58-8, Smoking in County Buildings and Vehicles Prohibited, employees are prohibited from smoking any tobacco product on property owned, leased, or controlled by the County including buildings and vehicles. Smoking is permitted only in designated areas identified in the County Code of Ordinances.

The term Tobacco Product, shall mean any product derived from cultivated tobacco including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, bidis, kreteks, and pipes.

II. PROCEDURES

Resolving complaints about smoking

- Any complaints about the application of the policy to the workplace should be brought to the attention of the Human Resources Director or the County Manager.
- The complaint should be submitted in writing and identify specific objections. Columbia County will investigate the complaint and resolve it in accordance with the policy.
- No employee shall suffer any form of retaliation for raising a complaint or asking a question about this policy.
- The smoking policy is intended to comply with requirements of the County ordinance.

Scope

This policy applies to

- All areas of County owned buildings, facilities and parks
- All vehicles owned, leased or controlled by the County
- All visitors, citizens, vendors, or general public when on County property
- All contractors and consultants and/or their employees working on or in County property
- All temporary, contract or seasonal workers or student interns

Designated areas not subject to the provisions of the policy

- Columbia County Detention Center designated smoking areas
- Wildwood Park property
- County owned fire stations
- County owned roads which are part of the public road system

Employees who violate this smoking policy and the County ordinance will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate discharge.



	TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT
401.1	Education Reimbursement Program
402.1	Special Licenses and Memberships
403.1	Training Programs, Workshops and Seminars
404.1	Professional Development Program
405.1	Employee Travel and Training Expenses
406.1	Safety Training

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 19, 2018 September 21, 2021 July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Education Reimbursement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 401.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

I. PURPOSE

To encourage eligible Employees through an Education Reimbursement Program to participate in education programs which will further their skills and knowledge for use in their current position or for use in future positions with more responsibilities.

The Education Reimbursement Program shall be a plan as provided for in section 127 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code") and shall be construed consistently with the requirements of Section 127.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

The Human Resources Director is responsible for administration of the Education Reimbursement Program.

III. OBJECTIVE

Subject to the appropriation of sufficient funds by the Board of Commissioners, the County will reimburse an eligible Employee up to 100% of the cost of tuition for approved technical, undergraduate level courses, or graduate level courses, up to a maximum of \$5,250 during a calendar year.

Books, supplies and other fees or charges will not be reimbursed.

There will be no loans or advances of money to Employees for purposes of taking courses. Reimbursement will be paid only after the course has been completed.

IV. ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEE

To be eligible to participate in the Education Reimbursement Program the Employee must satisfy the following criteria:

- 1) The Employee must be a Regular Full-time Employee who has completed one (1) year of service as of the date the course begins.
- 2) The individual must be actively working for the County as of the date the course is completed.
- 3) The course schedule and study time must not be in conflict with the Employee work schedule.
- 4) The Employee must take the course at one of the following types of accredited institutions: Technical institutes, colleges or universities.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 19, 2018 September 21, 2021 July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Education Reimbursement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 401.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

The County reserves the right in the sole discretion of the Board of Commissioners to exclude any school or subject from eligibility under the Program. Any exclusion shall be effective as to courses beginning after the date the exclusion is imposed.

- 5) The Employee shall be entitled to tuition reimbursement if he/she has complied with all provisions of this policy with the amount of reimbursement based on the grade received subject to the limitations set forth above according to the following schedule:

Employee receives an “A”	= 100% reimbursed
Employee receives a “B”	= 90% reimbursed
Employee receives a “C”	= 80% reimbursed
Employee receives a “D” or below	= 0% reimbursed

Plus or minus modifiers to a grade will be disregarded.

- 6) For Employees taking graduate level courses, the course for which reimbursement is sought must be one leading to a graduate degree in a course of study in which the Employee is enrolled.

V. PROCEDURES

- 1) Before enrollment in a course for which reimbursement will be sought, an eligible Employee must submit to his/her immediate Supervisor a complete **Education Reimbursement Application** for each course. The form can be obtained by contacting the Human Resources Department or by downloading the application from the County website. A copy of the course description, costs and dates must be attached.
- 2) Completed Education Reimbursement Application forms will be submitted to the Employee’s Supervisor, Department Manager, or Division Director for their review and recommendations if they care to make a recommendation, and approval. The approved forms and any recommendations will then be submitted to the Human Resources Director.
- 3) The Human Resources Director will review the Education Reimbursement Application to determine if the applicant satisfies the criteria as an eligible Employee and to otherwise determine whether or not to approve the application. Applications by those who are not eligible Employees will be returned with an explanation of the reason the criteria is not met. The Human Resource Manager will approve or disapprove each application. If an application is disapproved, the Human Resource Manager shall advise the applicant of the reasons in writing.
- 4) When the Education Reimbursement Application satisfies the criteria for an eligible Employee and has been approved, Human Resources will retain the approved document. A Human Resources representative will advise the employee of the application approval.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 19, 2018 September 21, 2021 July 19, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Education Reimbursement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 401.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

- 5) To receive tuition reimbursement, the eligible Employee must submit to the Human Resources Department an official grade report for the course or a copy certified by the registrar or other appropriate official of the educational institution and a receipt of payment of tuition for the course or a copy thereof certified by the registrar or other appropriate official of the educational institution.

- 6) Employees who voluntarily separate service from the County or are dismissed for just cause, within twelve (12) months after receiving a reimbursement under the Education Reimbursement Program, shall repay the County for all such tuition reimbursements. By accepting the reimbursement under the Education Reimbursement Program, the Employee authorizes the County to deduct tuition reimbursements, which must be repaid from his or her final paycheck. If the repayments are not fully paid by payroll deduction, the Employee shall immediately pay the County the repayment due and such amount shall bear interest from the date of the Employees termination of employment until paid at the rate of 10% per annum.

The Department Head or Division Director may at his/her discretion waive the reimbursement requirement if the employee transfers to another County department or if circumstances deem a waiver to be appropriate. The Department Head will send the Human Resources Director a written waiver of the reimbursement requirement.

VI. FEDERAL INCOME WITHHOLDING

Amounts paid for tuition reimbursement from a plan meeting the requirements of Section 127 of the Code are not included in an Employee's income or subject to income tax withholding up to a maximum of \$5,250 annually. This does apply to reimbursements for graduate level courses effective January 2002. If subsequent tax law changes fail to continue the tax-free treatment of an Education Assistance Plan or in any way modify its treatment, appropriate adjustments in Federal Income Tax withholding will be made from the effective date of the change.

VII. MANDATORY COURSES

This Education Reimbursement Program should not be confused with courses undertaken to meet the express requirements of the County. Mandatory courses, which may be required for a current position, are not subject to this Policy.

VIII. BUDGET LIMITATIONS

Reimbursement under the Education Reimbursement Program is contingent upon the continued availability of funds and may be increased, decreased or eliminated according to the availability of funds as appropriated by the Board of Commissioners.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Special Licenses and Memberships</i>
<i>Policy Number 402.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the request and approval of special licenses and membership fees.

II. POLICY

The County will pay an annual lump sum payment equal to the current annual dues or fees for each Employee who is required by ordinance, state, or Federal law to be a member of a professional organization, or who must maintain a current certification or license as a condition of employment, or who maintains credentials and certifications that provide professional credibility in his/her County position. Membership to organizations and for licenses that certify the professional credibility of the Employee will be made upon approval by the Employee's Department Head. The County will also pay such amount for Employees when the County has contracted to do so.

Employees who belong to professional organizations that promote individual professional growth, competence and effectiveness in functioning as County Employees will be allowed time off with pay to attend local, state and national meetings, subject to approval by the Department Head and based on budgetary limitations.

Membership in outside organizations shall be in the name of the County, if possible.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: February 20, 2018 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Training Programs, Workshops and Seminars</i>
<i>Policy Number 403.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

I. PURPOSE

To promote and facilitate training, general education, and career education which meets the dynamic needs of the County. Training will include any work related programs, seminars, conferences, conventions, courses or workshops attended by an Employee whose tuition and expenses are funded in whole or in part by the County or while the Employee is in a paid status with the County. In addition, employees may participate in General Educational Development (GED) preparation courses available through local education institutions and other resources.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the County to encourage and coordinate training and education opportunities for Employees and supervisors in order that services rendered to the County will be more efficient and effective.

III. PROCEDURES

- 1) Attendance at training, general education and career education programs will be approved by the Employee's immediate Supervisor and/or Department Manager. Employees participating in the GED program will complete a Memorandum of Understanding that the GED is part of their job requirement and must be obtained within six (6) months from date of hire, and, if unsuccessful, their employment with Columbia County will be terminated.
- 2) Attendance at a training program involving out-of-state travel by an Employee requires approval by the Division Director/Department Head and the County Manager.
- 3) County-sponsored and required training shall generally be arranged during regularly scheduled work hours. A Department Head may change the standard work hours to accommodate or require attendance at such training activities. Such required training shall be recorded as time worked within the meaning of this policy.
- 4) Employees who acquire training on their own time and expense are encouraged to notify the Human Resources Department so the information can be noted in the Employee's personnel file. Employees who terminate employment within one year or less after receiving payment by the County for education expenses, including tuition, registration, cost of meals or travel costs, will be required to reimburse the County for those funds or it will be deducted from the Employee's final check.
- 5) The Human Resources Department shall maintain Employee training and education history and shall periodically audit training attendance and policy compliance.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 15, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Professional Development Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 404.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

I. PURPOSE

To encourage Employees to participate in educational programs which will further their professional development, skills and knowledge for use in their current position or for use in positions with greater responsibility. Employee participation in the courses will be voluntary and payment/reimbursement for tuition, books, tests, certificates, travel expenses, hotel costs and any other associated costs will have prior approval by the Department Head.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

The Department Head is responsible for the financial and administrative oversight of his/her division and approval of all departmental employee professional training requests and funds. The Human Resources Department will maintain professional development training records in the employee official personnel file for all employees participating in a professional development program.

III. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to receive payment/reimbursement for qualified Professional Development coursework, tuition, books, travel, hotel and meals, the Employee must satisfy the following criteria:

- 1) Probationary or temporary employees are not eligible to participate in the payment/reimbursement program.
- 2) The employee must submit a request in writing to the immediate Supervisor and Department Head requesting approval to participate in and to receive payment/reimbursement for expenses under the program.
- 3) Certifications obtained through professional organizations, technical schools, distance learning, continuing education seminars and colleges are eligible.
- 4) The individual must be actively working for the County as of the date the course is completed.
- 5) Courses and study time must not be in conflict with the Employee work schedule unless prior approval is received from the Department Head.
- 6) The major Department Head or the Human Resources Director may exclude any school or subject from eligibility under the Program. Courses beginning after the date the exclusion is imposed are affected.

IV. PROCEDURES

Before enrollment in a course for which payment/reimbursement will be sought, the Employee must submit to his/her immediate Supervisor and major Department Head a request for approval of payment/reimbursement, providing all information relevant to the request. A copy of the course description, costs and tentative dates of attendance must be attached.

To receive payment/reimbursement, the eligible Employee must

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 15, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Professional Development Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 404.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

- 1) Sign the Wage Withholding Authorization Form (*Exhibit A*) to reimburse the County if they voluntarily separate service from the County or are dismissed for just cause within twelve (12) months after receiving payment/reimbursement under the program.
- 2) Submit the original grade report for the course and/or copy of the certificate issued by the educational institution, and an original receipt of payment for tuition, books, tests and associated costs in addition to a Travel Expense Reimbursement form, if applicable, to the Department Head.

Terminated Employees shall reimburse the County for any funds including tuition, books, travel, hotel and meals received under this program for courses completed during the last twelve (12) months of employment.

The pre-authorized agreement will allow the County to deduct tuition payments or reimbursements from the terminated Employee's final paycheck. If the repayments are not fully paid through payroll deduction, the Employee shall immediately pay the County the funds due, and if not paid, such amount shall bear interest from the date of the Employee separation until paid in full at 10% per annum.

The Department Head or Division Director may at his/her discretion waive the reimbursement requirement if the employee transfers to another County department or if circumstances deem a waiver to be appropriate. The Department Head will send the Human Resources Director a written waiver of the reimbursement requirement.

V. MANDATORY COURSES

This Professional Development Program should not be confused with courses undertaken to meet the express requirements of the County. Mandatory courses, which may be required for a current position, are not subject to this Policy

VI. BUDGET LIMITATIONS

Payment/reimbursement for courses and associated costs is contingent upon the continued availability of funds and may be increased, decreased or eliminated by the Board of Commissioners.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 15, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Professional Development Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 404.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

Exhibit A

WAGE WITHHOLDING AUTHORIZATION FORM

In accordance with the Professional Development Program, if my employment is terminated voluntarily or involuntarily for just cause from Columbia County, Georgia, within twelve (12) months after receiving any payment/reimbursement under the program, a deduction from my salary may be made to repay Columbia County, Georgia for any Professional Development Program funds received to include cost of coursework, travel, hotel and meals during the preceding twelve (12) months.

Further, if there are not adequate funds from my salary to repay the payment/reimbursement amount in full, I agree to immediately pay the County the funds due and such amount shall bear interest from the date of the Employee termination of employment until paid in full at 10% per annum.

Employee

Date

Supervisor

Date

Department Head/Division Director

Date

Copy to: Personnel File
 Department Head/Division Director
 Human Resources Director

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 September 20, 2011 February 17, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Employee Travel and Training Expenses</i>
<i>Policy Number 405.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

I. PURPOSE

The county recognizes that the employees of the county are its most valuable asset. As such, these assets must be maintained in order to have an effective and efficient government operation.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

- 1) Each Department Manager authorizing travel and training expenses incurred on behalf of the County must:
 - a) Ensure appropriate training which will provide the greatest return and individual professional development for employees of their department and themselves.
 - b) Implement controls to ensure compliance with current travel policies and procedures.
 - c) Ensure proper use of funds, such that all travel expenses are reasonable, necessary and proper.
 - d) Only authorize reimbursement for allowable expenses incurred while the employee is on official county business.
 - e) Ensure expenses incurred are within appropriated budgetary levels.
 - f) Verify all of the necessary expense information, including attached receipts documenting the charges, and determine that the charges do not exceed allowable limits.
- 2) All employees requesting travel and training expenses incurred on behalf of the County must:
 - a) Travel by the most economical means.
 - b) Ensure that travel expenses are reasonable and necessary.
 - c) Comply with ALL travel/training policies and procedures.
 - d) Obtain all required receipts and document accurate records for each expense claimed.
 - e) Submit an *Employee Expense Form*, if applicable, within 14 days after travel is completed.
 - f) Comply with the *Vehicle Allowance and Travel Reimbursement Policy* when applicable.
 - g) Comply with the *Purchasing Card Policy* when applicable.

III. DEFINITIONS

- 1) Training - any work-related program, seminar, conference, convention, course, or workshop attended by an employee whose tuition and expenses are funded in whole or in part by the County or while the employee is in a paid status with the County.
- 2) Official County Business – Business that relates directly to a person’s work function and benefits the County.
- 3) Commuting Mileage – Total roundtrip miles traveled daily by an employee between his or her residence and normal work location.
- 4) Incidental Expenses – Bellhop and housekeeping tips, parking fees, transportation fees associated with travel between lodging/business and restaurants, etc.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 September 20, 2011 February 17, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Employee Travel and Training Expenses</i>
<i>Policy Number 405.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

- 5) Local Travel – Any one way travel occurring with 25 miles of the employee’s normal work location.
- 6) Non-Local Travel – One way travel exceeding 25 miles from the employee’s normal work location. Travel may or may not include an overnight stay.
- 7) *Employee Expense Form* – Form used to provide an itemized accounting of the actual expenses, both allowable and non-allowable, incurred by the employee during travel/training for official County business.

IV. GENERAL POLICY

- 1) All expenditures authorized under this policy are subject to the availability of funds within the employee’s departmental budget.
- 2) This policy establishes minimum standards which must be adhered to; however, more stringent or additional guidelines may be imposed by Elected Officials or Division Directors for use in their departments.
- 3) Authorized travel expenses include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Registration fees
 - b) Lodging expenses
 - c) Meals incurred during overnight lodging and for certain circumstances when there is no overnight lodging
 - d) Mileage for use of personal vehicle (except travel between their place of residence and their official headquarters, or personal mileage incurred while on travel status)
 - e) Parking fees
- 4) Non-allowable expenses are:
 - a) Laundry services
 - b) Tobacco
 - c) Alcoholic beverages
 - d) Entertainment
 - e) Personal telephone calls
 - f) Meals and lodging in lieu of other meals and/or lodging the expense of which is included in the registration fee
 - g) Expenses of a spouse or other non-employee
- 5) When two or more employees are attending the same seminar, car-pooling shall be practiced whenever possible.
- 6) If an employee for his/her own convenience travels by an indirect route or interrupts travel by the most economical route, the employee shall bear any extra expense involved. Reimbursement for such travel shall be for only that part of the expense as would have been necessary in order to travel by the most direct route.
- 7) Rooms, lodging, or accommodations furnished to government employees traveling on official business within the State of Georgia should be exempt from hotel/motel tax. Tax exemption forms, available in the Finance Department, should be tendered to the establishment to prove

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 September 20, 2011 February 17, 2015 September 21, 2021</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Employee Travel and Training Expenses</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 405.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i></p>

- eligibility.
- 8) Receipts are required for all expenses except:
 - a) Meals under a per diem basis
 - b) Miscellaneous expenses up to a maximum of \$10.00/day (unless otherwise supported by a receipt)
 - c) Reimbursement will not be made for any other unsupported expenses.
 - d) Although receipts are not required, an *Employee Expense Report* should be submitted to account for these expenditures. These reports are necessary to account for the funds expended and to ensure authorized use.
 - 9) *Employee Expense Reports* should be completed by the employee and approved by the employee's immediate supervisor or designee, and filed with the Finance Department within 14 days after travel/training is completed, regardless of whether or not reimbursement is due.
 - a) Expense reports for any employee reporting directly to the Board, including the County Manager, the County Clerk, and the County Attorney, must be approved by the Chairman of the Board. Expense reports for Commissioners must be reviewed by the Finance Director. Any questionable items should be discussed with the Commissioner. Unresolved issues should be referred to the Board.
 - b) Personal expenses will not be reimbursed and any included in an expense report will be deducted from the reimbursement.
 - c) An expense report should be completed if the employee received per diem, is due reimbursement, or incurred non-allowable charges.
 - d) If all travel/training expenses are charged to a County purchasing card and all expenses are allowable, no *Employee Expense Report* needs to be completed. The *Purchasing Card Policy* should be followed in these situations.

V. AUTHORIZATION

- 1) Attendance at a training program involving in-state travel with a total cost (i.e., registration fees, hotel, meals, etc.) <\$500 requires approval of the Department Manager. If the Department Manager is the attendee, then the Division Director must authorize the travel.
- 2) Attendance at a training program involving in-state travel with a total cost ≥\$500 and all out-of-state travel requires approval of the Division Director and the County Manager.
- 3) Attendance at a training program by a Division Director involving in-state travel with a total cost ≥\$500 and all out-of-state travel requires approval of the County Manager.
- 4) Unusual travel (i.e., out-of-country) requires approval of the County Manager.
- 5) County-sponsored and required training shall generally be arranged during regularly scheduled work hours. A Department Manager may change the standard work hours to accommodate or require attendance at such training activities. Such required training shall be recorded as time worked within the meaning of this policy.
- 6) A *Certificate of Attendance* or other documentation shall be provided to Human Resources in order to maintain an employee training history and to periodically audit training attendance and

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 September 20, 2011 February 17, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Employee Travel and Training Expenses</i>
<i>Policy Number 405.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

policy compliance.

VI. MEALS AND PER DIEM REIMBURSEMENT

- 1) Employees traveling may be reimbursed for meals on a per diem basis in accordance with the US General Services Administration's (GSA) Domestic Per Diem Rates. To find the per diem rate for the city to which you are traveling, go to www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877 and enter the city or zip code and then click on "find per diem rates". For the breakdown of individual meals, click on "breakdown of M&IE expenses".
- 2) The County shall use the full day per diem rates as provided by the GSA as well as the separate amounts provided for breakfast, lunch and dinner should an employee need a partial day's reimbursement.
- 3) The County shall NOT use the GSA's policy for calculating per diem for the first and last day of travel. These amounts shall be determined based on individual circumstances and must be approved by the Department Manager and/or Division Director, who has the responsibility to only authorize reimbursement for allowable expenses that are reasonable, necessary and proper.
- 4) Employees may only be reimbursed for meals actually purchased while traveling on official County business.
- 5) Receipts are not required for expenses reimbursed on a per diem basis.

VII. MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT – see the *Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement Policy*

VIII. CASH ADVANCES

- 1) Cash travel advances are considered the exception and not generally granted.
- 2) Cash travel advances to employees are not allowed if the individual has available a general purpose County credit/purchasing card.
- 3) Cash advances shall be issued to employees who generally do not travel and are making a one-time trip, upon request of the Elected Official or Division Director.
- 4) All employees are fully responsible for funds advanced to them and shall account for the funds on an *Employee Expense Report*. These statements shall be submitted to the Finance Department within 14 days after travel is completed. Employees are liable for any advanced funds which are lost or stolen.
- 5) When the actual travel expenditures reported on the expense statement exceed the amount of the cash advance, the employee shall be reimbursed for the additional travel costs incurred.
- 6) When the actual travel expenditures reported on the expense statement are less than the cash advance, the employee shall reimburse the County for the difference. This reimbursement shall be made at the same time the expense statement is submitted.
- 7) In the event of cancellation or indefinite postponement of authorized travel, any cash advances

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 September 20, 2011 February 17, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Employee Travel and Training Expenses</i>
<i>Policy Number 405.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

which were made shall be refunded immediately.

- 8) If an employee granted a cash advance fails to file an *employee expense report*, the amount of the cash advance shall become a lien against any and all funds due the employee from the County. According to the Internal Revenue Service, payments to an employee for travel are taxable if (1) the employee is not required to or does not substantiate timely those expenses with receipts or other documentation, or (2) an advance is given to the employee for business expenses and the employee is not required to or does not return timely any amount he/she does not use for business expenses. Therefore, if an employee does not file an *employee expense report* after receiving a cash advance, the amount of the advance will be reported as wages on his/her Form W-2.

IX. FUEL/PURCHASING CARDS

- 1) The County has entered into an agreement for the purchase of gasoline for County owned or leased vehicles via fuel cards. Each employee who operates a County vehicle and each vehicle shall be issued a unique identification card which allows tracking of all County fuel sales. The use of fuel cards in privately owned vehicles is prohibited.
- 2) Other limited retail credit cards are discouraged and must be approved by the Procurement Manager and the Finance Director.
- 3) County purchasing cards may be issued to employees as a means of charging allowable travel expenses such as registration fees, lodging, and airfare upon request of the Elected Official or Division director and shall be used in accordance with the *Purchasing Card Policy*.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Safety Training</i>
<i>Policy Number 406.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

- I. GENERAL:** The effectiveness of a safety program is directly related to the quality of supervision, a thorough understanding of the hazardous jobs to be accomplished, the training of employees, and daily operations that consistently follow practices specified in published work rules.
1. New Employee Orientation. All new employees shall receive a safety orientation within the first thirty days on the job. This will be accomplished during the "New Employee Briefing" given to all new employees by the Human Resources Department and Risk Management Department. In addition, Division Directors and/or manager/supervisors will brief their employees on Department specific safety issues. Appropriate documentation shall be maintained certifying completion of orientation on all employees. The employee receiving orientation training and the supervisor will sign such documentation.
 2. Employee Safety Training.
 - (a) Training of employees in job responsibilities and job operations, proper methods and techniques to be used, and the hazards associated with the function or system are important elements in achieving safe operation. Division Directors, Managers and Supervisors will be responsible for ensuring that all newly assigned individuals receive adequate training before beginning work.
 - (b) Formal training is required for all employees engaged in hazardous operations such as high voltage work, chemicals, pesticides, entering confined spaces and other functions designated as hazardous by Risk Management, Division Director, Department Heads, or Supervisors.
 - (c) Mandatory or Recommended Repetitive Training.
 3. On-The-Job-Training. Division Directors and/or Manager/Supervisors will provide on-the-job-training for employees under their control. This training will include:
 - (a) Safety program.
 - (b) Prescribed Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment for the job.
 - (c) Emergency treatment of injuries.
 - (d) How to report a fire or serious injury and accident.
 - (e) Specific hazards associated with the job.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Safety Training</i>
<i>Policy Number 406.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

- (f) General hazards encountered in the work area and how to avoid them.
 - 4. No Division Director or manager/supervisor will assume that a newly hired, newly assigned, or reassigned employee thoroughly knows all the safe job procedures.
 - 5. If an employee demonstrates, through accidents or continued unsafe acts known to the Division Director or manager/supervisor, that he does not understand the safety requirements of his job, the employee will be retrained, repeat on-the-job instructions, and/or be personally counseled by the employee's division director or his/her designee..
- II. TRAINING:** The four-point method: preparation, presentation, performance and follow-up have been found best for all hazardous operations.
- 1. Preparation.
 - (a) Put him / her at ease.
 - (b) Define the job and find out what he / she already knows about the job.
 - (c) Get him / her interested in learning his / her job.
 - (d) Place him / her in the correct position for him / her to work.
 - 2. Presentation.
 - (a) Tell how, and illustrate one important step at a time.
 - (b) Stress each key point.
 - (c) Instruct clearly, completely, and patiently, but cover no more than can be mastered each time.
 - 3. Performance.
 - (a) Have him / her do the job; coach him / her while he / she works.
 - (b) Have him / her explain each key point to you as he / she does the job again.
 - (c) Make sure he / she understands. Continue until you know he / she knows.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012 <i>Policy Number 406.1</i>	TOPIC: <i>Safety Training</i>
	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

4. Follow-up.
 - (a) Put him / her on his / her own.
 - (b) Designate to whom he / she goes to for help.
 - (c) Check frequently; encourage questions.
 - (d) Provide any necessary extra coaching.

III. SPECIALIZED TRAINING: Specialized training will be required from time-to-time for special areas of operation and to meet specific requirements of unique tasks. These include special equipment, handling of weapons, etc.

1. First Aid Training for Supervisors. All Division Directors, managers, supervisors and selected employees are encouraged to be trained in first aid. Many injuries can be effectively treated in the field, thereby eliminating the need to visit a doctor for each minor injury. Adequate first aid material should be made available and under the charge of a person trained in first aid.
2. Job Training - Hazardous Work. To eliminate accidents in high hazard areas, it is mandatory that each Division Director or manager/supervisor thoroughly examines his employees' knowledge on the hazards that exist and ensure that they understand the methods of doing each job safely when such hazards cannot be eliminated.
 - (a) Relying on memory alone during the instruction of an employee is assurance that important items will be overlooked. It is essential that the division director or manager/supervisor use published work rules that define each hazardous task his/her employees are responsible for and define the correct work procedures for safe accomplishment of the task. This enables them to attain a consistent quality of instruction that instills employee confidence in their own capabilities and those of management.
 - (b) Providing the employee with a copy of the work rules after instruction ensures that each employee has a ready reference for his review. Procedures for job hazard analysis are as follows:
 - i. The job is broken down into basic steps. These steps describe what is to be done and in what sequence. Details that have no bearing on the objective are to be omitted.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Safety Training</i>
<i>Policy Number 406.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

- ii. After the steps are listed, each step is analyzed for hazards that could cause an accident. The purpose is to identify as many hazards as possible, whether produced by the environment or connected with the mechanics of the job procedure, so that each step of the entire job can be done safely and efficiently.
- iii. When the hazards and potential accidents associated with each step are identified and their causes understood, ways of eliminating them should be developed. This can be handled in one of four ways.
 - (1) Eliminate the process of operations, or provide a substitute action which can be done without the hazards, or
 - (2) Isolate the process or operation so as to eliminate or minimize the hazards, or
 - (3) Provide guards or automatic devices to eliminate or minimize the hazards, or
 - (4) Provide personal protective clothing and equipment and enforce their use to eliminate or reduce the possibility of injury.
- (c) Using the information gathered from the first three steps, work rules shall be prepared by each Division Director or his/her designee, disseminated among all employees, and maintained on file for periodic review. This becomes a document to assist the supervisor in instructing his employees in the safe method of performing their jobs and determination of the personal protective clothing and equipment required. It also provides each employee a source of information for occasional review.

IV. COLUMBIA COUNTY NEW EMPLOYEE RISK MANAGEMENT ORIENTATION

- 1. Risk Management Policy Overview
- 2. Risk Management policies on employees, who lose, damage or destroy property. (Matrix)
- 3. Risk Management policies on driving county vehicles.
- 4. Harassment / Sexual Harassment Policy

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Safety Training</i>
<i>Policy Number 406.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

5. Training offered by Risk Management
6. Orientation to be documented and signed by new employee and Risk Management representative or designee and filed in employee personnel file/HR.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Safety Training</i>
<i>Policy Number 406.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

APPENDIX 2, (Recommended Training), to Section VI (Training), to RISK MANAGEMENT/TRAINING

RECOMMENDED TRAINING

REQUIREMENTS	DEPARTMENT	FREQUENCY
DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE	ALL	Annual
HIV PREVENTION	ALL	Annual - *Note: may be included with Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens training
OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE TO BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS	Sheriff - Coroner Recreation - Landfill Marshal - Code Enforcement Waste Water Treatment Water & Sewer Roads and Bridges Maintenance Department	New Personnel Orientation Annual (Refresher Training)
PREVENTION OF HEAT INJURIES	ALL	Annual
PROTECTION AGAINST TORNADO'S / INCLEMENT WEATHER	ALL	Annual - Recommended for training on the 3 rd Wednesday in February
CONCERN/EAP	ALL	Annual
FIRE PREVENTION/ EVACUATION & USE OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS	ALL	Fire Drills conducted semi annual Training-Annual
DEFENSIVE DRIVING	Any employee who is authorized to operate a county vehicle or receives a vehicle allowance	Every 2 years
CPR & FIRST AID	Managers, Supervisors, selected others: available to all	Every 2 years
HARRASSMENT	All	Annual

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012 <i>Policy Number 406.1</i>	TOPIC: <i>Safety Training</i>
<i>Policy Number 406.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Training and Development</i>

JOB HAZARD ANALYSIS

DEPARTMENT: _____		DATE: _____	
REVIEWED BY: _____ TITLE: _____			
APPROVED BY: _____			
TASK/JOB: _____			
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT: _____			
JOB STEPS	POTENTIAL HAZARD	PREVENTION	



	HEALTH AND SAFETY
501.1	Communicable Disease Social Distancing Program
502.1	Pandemic Continuity of Operations
503.1	Blood Borne Pathogens
504.1	Safety Review Board
505.1	Housekeeping / Safe Work Environment
506.1	Safeguarding Equipment and Supplies / Loss Prevention
507.1	Personal Protective Equipment
508.1	Vehicle Safety
509.1	Vehicle Accidents
510.1	Vehicle Accident Investigation
511.1	Claims
512.1	Employee Emergency Medical Procedures
513.1	Risk Identification and Assessment for New or Expanded Programs

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Communicable Disease Social Distancing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 501.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

I. PURPOSE

In the event of an influenza pandemic or other significant communicable disease situation, the County may implement social distancing guidelines to minimize the spread of the influenza and other communicable diseases among employees by:

- a) closing or limiting access to County offices
- b) canceling public events
- c) planning for liberal work leave policies
- d) teleworking strategies
- e) voluntary isolation of cases
- f) voluntary quarantine of household contacts
- g) alternative work schedules

These strategies will assist in containing disease and reduce the risk of infection and loss of life.

II. POLICY

Employer decisions involving employees who have communicable diseases shall be based on current and well informed medical judgments concerning the disease, the risks of transmitting the illness to others, the symptoms and special circumstances of each individual who has a communicable disease and the available alternatives for responding to an employee with a communicable disease.

The employee must be able to perform normal job duties and meet regular performance standards. In the judgment of the employer, the employee's continued presence must not pose a risk to the health of the employee, other employees or citizens. If an employee disputes the County's determination that such a risk exists, the employee must submit a statement from his or her attending physician that the employee's continued employment poses no significant risk to the employee, other employees or citizens.

The County will not discriminate against any job applicant or employee based on the individual having a communicable disease. Applicants and employees shall not be denied access to the workplace solely on the grounds that they have a communicable disease. The County, however, reserves the right to exclude a person with a communicable disease from the workplace facilities, programs and functions if the County finds that, based on a medical determination, such restriction is necessary for the welfare of the person who has the communicable disease and/or the welfare of others within the workplace.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Communicable Disease Social Distancing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 501.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

III. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The County will use the Georgia Department of Human Resources' notifiable disease listing and will seek guidance on an individual case per disease and performance expectations of the affected employee(s). This guidance will come from the local public health department, in collaboration with the East Central Georgia Health District and the State Office of Epidemiology.

In the event of an outbreak (multiple cases) of an infectious disease, the county will follow each case, as defined by public health to identify those in need of voluntary isolation and/or quarantine.

The local Health Department will provide County employees with the influenza vaccine during the County's annual benefits open enrollment. The County currently pays a portion of the total cost of the influenza vaccine for employees. In addition, based on work related responsibilities, employees working in positions that may be exposed to blood borne pathogens are eligible to participate in the hepatitis vaccination program at no cost to the employee.

The County will comply with all applicable laws, statutes and regulations that protect the privacy of persons who have a communicable disease. Every effort will be made to ensure sufficient safeguards are maintained to provide confidentiality about employees who have communicable diseases.

IV. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY

Employees should demonstrate good hygiene habits to prevent the spread of germs.

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water.
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Put used tissues in a waste basket.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve if you do not have a tissue.
- Clean hands after coughing or sneezing; use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Stay at home if you are sick.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Pandemic Continuity of Operations</i>
<i>Policy Number 502.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

I. PURPOSE

In the event of a pandemic or other catastrophic communicable disease situation, the County may implement Pandemic Continuity of Operations-Essential (COP-E) plans to minimize the spread of influenza and other communicable diseases among employees and the general public and meet the need to sustain business, the community and the nation.

II. POLICY

Disaster planning and preparedness is a fundamental of good business practice. The County must ensure the capability to continue essential operations in response to potential operational interruptions, including a pandemic influenza. In the event a Pandemic is declared, Division and Department Pandemic Mitigation Continuity of Operations Plans (COP) will be implemented to ensure continued production and delivery of vital goods and services to the citizens of Columbia County.

Delivery of Essential Services shall be considered the highest priority when high rates of absenteeism are expected. Important Services will be considered as the second most important priority. Non-Essential Services will be considered the least important priority.

Employees must be able to perform normal job duties and meet regular performance standards during a pandemic. If an employee becomes ill during a pandemic, the employee's continued presence at work will require a statement from his or her attending physician that the employee's continued presence poses no significant risk to the employee, other employees or citizens.

The County reserves the right to exclude a person with a communicable disease from the workplace facilities, programs and functions if the County finds that, based on a medical determination, such restriction is necessary for the welfare of the person who is ill and/or the welfare of others within the workplace.

The County will comply with all applicable laws, statutes and regulations that protect the privacy of persons who have a communicable disease.

III. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

The County must maintain production of essential goods and services while mitigating pandemic impact on business operations. Continuity of Operations Plan-Essential (COP-E) assumes pandemic-specific impacts and encourages contingency plans to identify essential functions, people and materials within and across critical sectors of the organization.

Critical Infrastructure. Systems and assets such that the incapacity or destruction of such systems and assets would have a debilitating impact on security, economics, public health, public safety or any

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Pandemic Continuity of Operations</i>
<i>Policy Number 502.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

combination of events. Management should identify those critical systems and alternative approaches to maintain essential business operations.

Essential Functions. Functions identified that are absolutely necessary to keep business operating during a pandemic and are critical to survival and recovery. Management should identify those essential employees and alternative approaches to maintain essential business operations.

Workforce Absenteeism. Absenteeism during a severe pandemic wave could result in 30-40 percent of the workforce being absent. Management should identify those essential employees, essential functions and prepare alternative working options through telecommuting, if possible, to ensure business operations are not interrupted.

COP-E Plan Design. Each Division is responsible for developing plans for their service areas. The plan should include preparation by categorizing services and activities as essential, important or non-essential. Staffing plans to respond during the catastrophic event should be created as well as recovery plans. The plans should be forwarded to the Emergency and Operations Director. A Continuity of Operations Essential (COP-E) Plan may be developed as follows:

Categorization of Services

- Identify individuals responsible for developing Continuity of Operations Plan at the department levels.
- Identify key contacts in the community as a resource for or to partner with the department in preparing a plan.
- Identify which services/functions are essential.
- Identify which services/functions are important, but not essential, that the department may continue during a pandemic if they are able.
- Categorize services based on whether or not face-to-face contact is necessary for that service.
- Group services/functions together for more efficiency.
- Identify technology or other resources needed to implement the COP plan and any challenges to plan implementation.

Communication

- Develop a communications plan for department employees.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Pandemic Continuity of Operations</i>
<i>Policy Number 502.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- Develop a communications plan for customers/clients/users including pandemic awareness activities, regular updates on pandemic planning and communicating during the pandemic.

Planning

- Determine which employees are essential.
- Develop a plan for supporting essential employees that includes identification of their needs for transportation and family support.
- Evaluate workplaces to determine functions that may be performed off-site via telecommuting.
- Evaluate department procedures to determine if they support or impede COP-E.

Protecting Employees

- Evaluate workplaces and develop a plan to protect employees using work practices, engineering and administrative controls and PPE.
- Identify technology and other resources needed for workplace protections.
- Identify resource gaps and challenges as well as proposed solutions and procedure modifications.
- Prioritize implementation of the plan based on functions that are essential, important or non-essential.
- Educate staff how to protect themselves from exposure to influenza and other contagious diseases outside the workplace.
- Develop standards to support the need for isolation of the sick and quarantine of the exposed.

Maintaining Sufficient Staff for Essential Operations

- Cross-train employees for essential functions.
- Develop a plan to phase down operations if insufficient numbers of personnel are available.

Supplies

- Develop a communications plan for your suppliers.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Pandemic Continuity of Operations</i>
<i>Policy Number 502.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- Identify critical supplies and the amounts needed to maintain essential services at various levels; determine whether to stockpile or develop resupply procedures.
- Develop a plan for phasing down operations if insufficient supplies are available during a pandemic.

Equipment

- Develop a communications plan for your equipment contractors and identify critical equipment.
- Evaluate maintenance procedures for critical equipment and develop alternate maintenance procedures.
- Develop a plan for phasing down operations if equipment maintenance becomes an issue.

Security

- Evaluate workplaces to determine modifications to make it easier to ensure security during a pandemic.
- Determine services that may be grouped together for more efficiency and to provide security during a pandemic.
- Develop a plan for phasing down operations if security becomes an issue during a pandemic.

Training

- Train employees in your Pandemic Continuity of Operations Plan and update training annually.
- Regularly test the readiness of staff to implement the Plan through drills and exercises.

Recovery

- Identify essential employees responsible for developing and implementing a recovery plan after each wave of a pandemic.
- Develop a plan for reopening your department, in varying stages, as each wave of the pandemic passes.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Pandemic Continuity of Operations</i>
<i>Policy Number 502.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

Special Needs Populations

- Ensure the department Continuity of Operations Plan addresses individuals with special needs.

Policies and Procedures

- Amend department policies and procedures as appropriate.
- Revise department plans based on additional resources development.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 17, 2014 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Blood Borne Pathogens</i>
<i>Policy Number 503.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

I. PURPOSE

To ensure the safety of employees who may be exposed to Blood Borne Pathogens (BBP) and Other Potentially Infectious Materials (OPIM).

II. POLICY

The County shall provide Employees, who are in positions that may be exposed to Blood Borne Pathogens (BBP) or Other Potentially Infectious Materials (OPIM), training in the methods of exposure avoidance. Personal protective equipment will be provided when necessary to minimize personal harm to self when coming in contact with BBP or OPIM, when rendering first aid or CPR, or during an accident clean up.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Supervisor** – Ensures that all employees who may come into contact with BBP or OPIM are familiar with and follow the policies.
- **Employee** – Understands and complies with all phases of the policies and procedures for situations involving BBP and OPIM.
- **Employee** – Employees without formal first aid training must be instructed to maintain a "hands off" practice in the event of an emergency. These employees should contact a first aid responder as quickly as possible.
- **Risk Manager** – Ensures that protective equipment as specified in this policy is made available when requested, employees are trained in its use and that the equipment is properly maintained.
- **Human Resources Director** – Ensures that employees are provided medical care and appropriate vaccinations who may have increased risk in his/her position responsibilities to be exposed, or who have been exposed, to BBP or OPIM

All employees who have been trained in first aid may come into contact with BBP or OPIM while carrying out first aid or CPR. Any employee who cleans up after a spill of blood or body fluid or OPIM may be exposed during that work.

Unless specified as a job requirement, no employee, including trained responders, is required to provide first aid, CPR, clean up or any other activity involving a possible exposure should the employee choose not to become directly involved. At a minimum, the employer may provide available first aid supplies to the victim or other willing responder in minor situations. For emergencies, call 9-1-1 and report the situation so that appropriate responders can be activated.

IV. WORK PRACTICE CONTROLS

The following work practice controls are recommended to minimize exposure to human blood borne pathogens:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 17, 2014 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Blood Borne Pathogens</i>
<i>Policy Number 503.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- Gloves must be worn whenever there is a possibility of contact with human blood or body fluid.
- Personnel must wash their hands immediately after removing gloves and as soon as possible upon any contact with blood or OPIM.
- Masks must be worn whenever there is a possibility of splattering of human blood or body fluids.
- Protective clothing must be worn if soiling of exposed skin or clothing is likely.
- To minimize the risks for exchange of body fluids during resuscitation procedures, gloves and masks should be available in first aid kits.
- Spills of blood or blood-containing body fluids shall be cleaned up by trained personnel using materials in an infection control kit. The contaminated item shall be put into a biohazard bag and disposed of properly. Cleanup of any substantial spill may require outsourcing to a specialized biohazard team. Risk Management should be contacted for assistance.
- Individuals who have open lesions, dermatitis or other skin irritations should not participate in direct "patient" care activities and should not handle contaminated items. If an emergency requires participation, employees should double glove.
- Sharp objects represent the greatest risk for BBP exposure; therefore, gloves should be worn and tweezers should be used to remove glass or other sharps from the patient. Use a broom and dust pan to clean up contaminated glass or other sharp objects.
- Work flow shall be examined when an exposure incident has occurred to implement preventative measures against future incidents.
- Gloves, resuscitation masks, infection control kits and first aid boxes are recommended to be kept in all vehicles and offices.
- Medical records are maintained by the Human Resources Department. Employees working in positions with increased risk to BBP or OPIM exposure may request and receive the Hepatitis B vaccine as a preventive measure at no cost to the employee. The request should be submitted to the immediate Supervisor, Department Manager, Division Director or the Human Resources Director.

V. REPORTING PROCEDURES

Whenever an incident occurs involving the potential for exposure to BBP and OPIM, a report must be made to the Human Resources Director and Risk Manager.

- The report should be made immediately if possible, but no more than twenty-four hours after exposure.
- A workers' compensation first report of injury incident report shall be completed if an exposure incident has occurred. Exposure incident means a specific eye, mouth, other mucous membrane, non-intact skin or parenteral contact with blood or OPIM. Contact with healthy skin does not constitute an exposure incident.
- The Human Resources Department will maintain a list of such incidents.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: June 17, 2014 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Blood Borne Pathogens</i>
<i>Policy Number 503.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- All members of staff who render assistance in any situation involving the presence of blood or OPIM will have a Hepatitis B vaccine or other treatment necessary made available to them at no cost and as soon as possible after the exposure incident has occurred.
- If an exposure incident occurs, the Risk Manager will review and discuss the event at the next scheduled Safety Review Board meeting and recommendations for exposure avoidance will be submitted to the respective Division Director.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 17, 2010 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Safety Review Board</i>
<i>Policy Number 504.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

I. DECLARATION

There is hereby created a body known as the "Safety Review Board", hereafter referred to as SRB.

II. PURPOSE

- 1) To review all Columbia County vehicle accidents that result in loss, damage, or destruction.
- 2) To review all property damage or incidents resulting in loss, damage or destruction of Columbia County property in excess of \$250.00.
- 3) To review all incidents resulting in claims, torts or loss by liability of Columbia County, as it applies to property damage, loss or destruction of property and/or resulting in bodily injury to an employee due to legal and expected operations of subordinate departments of the Columbia County Commission.
- 4) To review all reported injuries to employees during the course of their employment under the provisions of Workers' Compensation.

III. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the SRB will consist of one person appointed by each Division Director and the Sheriff, the Risk Manager, who shall serve as chairman of the SRB and the Risk Management Assistant, who shall serve in a non-voting capacity, as secretary of the SRB. Each Division Director shall also appoint an alternate member who shall attend SRB meetings when the primary appointee is not available. Members of the Safety Review Board shall consist of rank and file employees, with no more than four members being in a managerial capacity with Columbia County. No Division Director shall be included as a member.

IV. MEMBER TENURE

- 1) Appointments of members shall be for a period of two years unless rescinded by the appointing authority.
- 2) Risk Management will coordinate with appropriate divisions and /or elected officials on the first working day of January so as to allow for the alternating review of approximately half of the board each year. Those reviewing appointments will notify Risk Management in writing of the primary and alternate member.

V. DEFINITIONS

- 1) Gross or Willful Negligence: An intentional unreasonable act by an employee knowing the conduct will result in property damage or injury (i.e.: throwing a radio on

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 17, 2010 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Safety Review Board</i>
<i>Policy Number 504.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- the ground, provoking or starting a fight). For example, where the employee initiates or executes the act, knowing the possible results of his/her actions but does not care.
- 2) **Negligence:** Conduct that falls below the standard set by law or policy for protecting others against risk or harm. A person is negligent if he/she fails to act with a reasonable amount of care and as a result injures another person or thing. The following criterion applies:
 - a) The person has a duty or obligation to conform to a certain standard of conduct to protect others or property against unreasonable risk.
 - b) The person failed to conform to that standard.
 - c) The person’s conduct is so closely related to the resulting injury or damage that it can be said to have caused it (proximate cause).
 - d) Actual damage (property or injury) results from the person’s conduct.
 - 3) **Proximate Cause:** Conduct which is the primary cause from which an injury or damage follows as a direct or immediate consequence and without which the injury or damage would not have happened.

VI. AUTHORITY

The SRB shall be empowered to:

- 1) Investigate any accidents/incidents involving employees, occurring in the course of their employment and/or equipment that results in personal injury or property loss or damage.
- 2) Investigate any accidents/incidents occurring on Columbia County property.
- 3) Investigate and review all personal injury accidents and Workers’ Compensation claims and all records and information to the same.
- 4) Make recommendations regarding policy to the Columbia County Commission through the Division Directors on matters pertaining to:
 - a) Fleet Management/Maintenance
 - b) Safe work practices
 - c) Loss prevention/security
 - d) Claims/tort reduction
- 5) Review each accident/incident to recommend the employee’s actions to be either AT Fault or NOT AT FAULT. Penalties for employees found AT FAULT will be assigned in accordance with the *Appendix I* of this section, unless modification with explanation is given. The SRB will take into consideration all disciplinary action taken by the department and/or shift level against the employee and adjust the penalty as appropriate.

Recommend disciplinary action up to and including discharge of employment or suspension of an employee for:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 17, 2010 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Safety Review Board</i>
<i>Policy Number 504.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- a) Gross negligence that results in losses to Columbia County.
- b) Repeated safety violations (complete documentation is required).
- 6) Review and make recommendations pertaining to all matters relating to motor vehicle and general safety relative to Columbia County owned vehicles, equipment and employees.
- 7) To direct the attendance of employees as it shall deem appropriate for the proper determination of the facts surrounding each incident and obtain such documentary evidence as shall be needed to complete its investigation.
- 8) The presence of a majority of the members of the SRB shall constitute a quorum at any SRB meeting. Once a quorum is established at a meeting, a quorum shall exist for the duration of the meeting. An affirmative vote of a majority of the SRB present and eligible to vote shall be necessary to make a formal recommendation following investigation and review of an incident. Minutes of the SRB meeting will be prepared by the Risk Management Assistant and forwarded to the County Manager and affected Division Directors for review.
- 9) Should a member or family of a member of the SRB be subject to review by the SRB, witness to an incident reviewed by the SRB, or another conflict of interest exists, as determined by a majority vote of the other members of the SRB, the member in issue shall be removed from the review of the matter and the alternate member shall act in the place of the removed member.

VII. PENALTIES

- 1) Any department disciplinary action taken against the employee will be reported to Risk Management and Human Resources and will be made a part of the employee's accident and personnel record. The SRB will take into consideration all disciplinary action taken by the department and/or shift level against the employee and adjust penalties as appropriate.
- 2) *Appendix 1* of this section describes the categories of accident violations and penalties. The SRB may use discretion in modifying penalties based on years of service, accident history and any other information specific to the incident that they deem pertinent. Modifications will be explained and recorded in the minutes.

VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) Employee
 - a) Report all accidents/incidents to supervisor immediately and cooperate with investigation.
 - b) Once notification letter received indicating that the incident will be reviewed by the SRB giving the date, time, and location of the meeting.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 17, 2010 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Safety Review Board</i>
<i>Policy Number 504.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- i. Any employee directly involved in the accident/incident has the right to appear before the SRB but is generally not required to attend.
- ii. Employees desiring to have witnesses speak in their behalf should contact Risk Management before the scheduled meeting giving the name, department and relationship to the accident/incident of the witness. Only witnesses with first hand information will be allowed.
- iii. Employees not able to attend the scheduled meeting may request a delay by notifying Risk Management and giving the reason.
- iv. Prior to the meeting date: the employee should review any documentary evident, such as the incident report and/or vehicle accident report filed by the investigating law enforcement agency. **THIS REVIEW IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE EMPLOYEE.**
 - 1. Incident or accident reports may be obtained from the employee's department or by contacting Risk Management
 - 2. Law enforcement reports may be obtained from Risk Management
- v. Employees who feel the police report is inaccurate should attempt to have the report corrected with the appropriate law enforcement agency before the SRB meeting.
- vi. Employees should be present at the scheduled time and place for the SRB meeting. Once called, the employee will provide information as requested by the SRB, usually an explanation of the accident/incident.
- c) Review letter from Division director of the outcome of the review and the Division Director's decision.
- d) May appeal the decision pursuant to the grievance process provisions set for the in the current Columbia County Personnel Policies. (see Appeals Process in IX, 4 of this section)
- 2) Departments
 - a) Report all vehicle accidents, damage to vehicles, equipment or property using the Claims Reporting Form unless a report is made by law enforcement. Timely reporting is essential. This form may be forwarded to Risk Management through any established "chain of command" as desired by the department; however, no report should be delayed due to the unavailability of any individual approving authority.
 - b) Forward all reports to Risk Management within 24 hours.
 - i. Reports requiring additional time for investigation will be reported to Risk Management by telephone.
 - ii. Reports will include statements from any employee involved.
 - c) Allow employee to attend SRB meeting.
 - i. May request a delay for the employee based on operational necessity but must notify Risk Management of the request.
- 3) Division Directors
 - a) Appoint SRB member and alternate.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 17, 2010 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Safety Review Board</i>
<i>Policy Number 504.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- b) The Division Director is not required to wait for the recommendation from the SRB regarding any accident or incident should they feel that immediate action is warranted; however, any department disciplinary action taken against the employee prior to the SRB meeting will be reported to the Risk Management and Human Resources Department and will be make a part of the employee's accident and personnel record.
 - c) Review SRB recommendation and make final determination: Division Directors shall not be bound by the recommendation of the SRB. However, should the Division Director's determination deviate from the recommendation of the SRB, the Division Director shall prepare a written statement, including sound reasons, for his/her determination. A copy of the written statement shall be forwarded to the County Manager, Risk management and Human Resources Departments to be included in the employee's personnel records.
 - d) Notify employee by letter of the outcome of the review. A copy of this letter will be sent to Risk management for inclusion in the incident file. Additionally, a copy of any AT FAULT determinations and corresponding disciplinary actions will be sent to Human Resources for inclusion in the personnel records.
- 4) Risk Management
- a) Coordinate with Division Directors and elected officials to maintain SRB membership
 - b) Log reports, obtain appropriate documentary evidence and schedule for SRB
 - c) Prepare agenda and distribute to SRB members
 - d) Notify employees and departments by letter that the accident/incident will be reviewed by the SRB giving the date, time, and location of the meeting.
 - e) Notify appropriate department of witnesses to attend
 - f) Have documentary evident/file available for employee review
 - g) Reschedule review as appropriate due to delay requests
 - h) Notify Division Director of SRB recommendation
 - i) Maintain record in file of Division Director decision
 - j) Process appeals as appropriate
 - k) Maintain files

IX. APPEALS

- 1) Any employee whose case has been reviewed by the SRB and has been acted upon by the employee's Division Director may appeal the decision pursuant to the grievance process provisions set forth in the current Columbia County Personnel Policies.
- 2) Appeals must be submitted to Risk Management within ten (10) days of employee's receipt of written notification that the employee has been found at fault. The employee must provide written notification of the employee's desire to appeal the decision within the time frame stated above and such notification shall contain employee's type and reason for appeal.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 17, 2010 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Safety Review Board</i>
<i>Policy Number 504.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- 3) Appeals may be requested for:
 - a) Reconsideration with no new information
 - b) Reconsideration with new information
 - c) Appeal due to financial hardship
- 4) Appeal Process:
 - a) The employee shall notify Risk Management as outlined in provision 2 above.
 - b) If the appeal is made because of new information that was not available to the SRB at the initial ruling, the Chairman of the SRB may elect to have the case returned to the SRB and division director for reconsideration. Should the decision be upheld, the employee's written request for appeal is forwarded to the Human Resources Department for appeal through the grievance process.
 - c) Appeals due to financial hardship must be supported by documentation by the employee. Failure to provide financial documentation may result in denial of the appeal.

X. EMPLOYEE FILES

- 1) Any employee involved in an accident/incident resulting in property damage will have a file maintained in the Risk Management Department. The file will consist of:
 - a) Any report of loss with which the employee is directly involved.
 - b) Any witness statement available concerning the accident/incident.
 - c) Any documentation of the accident/incident, including any invoices, estimates, pictures, or allied documents pertaining to the incident.
 - d) Record of the SRB recommendation, suggested penalties, and a copy of the notification letter from the Division Director.
- 2) Employees have the right to review their files by contacting the Risk Management Department.
- 3) Employee records will be maintained as active as long as the party is employed by Columbia County.
- 4) Records will be moved from the active file to inactive file when the employee is terminated or resigns. This file will be retained for seven (7) years after termination or resignation, at which time the complete file will be destroyed.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Exhibit A

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 17, 2010 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Safety Review Board</i>
<i>Policy Number 504.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

**PENALTIES MATRIX
SAFETY REVIEW BOARD**

CLASS	DESCRIPTION	First Incident (3 yrs)	Second Incident (3 yrs)	Third (or more) (3 yrs)
1	Unavoidable	No Action	No Action	No Action
2	Avoidable with mitigating circumstances: (i.e.) a. Bad Weather b. Road Conditions c. Emergency Response d. Other driver action	Written Warning	Letter of Reprimand	Suspension
3	Avoidable with driver error: (Drivers action was major contributing factor)	Letter of Reprimand	Suspension	Termination of Driving Privileges / possible loss of job
4	Negligence with extreme prejudice:(i.e.) a. DUI (alcohol/drugs) b. Excessive speed c. Leaving scene of an accident d. Willful traffic violations	Suspend driving privileges for County vehicles Recommend Termination	Termination	

ADJUSTMENTS: Shown penalties are general recommendations. The SRB is allowed discretion in penalty recommendation with explainable justification. **Adjustments are not automatic.**

The operation of a Columbia County vehicle is a privilege not a right. If an employee is found to be negligent in their care, that privilege can be revoked.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Housekeeping / Safe Work Environment</i>
<i>Policy Number 505.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

I. POLICY

It is the intent of the Columbia County Commission to provide for a safe work environment. While work sites shall be continuously monitored by supervisors to ensure potential hazards to employees and the public are reduced to the maximum extent possible, employees are responsible for maintaining the neatness of workspaces. Employees are required to keep their work areas clean and free of hazards.

II. HOUSEKEEPING

Good housekeeping is an important element of accident prevention. It should be of primary concern to all supervisors. Good housekeeping should be planned at the beginning of the job and carefully supervised and followed to the final clean up. Housekeeping should be the concern of each worker and not left for the "clean-up" crew. Confusion will be reduced and operations can be increased when the work area is neat and orderly at all times.

III. PROCEDURES

- 1) Plan Ahead: A predetermined and organized materials storage area is safer and cleaner than one that has been developed haphazardly.
- 2) Assign Responsibilities: If the size of the job and working force merits, a crew should be specifically detailed to clean up continuously. In any event, housekeeping should not be haphazard; duties should be assigned to one or more responsible persons.
- 3) Implement the Program: Housekeeping should be part of the daily routine with clean-up being a continuous procedure.

IV. RULES FOR HOUSEKEEPING

- 1) Storage Areas: All materials should be maintained in neat stockpiles for ease of access. Aisles and walkways should be kept clear of loose materials and tools.
- 2) Work Areas: Loose materials, waste, etc. should be cleaned up immediately. This is especially important in aisles and near ladders, ramps, stairs and machinery. Keep walking areas clear at all times, especially in high traffic areas.
- 3) Area Used by Personnel: Empty bottles, containers, and papers should not be allowed to accumulate on the job site. Trash disposal containers should be provided.
- 4) Oil and Grease: Spills of oil, grease, or other liquid should be removed immediately by putting sand or an oil-absorbing compound on them. Do not let combustible materials gather and collect

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Housekeeping / Safe Work Environment</i>
<i>Policy Number 505.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

to the point where they could constitute a fire hazard. Place all combustible items in a metal fire resistant container with a lid. Make sure flammables are stored properly and promptly disposed when empty.

- 5) Disposal of Waste: An effective means of preventing litter is to provide suitable receptacles for waste, scrap, etc. These items should be stored in a safe place, such as a covered metal container, and disposed regularly.
- 6) Protruding Nails: Protruding nails should either be removed or bent over. Cleaned lumber should be stacked in orderly piles. Workers dealing with protruding nails should wear heavy gloves and puncture-proof insoles.
- 7) Lighting: Adequate lighting should be provided in or around all work areas, passageways, stairs, ladders, and other areas used by personnel.
- 8) Defective Equipment: All equipment, especially electric cords and plugs, should be checked prior to use and defects repaired or taken out of service.
- 9) Tripping Hazards: Loose floor covering, stair treads, etc., should be examined and repaired immediately.

Make housekeeping a daily affair. Be responsible enough to thoroughly “police” your work areas for housekeeping hazards. On a busy day, any workplace can become a dangerous obstacle course if we let it get that way.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Safeguarding Equipment and Supplies / Loss Prevention</i>
<i>Policy Number 506.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this section is to provide policy and guidance on the prevention of loss of equipment and supplies by: theft, negligence, misappropriation, willful destruction or other means.

II. POLICY

Each employee of the Columbia County Commission has a direct responsibility to safeguard equipment and supplies entrusted to him or her in the performance of their official duties. To this end, every employee will take reasonable and necessary precautions to prevent the loss, destruction, damage to or misappropriation of equipment and/or supplies belonging to Columbia County.

III. APPLICABILITY

This section applies to all departments, agencies, offices or sections subordinate to the Columbia County Commission.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

1) Department Heads:

- a) Establish departmental policies and procedures for the accountability of property and supplies. Policies will be in writing and posted for employee notification. *Exhibit A* may be used for this purpose.
- b) Ensure their respective departments maintain an accurate listing of equipment having serial numbers, not including vehicles.
- c) Maintain a list of all serial numbered equipment in your work area or issued to personnel. This inventory will help if items are stolen or recovered after a theft.
- d) Submit an Incident Report upon learning of the loss, damage, destruction or theft of department property in excess of \$250.00 to Risk Management.

2) Supervisors:

- a) Will ensure all employees under their direct supervision are aware of departmental policies on loss prevention.
- b) Will ensure employees are trained on the proper use of assigned equipment.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Safeguarding Equipment and Supplies / Loss Prevention</i>
<i>Policy Number 506.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- c) Make on the spot corrections to employees abusing equipment or in violation of their departmental policies.
 - d) Are responsible for common use equipment assigned to their crew, section or team.
 - e) Periodically inspect common use equipment and equipment assigned to subordinates to ensure proper maintenance and care.
- 3) Employees:
- a) Are responsible for the proper maintenance and security of equipment assigned to him/her.
 - b) Take necessary action to prevent the loss, damage, destruction or theft of property assigned to him/her.
 - c) Report any loss, damage, destruction or theft of property assigned to them immediately to their supervisor.

V. LOST, DAMAGED OR DESTROYED PROPERTY

- 1) Employees charged with equipment, which has been lost, damaged or destroyed will report such to their supervisor.
- 2) An incident report will be filled out and submitted to the department head. Incident reports will be forwarded to the Risk Management Department.
- 3) Before liability is established it is essential the department head has the incident investigated by a disinterested party.

VI. THEFT OR VANDALISM

- 1) Property that has been stolen will be reported to the Sheriff's Office (or appropriate law enforcement agency) and an incident report submitted to Risk Management.
- 2) Property that has been vandalized will be reported to the Sheriff's Office (or appropriate law enforcement agency) and an incident report submitted to Risk Management.
- 3) The loss or theft of a Columbia County owned/purchased firearm will be reported immediately to the Sheriff's Office and an incident report forwarded to Risk Management.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Safeguarding Equipment and Supplies / Loss Prevention</i>
<i>Policy Number 506.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

VII. PROPERTY ACCOUNTABILITY

- 1) Issued Personal Equipment:
 - a) Equipment that is issued to an employee is the responsibility of the employee to whom the equipment is issued. As such, the employee will take reasonable and necessary precautions to safeguard and maintain property issued to them.
 - b) Equipment should be inspected upon receipt for serviceability and ensure that no damage is apparent. The receiving employee will make inspections at the time of issue.
 - c) Equipment issued for the sole use by the employee will be issued on a Property Receipt Form (*Exhibit B*). A copy of this receipt should be maintained on file at the department.
 - d) Common use property, issued for short duration should be routinely inspected by the receiving employee at the time of receipt. Any damage should be immediately reported to the supervisor or person issuing the equipment.
 - e) Employees who have been issued equipment on the Property Receipt and have lost or damaged said equipment (beyond normal fare ware and tear/use) may be responsible for replacing (at the employee's expense) that equipment should they be determined negligent.

VIII. EXPENDABLE SUPPLIES

Supplies are classified into two categories: expendable but accountable (construction materials, replacement parts, consumable goods, etc.) and expendable but non-accountable (office materials: pens, paper, etc).

- 1) Accountable supplies must be traceable by audit (purchase order to work order, purchase order to job, etc). Materials in excess of job requirements must also be accountable.
- 2) Expendable supplies should be regulated to protect against misappropriation.
- 3) Consumable goods should be auditable from the time of issue to the supported activity and bank deposit (if appropriate). Items that have spoiled or must be destroyed (non-sellable) must be accounted for as an annotation on an inventory sheet or a memorandum of destruction, giving all pertinent data to include the reason for destruction.

POLICY LETTER

1. DEPARTMENT:	2. LETTER NUMBER:
3. SUBJECT:	4. DATE:
5. APPROVED BY:	5. EFFECTIVE DATE:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Personal Protective Equipment</i>
<i>Policy Number 507.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

I. GENERAL

Protective equipment, including personal protective equipment (PPE) for eyes, face, head, extremities, protective clothing, respiratory devices and protective shields and barriers, shall be provided by the respective departments, used and maintained by the employee and kept in a sanitary and serviceable condition. PPE shall not be altered in any way. *Exhibit A* of this section establishes minimum PPE required of common tasks.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

1) Department Heads:

- a) Ensure PPE is available to employees involved in work requirements that pose a potential hazard through absorption, inhalation or physical contact.
- b) Ensure supervisors are instructed in policies relating to the use of PPE by employees.
- c) Charge supervisors with the responsibility of enforcing policies relating to the use of PPE.

2) Supervisors:

- a) Analyze job tasks to determine essential PPE.
- b) Instruct employees on the tasks requiring PPE and the minimum PPE required for the task, to include the proper use of protective equipment.
- c) Enforce policies relating to the use of PPE by employees.

3) Employee:

- a) Use PPE as directed by the supervisor or job task.
- b) Identify any potential hazard of a job task for which required PPE has not been identified and report it to your supervisor.

III. GENERAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT

- 1) Eye and Face Protection: Protective eye and/or face equipment shall be required where there is reasonable probability of injury that can be prevented by such equipment. Eye protection will be provided and used where machines or operations present the hazard or potential for injury from flying objects, or splashing liquids.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Personal Protective Equipment</i>
<i>Policy Number 507.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- 2) **Respiratory Protection:** Respiratory protection will be provided by the respective department to control occupational diseases caused by breathing air contaminated with harmful dusts, fogs, fumes, mists, gases, smokes, sprays or vapors. The primary objective will be to prevent atmospheric contamination. Respiratory protection will be provided to protect the health of the employee. Product warning labels or material safety data warning labels or material safety data sheets will prescribe the appropriate protection necessary for employee protection. Department heads are responsible for providing employee use and maintenance training as appropriate.
- 3) **Occupational Head Protection:** Helmets for the protection of heads from impact and penetration from falling and/or flying debris or objects and from limited electrical shock and burn shall meet the requirements and specifications of the American National Standard Safety Requirements for Industrial Head Protection; Z89.1-1969.
- 4) **Foot Protection:** Safety-Toe footwear shall meet the requirements and specifications established in the American National Standard Requirements for Men's Safety-Toe Footwear Z41.1 - 1967.
- 5) **Visibility Vests:** The **reflective orange vest** shall be used by all employees where enhanced visibility is required as determined by Risk Management, Division Directors, department heads or supervisors. Each division is to identify these areas and establish a policy to direct their employees in vest use. Vests with a **minimum Class II rating** shall also be worn by employees working within the limits of road right of ways.

IV. MINIMUM ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) Departments are responsible for determining minimum essential requirements for PPE for tasks and activities not covered in *Exhibit A*. Each Department Head shall inform the Risk Management Department of minimum essential requirements for PPE.
- 2) *Exhibit A* establishes minimum essential requirements for specific tasks which are either common to more than one department or specific requirements which have resulted in needless employee injury in the past. *Exhibit A* shall be modified from time to time to reflect current legal requirements, including those set forth in OSHA.
 - a) The Job Hazard Analysis is to be used for specific jobs. When completed, it may be used as a policy/procedure within the department. See *Exhibit B* of *Policy 406.1, Safety Training*.
 - b) Once the job or task to be analyzed is determined, the steps or procedures are listed individually in the Job Steps column.
 - c) Each step is then analyzed for potential hazards associated with that step. These are listed in the Potential Hazards column.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Personal Protective Equipment</i>
<i>Policy Number 507.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- d) List the activities to be accomplished to complete the job step and include any activity or action to eliminate the hazard, in the "Prevention" column.

V. EMPLOYEE NON-COMPLIANCE/NON-USE OF PPE

Once the employee is trained in the use of personal protective equipment and clothing, if such items are not used, the employee's supervisor will take immediate corrective and/or disciplinary action. Supervisors should document corrective action and, if necessary, discipline the employee as appropriate. Failure to use proper clothing and equipment could result in suspension or termination, as appropriate. Supervisors should document any action taken against the employee. Should an employee become injured as a result of not wearing prescribed personal protective equipment, he/she may be denied compensation under Workers' Compensation.

VI. PPE FUNDING

When PPE has been determined a requirement of the job based on the POTENTIAL for injury, Columbia County will provide such PPE, as required, at no cost to the employee.

- 1) Employees who lose or negligently damage or destroy PPE will be responsible for the replacement of those items.
- 2) Items will be replaced when equipment is no longer serviceable.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Exhibit A

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Personal Protective Equipment</i>
<i>Policy Number 507.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

Minimum Essential Personal Protective Equipment

X = Required Protection
O = Recommended Protection

H = Head
E = Eye
F = Face
R = Respiratory
V = Vest

Job/Activity	H	E	F	Hear	R	Hand	V	Foot	NOTES
General Construction	X			O			X	X	
Traffic Control Operations / Flagging	X						X	O	
Heavy Equip Operations				O			O	O	Based on the type of operation, Depts. Establish requirement
Tractor Mowing - Unprotected Cab	X	O		X	O		O	X	
Truck Driving-CDL	O							O	Vest are recommended to be available should the driver get out at a construction site
Pesticide Spraying		X			X				To be in compliance with the manufacturers' suggested safety equipment listed on the MSDS or product warning label.
Spray Painting		X			X				See above (Pesticide)
Power Tools		X		X				X	
Air Tools		X		X				O	
Winches	X	X				X		X	
Sewer Operations	X		O		O		X	X	As directed by Director, Water and Sewerage
Push Mower with gas engine		X		X				X	

The basis for determining the need for protective equipment is, according to OSHA standards, that if the potential for injury exists then protective equipment should be used.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: April 16, 2013 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 July 15, 2025	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Safety</i>
<i>Policy Number 508.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

I. GENERAL POLICY:

- 1) Columbia County vehicles are easily identified as such and thus constitute a traveling advertisement seen by many citizens. In their relationship with other motorists and pedestrians while operating vehicles, the employee controls an important influence on public relations. By applying courteous, considerate driving habits employees can build good public relations if they apply the principles of defensive driving to avoid accidents.
- 2) Only employees may drive Columbia County vehicles, unless otherwise approved by County Administration with written documentation to Risk Management. Non-employee passengers are to be approved by the Department Head. Out of area trips with non-employees are to be approved by the Department Head and Risk Management Office. A rights waiver form must be signed by all non-employee passengers prior to being allowed to ride in a county vehicle.
- 3) All drivers of Columbia County vehicles will abide by the laws, regulations and directives of Georgia traffic laws, signs, signals and markings.
- 4) All drivers of Columbia County vehicles will exercise "due care" in the operation of their vehicle; specifically, the driver must operate his or her vehicle as a prudent person would in a given situation, seeking to avoid unreasonable risk of harm to themselves and others. This provision applies to emergency vehicles and non-emergency vehicles.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1) Department Heads:
 - a) Establish policies that support safe operation of motor vehicles. Policies should include driving on improved (hard surface) roadways, unimproved (dirt/gravel) roadways and construction areas. Policies will be in written form with copies to the Risk Management Department.
 - b) Establish a training program that ensures all employees driving Columbia County vehicles are familiar with policies of Columbia County Commission, as well as the department policies.
 - c) Ensure all employees driving Columbia County vehicles attend defensive driving within 6 months of employment. Departments will maintain records of attendance.
 - d) Ensure all employees driving Columbia County vehicles have a valid state driver's license by performing a driver's license check at least once every two years.
 - e) Assist in the enforcement of policies established by the Commission.
 - f) Establish a system of safety checks for motor vehicles. Safety checks are to be performed by the driver at the beginning of each driving day. (See Appendix 1 and 2 for sample daily checks).
 - g) Provide written operating procedures for emergency or specialized equipment. Procedures will be submitted to the Safety Review Board chairperson and to the Sheriff's Department for review. Such equipment includes, but is not limited to:
 - i. Sheriff's Department vehicles;
 - ii. Emergency service vehicles;
 - iii. Dump trucks;

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: April 16, 2013 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 July 15, 2025	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Safety</i>
<i>Policy Number 508.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- iv. General Motor Pool Vehicles;
- v. Any vehicle weighing in excess of 10,000 pounds (Gross Vehicle Weight).
- 2) Supervisors:
 - a) Ensure drivers conduct daily vehicle inspections.
 - b) Ensure drivers are trained in the details of paragraph A, provisions 1 through 4, above.
 - c) Perform checks for valid driver's licenses of employees driving Columbia County vehicles at least once each quarter.
 - d) Assist in accident investigations as required.
 - e) Ensure scheduled maintenance is conducted.
- 3) Drivers:
 - a) Adhere to the provisions of this section, in particular the provisions of paragraph A, above.
 - b) Ensure he/she has a valid driver's license in their possession while operating a Columbia County vehicle.
 - c) Inspect the vehicle at the beginning of each driving day. Items to inspect can be found at Appendix 1 for vehicles requiring a Class C license and Appendix 2 for CDL. Inspection check sheets provided in this manual are not intended to replace the provisions of law.
 - d) Are responsible for ensuring any and all legal requirements for safety inspections are met.
- 4) Department Safety Officers:
 - a) Ensure "pre-operation" daily checks are made.
 - b) May declare a vehicle "out of service" or "deadline" a vehicle for safety hazards.
- 5) Risk Manager:
 - a) Makes periodic inspections of any Columbia County owned vehicle to ensure safety and driver compliance with policy.
 - b) May declare a vehicle "out of service" or "deadline" as a result of a safety problem.
 - c) May temporarily suspend the driving privileges of an employee operating a Columbia County vehicle in a reckless manner. A written report of the action/conduct and description of the observation will be provided to the department head within one working day.
 - d) Conduct Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) checks for every employee authorized to operate a county vehicle or who receives a vehicle allowance every two years, with the exception of the Sheriff's Office employees who maintain their own checks.

III. DRIVER INSPECTIONS

Pre-Operations checks

- 1) Non-commercial vehicles: Safety checks will include as a minimum:
 - a) Lights
 - b) Horn
 - c) Directional Signals
 - d) Brakes, brake lights and brake fluid
 - e) Motor oil
 - f) Power steering fluid
 - g) Windshield washers and wipers

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: April 16, 2013 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 July 15, 2025	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Safety</i>
<i>Policy Number 508.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- h) Tires (tread and inflation)
 - i) Clutch travel
 - j) Hydraulic systems
 - k) Proper latching of seat belts.
- 2) Commercial type vehicles (CDL): The minimum requirements are established by law and all drivers applying for a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) must demonstrate their knowledge of pre-trip inspections prior to being approved for a license. **Drivers are responsible for conducting all safety inspections prescribed by law**, including pre-trip inspection, during-operations inspection and end-of-the-driving-day inspection.

IV. GENERAL VEHICLE SAFETY:

- 1) Position all adjustments for safe driving before putting the vehicle into gear, including adjustment of the seat, seat belts, inside and outside mirrors, and seating positions.
- 2) Drivers of Columbia County vehicles must possess a valid state driver's license and they must be thoroughly familiar with the state and local regulations governing motor vehicle operation. The fact that an employee is operating an emergency vehicle does not absolve them from civil or criminal liability for the consequences of wanton reckless driving. The driver must be in the position to satisfy a jury that they used reasonable care and prudence in operating emergency vehicles. Even though emergency equipment has warning devices, the drivers are expected to **PROCEED WITH DUE CAUTION**.
- 3) All slow moving equipment operated in public right-of-ways shall be equipped with proper flashing lights and other devices required by the Georgia Vehicle Code.
- 4) Load Security
 - a) Supplies transported in motor vehicles shall be secured in such a manner that they will not be dislodged or fall out or forward during transit or sudden stops.
 - b) Drawers in moveable trucks shall always be secured before the truck is driven.
 - c) Ensure load capacity is not exceeded.
- 5) Drugs or any medication, which might affect the ability to drive, are not to be taken before operating vehicles. Drugs, illness, or extreme fatigue may affect ability to judge distances, speed and driving conditions.
- 6) All persons who drive or ride in Columbia County vehicles will, in all cases, wear the installed seat belts. The number of seat belts available will establish the maximum passengers of the vehicle. Failure to wear seat belts can result in forfeiture of an assigned vehicle. **Unless work duties require otherwise, passengers will not be authorized to ride in the "bed" of pick-up trucks, dump trucks or other utility type vehicles.**
- 7) Not more than three (3) persons, including the driver, shall be permitted to ride in the front seat of any vehicle. Persons shall not be transported in any vehicle unless safe and secure seating is provided for each such person and a seat belt is available for **all** passengers.
- 8) Parking vehicle:
 - a) Unless working conditions require otherwise, parked vehicles must have motor stopped, emergency brake set, put gear in park and keys removed.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: April 16, 2013 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 July 15, 2025</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Safety</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 508.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i></p>

- b) If parked on a downgrade the front wheels should be turned toward the curb. If parked on an upgrade the front wheels should be turned away from the curb. Brakes should be set and transmission left in "park" before driver's seat is vacated.
- c) Vehicles will not be parked on the wrong side of the street facing traffic except in case of emergency.
- d) Before leaving the curb, it is essential to see that no cars are approaching from either direction, and signals are to be used.
- 9) When backing up a vehicle, it is necessary to see that the way is clear. The driver should get out of the vehicle when necessary and inspect the area to be backed into slowly. Sound the horn while backing when necessary. If there is another employee along, he will get out and direct the backing. **Drivers of dump trucks or heavy construction equipment are required to go to the rear of their vehicle to ensure the area is clear prior to backing the vehicle. Assistance from another employee standing near the rear observing for safe clearance is the recommended procedure.**
- 10) The vehicle is never to be left unattended with the motor running (excluding emergency type vehicle). Drivers will not go further than 20 feet from any point of the vehicle while it is running. When parked and unattended, the vehicle will be locked.
- 11) Drivers must be particularly alert while driving near children. Children must be kept from playing in or around Columbia County owned vehicles. While working areas such as schools, parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, or community centers, drivers will be especially watchful for children and will drive carefully and slowly at all times.
- 12) **Driver must stay within posted speed limits** and slow down when conditions warrant.
 - a) Drivers of vehicles pulling trailers and those requiring a CDL license shall (1) exercise great caution, (2) allow for increased following distance and (3) shall not exceed the posted speed limit.
- 13) The right-of-way is not to be assumed. The driver who has the last chance to avoid an accident may be the driver in the legal right. **YIELD OR STOP.**
- 14) A safe distance behind other vehicles is to be maintained so as to avoid tailgating and every effort made not to allow others to tailgate. If necessary, slow down, pull over to the side and let the driver pass.
- 15) Intentions will be signaled at least 100 feet in advance, including a change in lane and a change in direction. Avoid sudden braking.
- 16) Low beam headlights will be turned on during any low light period of the day such as during rainstorms and fog. Headlights should be "on" 1/2 hour before sunset until 1/2 hour after sunrise when driving. Parking lights designate a vehicle is parked. **Vehicles are never to be driven with only parking lights on.**
- 17) Filling tanks:
 - a) Motor of the equipment to be shut off.
 - b) No smoking near gasoline pumps.
 - c) Hose nozzle to be kept against the edge of filler pipe.
 - d) Tank not to be filled too fast or too full to avoid spilling gasoline.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: April 16, 2013 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 July 15, 2025	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Safety</i>
<i>Policy Number 508.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

V. SEAT BELTS

1. Columbia County has declared that any and all passengers, including the driver, riding in a vehicle owned by Columbia County are required to properly wear installed seat belts when operating a Columbia County vehicle. Rare exceptions may be granted by the Division Director or elected official with prior approval from Risk Management and the County Manager.
2. A failure to use your seat belt is a serious safety violation and is not to be taken lightly. It is a known fact that seat belts can and do help reduce the severity of injuries when they are properly used. Proper use constitutes proper adjustments as well as proper latching of the unit. Employees who receive an auto allowance for operating their personal vehicle on COLUMBIA COUNTY business are required to wear their seat belts in their personal vehicles as well as those in county owned vehicles.
3. To bring employees into compliance with this policy:
 - (a) First Offense: Will result in a written warning;
 - (b) Second Offense: Suspension as per Personnel Policy and Procedure
- (c) Third Offense: Will result in the loss of driving privileges for those who drive Columbia County vehicles;
- (d) Third Offense for those who receive auto allowance: Will be the forfeiture of that allowance.

VI. ITEMS PROHIBITED FROM BEING CARRIED IN COLUMBIA COUNTY VEHICLES:

The following items are not authorized for transport in vehicles belonging to Columbia County, unless job duties require otherwise.

1. Any item classified as contraband or illegal substance
2. Firearms or weapons of any type, except by Public Safety Officers who are certified and hold a position of employment by Columbia County as a certified Public Safety Officer, or as provided by State of Georgia law.
3. Alcoholic beverages

VII. REPORTING DRIVING CITATIONS/VIOLATIONS: All employees whose job requires they drive Columbia County vehicles or receive a vehicle allowance are required to report any and all traffic/moving vehicle violations to their supervisor, regardless of whether the citation was issued in the course of employment or not. Employees whose licenses are suspended will not be allowed to drive Columbia County vehicles and/or will forfeit the vehicle allowance while their licenses are suspended. A restricted permit, sometimes available during a license suspension for limited driving is not acceptable and does not alter this policy. **Employees hired as drivers (primary job duty) and whose license has been suspended may be subject to termination for loss of job qualifications. (See Personnel Policy)**

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: April 16, 2013 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 July 15, 2025	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Safety</i>
<i>Policy Number 508.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

VIII. MOTOR VEHICLE RECORDS:

1. Potential Employees: Persons applying for driving positions (any position which requires the applicant to drive a Columbia County vehicle as a major function of his or her job) will be required to provide a 3-year driving history at the applicant's expense. Failure to provide the required motor vehicle record will disqualify the applicant from employment. Applicants holding a Georgia Driver's License may complete the appropriate authorization form and Risk Management will obtain their MVR at no cost.
Risk Management will review all MVRs. Any record that indicates violations or vehicle accidents will be forwarded to the applicable Division Director with a recommendation based on acceptable driving standards. The Division Director must review the record and recommendations and sign approval prior to hiring.
2. Employees whose license is suspended for traffic violations or Driving Under the Influence (DUI), and whose job requires they drive a Columbia County vehicle may be terminated for failure to perform job responsibilities.
3. Any employee whose job requires they drive a Columbia County vehicle or receives a vehicle allowance may have motor vehicle records requested as a condition of employment. Only Department Heads, Safety Review Board, Division Directors, Risk Management, Human Resources or Columbia County Manager can request motor vehicle records.
4. Employees do not meet acceptable driving standards may have their Columbia County vehicle driving privileges revoked or forfeit their vehicle allowance.
 - (a) The Risk Management Department will identify employees in this category and forward the information to the appropriate Division Director. The employee will be notified in writing that his or her driving record is being reviewed and they should attend the meeting to present reasons why their driving privileges for Columbia County vehicles should not be revoked.
 - (b) The Division Director has the authority to:
 - i. Direct a Letter of Intent to terminate the employee's employment for continued unacceptable driving practices.
 - ii. Direct the employee be placed on probationary status for unacceptable driving practices (6 months to 1 year).
 - iii. Direct that the employee be terminated from employment.
 - (c) Following receipt and review of the information from the Risk Management Department, the Division Director will notify the Risk Management Department in writing of his/her decision to take action or not to take action against the employee and his/her reasons therefore. Copies of the Division Director's report will be forwarded to Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's personnel record.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: April 16, 2013 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 July 15, 2025	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Safety</i>
<i>Policy Number 508.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

DATE: _____ OPERATOR: _____ VEHICLE #: _____ SHOP #: _____ MILEAGE: _____		
ITEM CHECKED	✓ OK	NEEDS MAINTENANCE
1. Horn		
2. Brakes (including Park)		
3. Lights: a. Head Lights b. Tail Lights c. Turn Signals d. Brake Lights e. Back up Lights f. 4 way flasher/hazard		
4. Tires: (tread/pressure)		
5. Seat Belts:		
6. Fluid Levels: a. Coolant b. Oil c. Brake d. Power Steering e. Transmission		
7. Battery		
8. Windshield Wipers and fluid		
9. Clutch		
10. Damage to interior/exterior Beginning and end of day		
11. Note any unusual noise/problem		
12. Damage: _____		

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: April 16, 2013 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 July 15, 2025	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Safety</i>
<i>Policy Number 508.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

**DAILY VEHICLE INSPECTION
AIR BRAKES**

DEPARTMENT: _____ DRIVER: _____
DATE: _____ VEHICLE #: _____ SHOP #: _____

ENGINE COMPARTMENT

BELTS : Alternator <input type="checkbox"/> Compressor <input type="checkbox"/> Water Pump <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> HOSES: <input type="checkbox"/> FLUIDS: Water <input type="checkbox"/> Oil <input type="checkbox"/>	FLUIDS: Steering <input type="checkbox"/> Transmission <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Steering Linkage <input type="checkbox"/> Slack Adjusters <input type="checkbox"/> Leaf Springs <input type="checkbox"/> Rim Seals <input type="checkbox"/>	COMMENTS
---	---	-----------------

TIRES

<input type="checkbox"/>
TREAD: Check all tires for tread; front tires 4/32 inch minimum with matching tread; rear 2/32 inches - minimum. SIDEWALL: check for visible punctures, separation, bulges or cuts; PRESSURE: follow manufacture's recommended pressure.

ELECTRICAL & BRAKES

LIGHTS: HI Beam Low Beam Park : Front Rear Turn : Front Rear Hazard Clearance Brake	Left _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Right _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	BRAKES: 1. Low Pressure Signal 2. Spring Brakes: 3. Air Pressure Buildup rate: 4. Air Leakage Rate: 5. Air Compressor cut in/out Pressure: (See Reverse of form)	COMMENTS
---	--	---	---	-----------------

CAB

Doors/locks _____ Windows _____ Windshield _____ Wipers _____ Mirrors _____ Steering play (less than 2") _____ Fire Extinguisher _____ Warning Triangle _____ Gauges _____ Horn _____	COMMENTS
---	-----------------

UNDERCARRIAGE

Frame _____ Cross-members _____ Drive Shaft _____ Exhaust _____ Leaf Springs _____ Slack Adjusters _____ (1 in.) Mounting hardware _____ Fuel Tank _____ Damage _____ Drain air tanks to eliminate water/condensation	COMMENTS
--	-----------------

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: April 16, 2013 September 19, 2017 September 21, 2021 July 15, 2025</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Safety</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 508.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i></p>

<p>TEST LOW PRESSURE WARNING SIGNAL: Shut the engine off when you have enough air pressure that the low-pressure warning signal is not on. Turn the electrical power on and step on and off the brake pedal to reduce air tank pressure. The low air pressure-warning signal must come on before the pressure drops to less than 60 psi in the air tank (or tank with the lowest air pressure, in dual air systems).</p> <p>If the warning signal doesn't work, you could lose air pressure and you would not know it. This could cause sudden emergency braking in a single circuit air system. In dual systems the stopping distance will be increased. Only limited braking can be done before the spring brakes come on.</p> <p>CHECK THAT THE SPRING BRAKES COME ON AUTOMATICALLY: Chock the wheels, release the parking brakes when you have enough air pressure to do it, and shut the engine off. Step on and off the brake pedal to reduce the air tank pressure. The "parking brake" knob should pop out when the air pressure falls to the manufacturer's specification (usually in a range between 20 -40 psi). This causes the spring brakes to come on.</p> <p>CHECK RATE OF AIR PRESSURE BUILDUP: With the engine at operating RPM, the pressure should build from 85 to 100 psi within 45 seconds in dual air systems. (If the vehicle has larger than minimum air tanks, the buildup time can be longer and still be safe. Check the manufacturer's specifications.) In single air systems (pre 1975), typical requirements are pressure buildup from 50 to 90 psi within 3 minutes with the engine at an idle speed of 600 - 900 RPM. If air pressure does not build up fast enough, your pressure may drop too low during driving, requiring an emergency stop. Don't drive until you get the problem fixed.</p>	<p>TEST AIR LEAKAGE RATE: With a fully charged air system (typically 125 psi), turn off the engine, release the service brake, and time the air pressure drop. The loss rate should be less than 2 psi in one minute for single vehicles, less than 3 psi in one minute for combination vehicles. Then apply 90 psi or more with the brake pedal. After the initial pressure drop, if the air pressure falls more than 3 psi in one minute for single vehicles (more than 4 psi for combination vehicles) the air loss rate is too much. Check for air leaks and fix before driving the vehicle. Otherwise, you could lose your brakes while driving.</p> <p>CHECK AIR COMPRESSOR GOVERNOR CUT - IN AND CUT - OUT PRESSURES:</p> <p>Pumping by the air compressor should start at about 100 psi and stop at about 125 psi. (Check manufacturer's specifications.) Run the engine at a fast idle. The air governor should cut -out the air compressor at about the manufacturer's specified pressure. The air compressor at about the manufacturer's specified pressure. The air pressure shown by your gauge(s) will stop rising. With the engine idling, step on and off the brake to reduce the air tank pressure. The compressor should cut-in at about the manufacturer's specified cut-in pressure. The pressure should begin to rise.</p>
--	--

Signature: _____

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Accidents</i>
<i>Policy Number 509.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

I. GENERAL:

In the event of a vehicle accident involving Columbia County owned vehicles, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Notify the appropriate law enforcement agency (Call 9-1-1) and follow their instructions.
2. If there is no apparent serious injury or death, the vehicle can be operated normally and it is safe to do so, remove vehicles from the roadway as required by O.C.G.A. 40-6-275. Do not leave the scene until released by the investigating officer(s).
3. The driver involved may exchange names, driver's license numbers, vehicle tag number and insurance data with the other persons involved. Also, request name, address and phone number for any witnesses. **DO NOT ADMIT FAULT. OFFER NO INFORMATION REGARDING THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACCIDENT OR WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN DONE TO AVOID THE ACCIDENT.**
4. Report the accident to manager/supervisor as soon as possible. The driver needs to write a statement as to what happened in the accident as soon as time permits. The manager/supervisor will collect the statement(s) from the employee involved and any employee that was a witness as well as the police report number and any other related information.
5. Manager/Supervisor will immediately notify Division Director or his/her designee.
6. All accidents will be reported to the Risk Management Department and the Human Resources Department IMMEDIATELY, by the Division Director or his/her designee.
7. Once released by the investigating officer, if the vehicle is safe to operate, it will be driven to the respective department or Fleet immediately. If the vehicle is not drivable, the Sheriff's office will call the next List Wrecker from their call list. The vehicle will be taken to Fleet Services.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Division Directors:
 - (a) Ensure all employees are familiar with I: General, 1-7 above.
 - (b) Develop a system of notification within their respective department.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Accidents</i>
<i>Policy Number 509.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- (c) Promote driver safety and vehicle accident safety including attending defensive driving classes offered by Columbia County.
- (d) Ensure a prompt department investigation is conducted into the circumstances leading to the accident.
- (e) Should Division Director determine that immediate disciplinary action is warranted, notification will be sent to Risk Management for inclusion in the Safety Review Board information.
- (f) If action is not already taken, review accidents involving division employees; consider recommendation of Safety Review Board and other relevant data to determine appropriate action and notify employee of same.

2. Safety Review Board:

- (a) Serves as the administrative board of inquiry to identify the causes of accidents involving vehicles, property damage and employee injuries in order to establish responsibility and derive means to reduce accidents involving county owned vehicles and personnel.
- (b) Reviews all accidents resulting in property damage or personal injury to employees, including vehicle accidents, to determine the cause and to establish responsibility or culpability where appropriate.
- (c) Recommends penalties based on accident details and driver history; directs retraining and establishes needed procedures when shortcomings have been identified.
- (d) Where flagrant and/or repeated violations occur, the SRB notifies the appropriate Division Director and suggests further training or disciplinary action is taken.
- (e) When appropriate, the SRB recommends reassignment to a non-driving position or the termination of the employee.

3. Manager/Supervisors:

- (a) Ensure drivers of Columbia County vehicles are trained on procedures of paragraph I: **General**, 1-7 of this section.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Accidents</i>
<i>Policy Number 509.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- (b) Periodically inspect Columbia County vehicles driven by employees under their supervision to ensure driver compliance with policy to conduct daily inspections and ensure no damage goes unreported.
 - (c) Ensure any damages or accidents are reported immediately and that the Claims Reporting Form is prepared and forwarded, to include witness statements, whenever a police report is not completed.
 - (d) Ensure any common use vehicle is inspected by the driver for safety and condition prior to operation.
 - (e) Ensure any employee involved in an accident or as a witness to an accident involving a Columbia County vehicle is available to the Safety Review Board when requested.
 - (f) No manager/supervisor should deny an employee the time to attend a meeting of the safety review board.
4. Risk Management Department:
- (a) Maintains files on each driver involved in an accident and vehicle that has been damaged.
 - (b) Processes reports of the accident or incident and reports the damage.
 - (c) Depending on the scope of accident: Risk Management staff may respond to accident scene to obtain critical information, pictures and other relevant data for claim.
 - (d) Coordinates the repair of all vehicles and other county property damage.
 - (e) Coordinates claims handling functions.
 - (f) Provides administrative functions for Safety Review Board, including but not limited to notifications, agenda and minutes and Risk Manager serves as Chair.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Accidents</i>
<i>Policy Number 509.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- III. **DAMAGED VEHICLES:** Any Columbia County vehicle that has been involved in an accident and must be towed to the Fleet Services will be under "quarantine" until released by Risk Management. No one is authorized to touch, remove items, move or remove parts, or otherwise physically alter any part of the vehicle unless authorized to do so by the Risk Management Department. The only exception would be the authorized law enforcement investigator. This provision will ensure protection of physical evidence for potential liability. In the event that there are work-related items in the vehicle needed for the immediate day-to-day operation then approval from the Division Director or their designated representative must be obtained.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Accident Investigation</i>
<i>Policy Number 510.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- I. PURPOSE:** The purpose of this section is to establish a policy, guidelines and assign responsibility for the investigation of accidents or damage to vehicles owned by Columbia County.
- II. REQUIRED INVESTIGATIONS:** A Georgia Motor Vehicle Accident Report or Incident Report will be completed for the following:
1. Any traffic accident or non-traffic incident involving a Columbia County owned vehicle.
 2. Any traffic or non-traffic accident involving a non-motorized secondary vehicle (i.e.: trailer) that receives damage or causes damage to public or private property.
 3. Any county vehicle which receives damage as a result of vandalism, an unreported previous accident or is otherwise damaged without the immediate knowledge of the primary driver or department (for common use vehicles).
- III. RESPONSIBILITIES:**
1. Division Directors:
 - (a) Establish procedures to appoint an investigating employee for any accident identified in Section II above.
 - (b) Ensure employees designated as drivers are informed of their reporting responsibilities for vehicle accidents.
 - (c) Ensure an accident investigation is initiated as soon as practical and results are forwarded to the Risk Management Department within 24 hours of the accident. Notify Risk Management and explain delay if report cannot be completed within the specified time frame.
 2. Department Safety Officers:
 - (a) Reviews all department accident reports for completeness and accuracy.
 - (b) Recommends changes in department policy or driving practices as appropriate.
 - (c) Coordinates with the Risk Management Department for technical assistance as required.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: August 7, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Accident Investigation</i>
<i>Policy Number 510.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

3. Driver:

- (a) Reports any accident or damage to Columbia County owned vehicles to Manager/Supervisor immediately. The Manager/Supervisor will immediately notify the division director or his/her designee.
- (b) Assists in the investigation by writing a full description of the accident or circumstance of damage.
- (c) Inspects Columbia County vehicle before work each day.

IV. ACCIDENT REPORT: Any person having an accident in a Columbia County vehicle will have a Georgia Motor Vehicle Accident report filled out by the Police or Sheriff's Office in the jurisdiction where the accident occurred.

V. WITNESS STATEMENTS:

- 1. Written statements will be obtained from the employee driver and any Columbia County employee involved in the accident.
- 2. Prior to submitting the witness statement with the report, it will be reviewed to ensure the statement is complete and contains all details of the accident. Critical elements which should be answered in the statement are: Who, What, When, Where and How.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Claims</i>
<i>Policy Number 511.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish policy, procedures and guidance in response to claims, torts, potential law suits or any allegations of damage or injury by employees or equipment belonging to, or under contract by Columbia County Commission.

II. GENERAL POLICY

- 1) No person employed by Columbia County will accept responsibility for damages or injury to persons or property owned by the public.
- 2) All incidents of damage to property or equipment or injury to the general public will be reported to the Risk Management Department by telephone, and followed up with the Columbia County Incident Report, Sheriff Office Incident or Accident Report.
- 3) Any employee knowing of an incident (injury or damage) which involves an employee or equipment of Columbia County and the general public will report the incident immediately to his / her supervisor.
- 4) File all claims of damage and injuries on the ACCG-IRMA Claims Reporting Form in this section. Send this form and any statements or reports about the incident to the Risk Management Office as soon as reasonably possible after the incident.
- 5) Injuries received during the course of employment will be reported and the procedures for Workers' Compensation will be followed.
- 6) Any incidents of theft will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency as well as following the procedures of this section.
- 7) The Risk Management Department will not accept claims from employees for the loss, theft, damage or destruction of personal property not directly related to Columbia County operations and for which Columbia County would have legal liability.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) Risk Management:

Serves as the primary department under the Columbia County Commission for processing claims, torts, settlements and lawsuits against Columbia County and its subordinate departments.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Claims</i>
<i>Policy Number 511.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

2) Department Heads:

- a) Establish procedures for the reporting of all claims:
 - i. Property damage, loss or theft of Columbia County owned property;
 - ii. Damage to property owned by the public;
 - iii. Injury to the public by Columbia County equipment, personnel or injury to the public within Columbia County facilities.
- b) Notify Risk Management in writing of any Columbia County equipment that is lost through damage or theft, specifically:
 - i. Property listed as fixed asset,
 - ii. Property with a serial number;
 - iii. Any communication-type equipment;
 - iv. Any media-type property (i.e. cameras, TVs, radios, stereos, and projectors):
 - v. Computer/word processor-type equipment;
 - vi. Equipment under lease or contract;
 - vii. Machinery/power tools;
 - viii. Property valued in excess of \$99.00 that is not by its nature expendable.
- c) Ensure supervisors are familiar with reporting responsibilities/procedures.
- d) Implement necessary policies to reduce loss or injury.

IV. PROCEDURES:

- 1) Any employee having knowledge of an incident involving Columbia County property or operations that could lead to a claim against Columbia County will report the incident to their supervisor as soon as possible.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009	TOPIC: <i>Claims</i>
<i>Policy Number 511.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- 2) Risk Management should be notified, as soon as possible, by the designated department representative of any injuries to the public with implications of Columbia County involvement. A written report should be completed and forwarded immediately following the incident.
- 3) A Sheriff's Office Incident or Accident Report and an ACCG-IRMA Claims Reporting Form will be completed and forwarded to the Risk Management Department as soon as possible after the incident. If the department investigation is not complete within the prescribed time, the department representative should contact Risk Management.
- 4) Recovery/replacement of department losses will be coordinated through Risk Management.
- 5) Risk Management will replace lost, stolen, or damaged equipment (non-vehicle) on a case-by-case basis. Generally, replacement is limited to department equipment if the equipment is necessary to the entire department's operation.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED AND ADDED: September 20, 2011 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Employee Emergency Medical Procedures</i>
<i>Policy Number 512.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

I. POLICY

For any life threatening or serious medical emergency, call 911 or a designated Emergency Medical Services EMS number. Employees attending an individual with a medical emergency should direct another employee to call 911 or Emergency Medical Services. An employee shall be stationed at the emergency location or building entrance to keep the area clear of other vehicles and to direct Fire Department first responders and/or the EMS crews to the individual with the medical emergency until all emergency units leave the site.

Employees attending an injured/ill employee or another designated employee must advise the injured/ill employee's immediate Supervisor, Department Head, Human Resources or the County Manager during or immediately after the medical emergency. In addition, the attending employee should advise his/her own Supervisor or Department Head immediately during or after the medical emergency. The injured/ill employee's immediate Supervisor or Department Head will notify Human Resources of the medical emergency; Human Resources will contact the employee's designated emergency contact person.

Employees with non-life threatening minor injuries or illnesses should be treated at an urgent care center if necessary.

II. PROCEDURES

Medical emergencies in the workplace are very rarely properly planned for and are seldom expected. An individual's level of preparedness could mean the difference between life and death if there were a medical emergency at work. Learning the basics will help employees respond quickly and calmly in the face of chaos and could save a life.

Life threatening emergencies will require ambulance transport. If an injured or ill employee is transported by ambulance to a medical facility, the employee's immediate Supervisor or Department Head will contact Human Resources immediately and request a staff member to notify the employee emergency contact person of the situation. If the employee refuses ambulance transport based on the recommendation of the EMS, have him or her sign a form indicating he/she has refused to be transported by the ambulance service to a medical facility for treatment. Send the signed refusal for transport form to Human Resources to be maintained in the employee confidential medical file.

Employees with training can perform CPR, first aid and/or use an AED, if needed, until emergency medical transport arrives for them. Employees will not transport the seriously ill or injured employee in a county or personal owned vehicle under any circumstances. Following is a list of emergencies that require ambulance transport:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED AND ADDED: September 20, 2011 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Employee Emergency Medical Procedures</i>
<i>Policy Number 512.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- Seizure
- Chest Pain
- Cardiac Arrest
- Stroke
- Choking
- Moderate/severe respiratory distress
- Respiratory arrest
- Altered mental state
- Severe allergic reaction
- Diabetic emergency
- Severe abdominal pain (especially for females of child bearing age)
- Serious heat related injury
- Any severe injury such as hemorrhage that cannot be quickly controlled with direct pressure, amputations, head injuries, penetrating injury to the chest or abdomen, snake bites

Stay calm. In any emergency medical situation, do not panic. Remain calm, cool and collected.

Assess the Situation. Quickly assess the scope of the injuries and collect information. If an injured person is conscious, ask him/her to tell you if anything hurts and observe where on the body he/she may be physically injured. Do not move an injured person, especially if reporting pain, unless there is imminent danger.

Call 911. If a person is severely injured, immediately call 911. If there is any doubt as to whether Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is needed, it is better to err on the side of caution. Stay calm and provide your address, location in the building, phone number, name and any information you have gathered about the injuries.

Report the Situation to the Appropriate Authority. Notify management immediately about the situation.

Administer First Aid and CPR. CPR or first aid should be performed by a trained person skilled in the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). If there is no skilled person, wait for emergency professionals. Do not administer medical treatment or medications. Use PPE and be careful not to come in contact with blood, vomit or other bodily fluids.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED AND ADDED: September 20, 2011	TOPIC: <i>Risk Identification and Assessment for New or Expanded Programs</i>
<i>Policy Number 513.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Health and Safety</i>

- I. **PURPOSE:** In order to adequately evaluate the desirability of programs and facilities, exposures for potential loss must be considered. The purpose of this section is to provide policy and guidance for the identification and assessment of risk from new or increased exposures due to expansion of existing programs or venture into new programs or facilities.

- II. **POLICY:** The diversity of programs, duties and responsibilities of all county departments requires that each department be committed to and responsible for safety and risk management within their respective areas. However, the Risk Management department personnel have the expertise and dedicated focus to managing risk and should be consulted in the initial stages of consideration of all new, expanded or revised programs.

- III. **APPLICABILITY:** This section applies to all departments, agencies, offices or sections subordinate to the Columbia County Commission.

- IV. **PROCEDURES:** The Division Director or his/her designee will notify the Risk Management Department when significant changes to county operations and/or programs are under serious consideration.

The Risk Management Department will work with the department to identify the loss exposures and assess the associated risk for such program. If the risk exposure is significant, additional recommendations may be submitted as a means of reducing and/or controlling the risk as well as identifying methods to finance any losses.

The risk evaluation and recommendations will be included when submitting the final proposal for consideration.

Examples of changes which require risk evaluation include but are not limited to:

- Outsourcing services that were previously provided by county employees
- New volunteer programs, work/study or internship programs
- Joint ventures with other governmental agencies or private partners
- New/different facilities: swimming pools, skate parks, race tracks
- New/different vehicles or equipment: boats, jet skis, crane, horses, aircraft, etc.
- Providing day care for employees children

The final acceptance of any risk evaluations or recommendations shall be the responsibility of the Division Director.

- V. **NON COMPLIANCE:** Failure to obtain the risk evaluation may result in approval delay or rejection for the proposal. Should a program be implemented without the required risk evaluation and a loss results, the associated costs may be charged directly to the program's budget.



	FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT
600.1	Introduction
601.1	Budget Preparation
602.1	Capital Expenditures
603.1	Procurement
603.2	Projects Using Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP) Funding
603.3	Purchases Using Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Funding
604.1	Purchasing Card
604.2	Purchasing Card – Elected Official
605.1	Debt Administration
606.1	Accounting and Financial Reporting
607.1	Revenue
608.1	Reserves – Governmental Funds
608.2	Reserves – Water Utility
609.1	Bank Accounts
610.1	Investments
611.1	Cash Management
612.1	Cell Phone Usage and Reimbursement
613.1	Internment of an Indigent Decedent
614.1	Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement Policy
615.1	Donation of Funds/Items
616.1	Payment Card Acceptance
617.1	Grant Administration

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED AND ADDED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: <i>Introduction</i>
<i>Policy Number 600.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

To ensure the effective and economical use of public resources by promoting sound financial management practices.

II. POLICY

- 1) The Board of Commissioners (the Board) and staff of Columbia County (the County) recognize the desirability of stated financial policies to assist in meeting the County government's basic objectives:
 - a) The policies will assist the County in the objective of being publicly accountable and assist users of the financial statement to assess that accountability.
 - b) The policies will assist in meeting and evaluating the operating results of County government.
 - c) The policies will assist in determining the level of services that can be provided, the cost of services, and the County's ability to provide those services.
- 2) The County recognizes that the process of developing policies and supporting procedures to implement the policies is a dynamic process that must be continually reviewed. Accordingly, the County expects these policies to become a significant part of its system of internal control and provide the following benefits:
 - a) Reduce misunderstanding, duplication of effort, errors and inefficiency.
 - b) Provide a comprehensive, consistent methodology for similar transactions.
 - c) Insure the use of proper, accurate, and timely financial information.
 - d) Provide training to new or inexperienced employees to insure uniform, consistent application of policies.
 - e) Provide a basic framework for a system of internal control.
 - f) Provide a fixed point of reference for those who wish to evaluate the County's operations and financial reporting.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED AND ADDED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: <i>Introduction</i>
<i>Policy Number 600.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- g) Reduce or eliminate informal policies now in existence.
- h) Provide a framework for planning for emergencies.
- i) Improve the credibility of the County with Citizens through demonstration of prudent stewardship of public assets.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND AMENDED: December 14, 2010 August 20, 2013 September 21, 2021 <i>Policy Number 601.1</i>	TOPIC: <i>Budget Preparation</i>
	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

The budget serves as an important management tool providing information essential to improving the efficiency of program operations and as an accountability document providing information that Citizens can use in assessing County activities and operations.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

The Director is designated the Budget Officer and prepares the budget under the direction of the County Manager. The Budget Officer is responsible for coordinating the work of his or her staff as well as the budget activities of the department managers and their staffs.

- 1) By January 1st, the Budget Officer shall prepare a budget calendar and distribute budget preparation information to all departments. Included shall be actual or estimated budget information for the current and prior years. Guidelines showing the limits with which the budget requests should be prepared shall be included.
- 2) The Budget Officer shall be responsible for seeing that the calendar is met at each stage of approval. He or she may adjust the calendar as necessary to the extent it does not violate statutory requirements.

III. POLICY

- 1) The fiscal year for the County shall begin July 1st and end June 30th of each year.
- 2) The operating budgets originally adopted may be amended throughout the year by the Board subject to provisions of Georgia State law and as herein contained.
- 3) The County shall finance current expenditures with current revenues. The County shall avoid budgetary procedures that balance current expenditures through the obligation of future resources.
- 4) All revenues which are reasonably expected to be unexpended and unencumbered at the end of the fiscal year shall be anticipated as "fund balance" in the budget of the following year.
- 5) The budget shall provide for adequate maintenance of capital equipment and facilities and for its orderly replacement.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND AMENDED: December 14, 2010 August 20, 2013 September 21, 2021</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Budget Preparation</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 601.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

- 6) All funds except Trust and Agency funds and the Sheriff's Federal and State Condemnation Funds are subject to the annual budget process.
- 7) The budget must be balanced for all budgeted funds. Total anticipated revenues plus that portion of beginning fund balance in excess of the required reserve (see item 10 below) must equal total estimated expenditures for the General, Special Revenue, and Capital Project Funds.
- 8) All budgets shall be adopted on a basis of accounting consistent with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Revenues are budgeted when they become measurable and available. Expenditures are charged against the budget when they become measurable, a liability has been incurred, and the liability shall be liquidated with current resources.
- 9) The budget shall be adopted at the legal level of budgetary control which is the fund/department level. Expenditures may not exceed the total for any department within a fund without the approval of the Board.
- 10) The County shall establish a fund balance reserve for the General Fund to pay expenditures caused by unforeseen emergencies, for shortfalls caused by revenue declines, and to eliminate any short-term borrowing. This reserve shall be maintained at an amount which is noted in the fund reserve policy statements under "Operating Reserve."
- 11) The County shall include a line item in the General Fund for unforeseen, emergency operating expenditures. The amount of this contingency is detailed in the fund reserve policies.
- 12) The County shall maintain a budgetary control system to ensure adherence to the budget and will have available timely monthly financial reports comparing actual revenues, expenditures, and encumbrances with budgeted amounts.
- 13) Actual cost of support services (indirect costs) shall be allocated to the appropriate end-user fund/department so that all funds and departments will reflect their full costs of operation.
- 14) The budget shall reflect both fixed and variable costs whenever practical.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND AMENDED: December 14, 2010 August 20, 2013 September 21, 2021 <i>Policy Number 601.1</i>	TOPIC: <i>Budget Preparation</i>
	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

IV. BUDGET AMENDMENTS

- 1) Transfers within departments, except salary line items, less than \$5,000 may be authorized by the Finance Director.
- 2) Transfers within departments except salary line items, \$5,000 or greater may be authorized by the County Manager.
- 3) Transfers between departments or funds shall be by authority of the Board.
- 4) Increase or decrease in the total fund appropriation shall be by authority of the Board.
- 5) Increase or decrease in salary appropriation within any department shall be by authority of the Board.
- 6) Appropriation of fund balances in excess of established reserve requirements shall be by authority of the Board.
- 7) Items 3-6 must be reviewed by the Management and Financial Services Committee.

V. BUDGET INCREASES

Funds must limit expenditures to current year revenues except in the following instances:

- 1) Prior Year Encumbrances – Prior year open purchase orders act as a reserve against fund balance and will reduce fund balance when paid.
- 2) Unanticipated Revenue – Unanticipated revenue shall first be committed to satisfy revenue reserve requirements and then may be appropriated for current year non-recurring expenditures. Except in emergency situations, no recurring expenditures will be funded by current unanticipated revenue.
- 3) Prior Year Reserves – In cases where funds reserve requirements are in excess of amounts required by reserve policies those excess amounts may be appropriated for current year non-recurring expenditures. In no event shall the appropriation be made before March 1st of each fiscal year.

VI. BUDGET DECREASES

Where economic conditions dictate, budgets may be decreased to levels below adopted appropriations. The Director shall notify departments of the anticipated level of reductions detailing the order of preference in reductions. Amounts decreased from specific line items

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND AMENDED: December 14, 2010 August 20, 2013 September 21, 2021 <i>Policy Number 601.1</i>	TOPIC: <i>Budget Preparation</i>
	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

in each fund shall be entered as a line item entitled “Frozen Appropriations”. This does not automatically decrease appropriations, but prevents expenditures until such time as budget amounts are available for appropriation.

VII. LAPSING OF APPROPRIATIONS

Unexpended appropriations at the end of the fiscal year shall lapse into the fund balance. Those amounts cannot be spent unless re-appropriated in the succeeding fiscal year with certain exceptions:

- 1) Capital Projects, excluding equipment – Appropriations for capital projects do not automatically lapse at the end of the fiscal year. However, carryover must be budgeted by the department for the following fiscal year and re-appropriated by the Board.
- 2) Grant Funds – Appropriations funded by State or Federal grants lapse only at the expiration of a grant or completion of the project.
- 3) Bids Under Budgeted Amounts – When Capital items or other items identified as “New Appropriations” cost less than the amount budgeted, any difference shall be transferred to the fund’s contingency reserve.

VIII. FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT REVIEW OF NEW PROGRAMS

- 1) Before a new program or service is initiated by a County Division, the County Manager shall review the program to determine compliance with County policies, evaluate liability, and determine if the program could be better performed by outsourcing to a private sector vendor.
- 2) A recommendation by the County Manager shall be made to the appropriate Division Director for review before any further action is taken. These recommendations would be included in information or any item carried forth to Committee before new programs or services are initiated. The purpose of this review is to eliminate waste, reduce costs, manage risk, determine workload requirements, evaluate outsourcing possibilities, and restrict government competition with services provided by the private sector.
- 3) The County Manager will prepare guidelines for use by County divisions concerning this matter a part of the budget approval process.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: February 15, 2011 May 19, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Capital Expenditures</i>
<i>Policy Number 602.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

To purchase and maintain capital equipment and facilities which will result in the greatest service to the citizens at the lowest cost.

II. POLICY

- 1) The County shall develop a multi-year plan for capital improvements, update it annually, and make capital improvements in accordance with the plan.
- 2) The County shall maintain its physical assets at a level adequate to protect the County's capital investment and to minimize future maintenance and replacement costs. The budget shall provide for the adequate maintenance and the orderly replacement of the capital plant and equipment from current revenues where possible.
- 3) The County will try to ensure that prime commercial and industrial acreage served with necessary infrastructure is available for development.
- 4) Capital assets are defined by the County as assets with an initial, individual cost of more than \$5,000 and an estimated useful life in excess of one year. This minimum capitalization cost is applicable for all categories of capital assets. Purchased or constructed capital assets are reported at cost or estimated historical cost. Donated capital assets are recorded at their estimated fair value at the date of donation. General infrastructure assets acquired prior to July 1, 2002, consist of the streets network that was acquired or that received substantial improvements subsequent to July 1, 1980. The streets network is reported at estimated historical cost using deflated replacement cost. The cost of normal maintenance and repairs that do not add to the value of the asset or materially extend assets' lives are expensed as incurred.
- 5) In addition to an annual inventory, a depreciation schedule shall be established for physical assets to reflect the reasonable life of the asset. Depreciation is computed

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: February 15, 2011 May 19, 2015</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Capital Expenditures</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 602.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

using the straight-line method. A summary of the estimated useful lives is as follows:

Vehicles	3 to 8 years
Furniture and fixtures	3 to 8 years
Machinery and equipment	5 to 10 years
Utility plant and distribution systems	10 to 50 years
Storm water systems	10 to 50 years
Land improvements	10 to 50 years
Buildings and improvements	10 to 50 years
Donated subdivisions	25 to 75 years
Infrastructure	25 to 75 years

- 6) The County shall adopt a long-term funding mechanism for capital projects. The operating funds to maintain capital projects shall be identified prior to the decision to undertake the projects.
- 7) The capital improvements plan shall include a plan to address fleet management acquisition and replacement and equipment acquisition and replacement.
- 8) An appropriate priority mechanism shall be used in all County capital budgeting. This budget shall be approved by the Committee for submission to the Board for final approval.
- 9) The County will strive to fund at least 25% of the capital plan with current resources. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of annual General Fund revenues, fund balances in accordance with the County's reserve policy, and SPLOST funds.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 RENAMED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: February 15, 2011 May 19, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Capital Expenditures</i>
<i>Policy Number 602.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

III. CATEGORIES

Capital improvements generally fall into several different categories. Project categories, along with their funding sources, include:

- 1) Capital expenditures relating to normal replacement of worn or obsolete capital equipment or facilities will be financed on a pay-as-you-go basis, with debt financing considered only as appropriate.
- 2) Capital expenditures relating to the construction of new or expanded facilities necessitated by growth will be financed primarily on a pay-as-you-go basis. When the new improvements can be determined to benefit the population in the future, debt financing may be appropriate.
- 3) Capital expenditures which will significantly reduce the cost of operations or future capital cost must be evaluated to demonstrate a positive new present value.
- 4) Capital expenditures are allowed for improvements that enhance the quality of life in the County and are consistent with the County's goals even though they cannot be categorized as essential for the provision of basic services. The policy relating to unusual capital expenditures directs the County to look to the ultimate beneficiary of each capital improvement in order to determine the source of funding.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 May 21, 2013 July 1, 2014 December 2, 2014 August 21, 2018 May 4, 2021 September 21, 2021 November 16, 2021 January 17, 2023</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Procurement</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 603.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

I. PURPOSE

To establish policy guidelines to ensure the proper use and authorization of County funds; to ensure compliance with Federal, State, and local laws; to encourage competition for the most efficient and cost-effective use of County resources; to provide the highest standards of professionalism and ethical conduct; and to allow for the procurement of goods and services using County funds to provide the best solution at the best price in the best time.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

- 1) The procurement function is decentralized with County departments having responsibility for:
 - a) Initiation of purchase requisitions.
 - b) Ensuring funds are appropriated.
 - c) Requesting additional funds if needed.
 - d) Monitoring operating requirements of contracts.
 - e) Preparing specifications/scope of work for solicitations.
- 2) The Procurement Department is responsible for:
 - a) Reviewing all requests to ensure that County policies are followed.
 - b) Maintaining and distributing purchasing rules and regulations to be used internally and rules and regulations written specifically for vendors.
 - c) Monitoring administrative requirements of contracts.
 - d) Facilitating the solicitation process.

III. POLICY

- 1) Materials, services, and supplies shall be purchased only when funds for their cost have been appropriated and included in the annual budget. Sufficient funds must be available before any action can be taken by the Procurement Department. The responsibility for action to initiate additional funds rests with the user department.
- 2) **Procurement Thresholds**
 - a) Purchases estimated to be less than \$5,000 may be made in the open market. Departments are to use their best judgment as to source of supply.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 May 21, 2013 July 1, 2014 December 2, 2014 August 21, 2018 May 4, 2021 September 21, 2021 November 16, 2021 January 17, 2023</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Procurement</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 603.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

- b) Purchases equal to \$5,000 but less than \$25,000 may be made in the open market without regard for formal solicitation by obtaining 3 to 5 quotations. The requesting department may obtain the written quotations themselves.
 - c) Purchases equal to \$25,000 but less than \$50,000 may be made in the open market without regard for formal solicitation, using a competitive sealed quotation process, subject to and upon compliance with the following provisions:
 - i. The items to be purchased must be items included as line items in the adopted budget. The adoption of the budget by the Board of Commissioners containing line item expenditures for purchases normally made through the Procurement Department shall constitute approval for the purchase of those line items by the Procurement Department without further action of the Board of Commissioners.
 - ii. The purchase must be within the budgeted amount which has been approved by the Board of Commissioners.
 - iii. The competitive sealed quotation process will be administered by the Procurement Department.
 - iv. The purchase must be made from the lowest responsive and responsible quotation or the quotation determined to be in the best interest of the County.
 - v. Approval of the quotation must be made by the County Manager or at his direction, the Deputy County Manager, in writing, with verbal approval by the appropriate committee chairperson or County Chairman before execution.
 - d) Purchases with an estimated total cost equal to and greater than \$50,000, or purchases not in compliance with 2.c. require formal solicitation.
 - e) This section of the policy does not apply to procurement of goods/services otherwise specifically covered in this policy.
 - f) Deviations to purchasing thresholds shall be allowed if in the best interest of Columbia County upon approval by the appropriate oversight committee.
 - g) Purchases shall not be split to avoid threshold limits.
 - h) Reference is made to the *Procurement Department Standard Operating Guidelines* manual for methods of solicitation and solicitation guidelines.
- 3) **Negotiated Contracts**
- a) Although Procurement strongly recommends obtaining at least three quotes to ensure competitive pricing, the requirement for three to five written quotations for purchases equal

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 May 21, 2013 July 1, 2014 December 2, 2014 August 21, 2018 May 4, 2021 September 21, 2021 November 16, 2021 January 17, 2023</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Procurement</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 603.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

to \$5,000 but less than \$50,000 may be waived by the County Manager on items purchased through a contract that has been bid and negotiated by the following:

- State of Georgia Department of Administrative Services;
 - U.S. General Services Administration, limited to the Disaster Recovery Purchasing Program, the Cooperative Purchasing Program (schedules 70 & 84), and the 1122 Counter Drug Program
 - Other entities as approved by resolution of the Board.
- b) The competitive solicitation procedures for purchases of \$50,000 or more may be waived on items purchased through a contract that has been bid and negotiated by the above mentioned agencies ***upon review by the County Manager and recommendation of the applicable Oversight Committee.***
- c) Contract bids of the above mentioned agencies shall be subject to their respective bidding practices and requirements and shall comply with all requirements set forth in OCGA 36-69A-4.
- 4) **Public Works Projects**
All public works projects/contracts shall, at a minimum, comply with all applicable requirements of public works bidding as set forth in O.C.G.A. § 36-91-1 *et. seq.*
- 5) **Transportation Projects**
- a) All projects/contracts associated with County Road Systems shall, at a minimum, comply with all applicable requirements as set forth in O.C.G.A. § 32-4-1 *et. seq.*
 - b) When using federal funds or performing work on roads within the state highway system, the County shall comply with all applicable requirements as set forth in 23CFR172.5.
 - c) For all state and federally funded transportation projects, the County shall comply with the Georgia Department of Transportation Procurement Policy for the Procurement, Management and Administration of Engineering and Design Related Consultant Services.
- 6) **Federally Funded Projects**
All projects/contracts that include federal funding shall, at a minimum, comply with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards to Non-Federal Entities* guidance, which is commonly known as the Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG)(2 CFR 200).
- 7) **Computer Hardware, Software, and Hosted/Online Services Purchases**
- a) Proposed purchases of computer hardware, software, or hosted/online Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) platforms must be reviewed by the Information Technology Department to ensure compatibility with the County’s equipment and network systems.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 May 21, 2013 July 1, 2014 December 2, 2014 August 21, 2018 May 4, 2021 September 21, 2021 November 16, 2021 January 17, 2023</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Procurement</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 603.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

- b) Requests to purchase computer hardware or software must follow appropriate procurement procedures. No reimbursement will be made for out-of-pocket purchases of unapproved hardware, software, or SaaS platforms.
 - c) All software must be registered in the name of the County and not in the name of an individual user or user department. Registration documentation should be held by the Information Technology Department and software must be included in IT's asset management inventory, regardless of which department purchased and/or administers the solution.
- 8) **Emergency Purchases**
- a) An "Emergency" is defined as any situation resulting in imminent danger to the public health or safety or the loss of an essential governmental service.
 - b) In the event of an emergency that threatens the public health, safety, or welfare of the County or the loss of an essential governmental service, the County Manager will have the authority to suspend formal competitive bidding procedures to the extent required to rectify the emergency.
 - c) In the absence of the County Manager, the affected Division Director(s) will have the same authority, but will report such emergency purchases to the County Manager promptly (within two working days if possible).
- 9) **Sole Source Purchases**
- a) Sole source is defined as those procurements made pursuant to a written determination by a governing authority that there is only one source for the required supply, service, or construction item.
 - b) The County Manager will have the authority to suspend formal competitive bidding procedures upon verification of a "sole source" purchase.
 - c) Before making a determination of Sole Source, research must be conducted to determine if other products or service providers exist and can satisfy procurement requirements.
 - d) Sound procurement practice requires that Sole Source procurement be used when it is the only option and not as an attempt to contract with a favored service provider or for a favored product.
- 10) **Purchases from Employees or Elected Officials** - Purchases of goods or services from Employees or Elected Officials in excess of \$100 must be approved by the Board, and must meet the same criteria as any other purchase.
- 11) **Professional Services**
- a) Professional services involve specialized education, knowledge, judgment, and skill.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 May 21, 2013 July 1, 2014 December 2, 2014 August 21, 2018 May 4, 2021 September 21, 2021 November 16, 2021 January 17, 2023</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Procurement</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 603.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

- b) A professional service includes the performance of any type of personal service to the public that requires as a condition precedent to the performance of the service the obtaining of a license or admission to practice or other legal authorization from the State of Georgia or a licensing board or commission under the authority of the Georgia Secretary of State.
- c) Professional services are not required to be competitively procured through a formal solicitation process. However, when determined to be in the best interest of Columbia County, formal solicitations may be issued for professional services in accordance with the County’s solicitation guidelines.

12) Suspension of Vendor

- a) After consultation with Procurement, and the vendor who is to be suspended where practicable, and upon written determination by the Financial Services Director and Procurement Manager that probable cause exists for debarment as hereinafter set forth, a recommendation for suspension shall be made to the Board, upon which a final decision as to the proposed suspension shall be made by the Board.
- b) If the suspension is approved a notice of suspension including a copy of such determination shall be sent to the suspended vendor. Such notice shall state that:
 - The suspension is for the period it takes to complete an investigation into possible debarment including any appeal of a debarment decision but not for a period in excess of one hundred-twenty (120) days.
 - Bids or proposals will not be solicited from the suspended person, and, if they are received, they will not be considered during the period of suspension; and
 - A suspension may be appealed in accordance with the protest guidelines set forth in the *Procurement Department Standard Operating Guidelines* manual.
- c) A vendor is suspended upon issuance of the notice of suspension. The suspension shall remain in effect during any protest. The suspension may be ended at any time by the Board but otherwise shall only be ended when the suspension has been in effect for one hundred-twenty (120) days or a debarment decision has taken effect.

13) Debarment of Vendor

- a) Written notice of the proposed debarment action shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the vendor. This notice shall:
 - State that debarment is being considered;
 - Set forth the reasons for the action;

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 May 21, 2013 July 1, 2014 December 2, 2014 August 21, 2018 May 4, 2021 September 21, 2021 November 16, 2021 January 17, 2023</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Procurement</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 603.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

- State that, if the vendor so requests, a hearing will be held, provided such request is received by the Procurement Manager within ten (10) days after the vendor receives notice of the proposed action;
 - State that the vendor may be represented by counsel;
- b) Final decision for debarment will be made by the Board.
- c) The debarment may be removed by the Board upon petition by the vendor.
- 14) **Contracts**
- a) The Board must approve all contracts, including lease-purchase agreements, long-term leases, contract renewals, rental agreements, and routine maintenance or service agreements.
 - b) Bid and contract documents may contain provisions authorizing the issuance of change orders, without the necessity of additional requests for bids or proposals, within the scope of the project when appropriate or necessary in the performance of the contract. Change orders may not be used to evade the purposes of the Procurement Policies and Procedures.
 - c) Contract change orders for Public Works projects less than \$20,000 may be approved by the Department Manager and/or Division Director.
 - d) The Board may, at their discretion, designate alternate signors unless prohibited by law with relation to the item being signed. However, no employee or official of the County has the authority to obligate the County in any manner without prior approval from the Board.
 - e) All contracts and agreements shall be reviewed by Procurement for compliance with administrative requirements.
- 15) **Surplus Property** - The Board, through the Director of Internal Services, has authorized the Procurement Department to dispose of surplus items. As appointed agent, Procurement is charged with the responsibility of assuring that all disposal actions are in accordance with the Code of Columbia County, Code of the State of Georgia, and applicable Federal government regulations.
- 16) **GSIC** - Columbia County is subject to the requirements of the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act. Accordingly, the requirements of O.C.G.A. §13-10-91 and Georgia Department of Labor Rule 300-10-1-.02 are conditions that must be included in any contract.
- 17) **Ethics**
- a) The Procurement Department shall maintain multiple sources of supply for all procurements, and shall maintain the best possible source relationships.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 May 21, 2013 July 1, 2014 December 2, 2014 August 21, 2018 May 4, 2021 September 21, 2021 November 16, 2021 January 17, 2023</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Procurement</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 603.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

- b) No affiliate or employee of the County shall submit offers for, enter into, or be in any manner interested in entering into a contract for the County purchases or contract for services in which they would be financially interested, directly or indirectly. Nor shall any affiliate or employee of the County seek to influence in any manner, the award of a contract, purchase of a product or service from any offeror. Further, affiliates and employees must immediately disclose to the County any silent partnership, proprietorship, employment, other involvement or relationship in a prospective contract or procurement.
- c) Acceptance of gifts by employees from sources or potential sources, or their salesmen or representatives, at any time is strictly prohibited, except for inexpensive advertising items of nominal value with the firm's name clearly imprinted on them. These items shall not be displayed publicly in the Procurement division offices. Employees must not become obligated to any source and shall not conclude any transaction from which they may personally benefit, directly or indirectly.
- d) Vendors shall be advised from time to time that employees may not solicit or accept gratuities such as any type of compensation, contribution, emolument (kick-backs), offer of employment, loan, reward, rebate, gift, money, lodging, service, or "other things of value", except as specifically exempted herein. Employees of the County are not to participate in any type of extravagant entertainment with the supplier, customer, or consultant, or a contractor. These restrictions do not include entertainment such as business meals that are customary and proper under the circumstances; as long as they are consistent with good business ethics, and do not place the recipient under an obligation of any kind.
- e) In the event employee visits to a vendor's plant or distribution center become necessary for technical or other reasons, trips must be made at the County's expense, unless provided contractually by the vendor.
- f) No money shall be paid to any person, firm or corporation who is indebted to the County.
- g) Procurement Department personnel shall be well trained and acquainted with the legal requirements and regulations governing the purchasing function. When potential conflict with an existing regulation is suspected, or legal assistance is advisable, it is the responsibility of the Procurement Manager to notify management of conflicts or potential conflicts, and/or that legal counsel is needed.
- h) Noncompliance with this policy either from a vendor, customer, consultant, contractor, or employee will be justification for disciplinary action, including termination of said employee, and /or immediate termination of the business relationship.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: December 14, 2010 May 21, 2013 July 1, 2014 December 2, 2014 August 21, 2018 May 4, 2021 September 21, 2021 November 16, 2021 January 17, 2023	TOPIC: <i>Procurement</i>
<i>Policy Number 603.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

IV. PROCUREMENT MANUAL

Reference is made to the *Procurement Department Standard Operating Guidelines* manual for detailed procedures designed to implement the policies listed herein.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: February 17, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Projects Using Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP) Funding</i>
<i>Policy Number 603.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

Except as provided in (6) and (7) below, Columbia County shall use the competitive negotiation method for the procurement of engineering and design related services when FAHP funds are involved in the contract (as specified in 23 U.S.C. 112(b)(2)(A)). The solicitation, evaluation, ranking, selection, and negotiation shall comply with the qualifications-based selection procurement procedures for architectural and engineering services codified under 40 U.S.C. 1101–1104, commonly referred to as the Brooks Act.

II. POLICY

In accordance with the requirements of the Brooks Act, the following procedures shall apply to the competitive negotiation procurement method:

1) Solicitation.

The solicitation process shall be by public announcement, public advertisement, or any other public forum or method that assures qualified in-State and out-of-State consultants are given a fair opportunity to be considered for award of the contract. Procurement procedures may involve a single step process with issuance of a request for proposal (RFP) to all interested consultants or a multiphase process with issuance of a request for statements or letters of interest or qualifications (RFQ) whereby responding consultants are ranked based on qualifications and request for proposals are then provided to three or more of the most highly qualified consultants. Minimum qualifications of consultants to perform services under general work categories or areas of expertise may also be assessed through a prequalification process whereby statements of qualifications are submitted on an annual basis. Regardless of any process utilized for prequalification of consultants or for an initial assessment of a consultant's qualifications under an RFQ, a RFP specific to the project, task, or service is required for evaluation of a consultant's specific technical approach and qualifications.

2) Request for Proposal (RFP).

The RFP shall provide all information and requirements necessary for interested consultants to provide a response to the RFP and compete for the solicited services. The RFP shall:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: February 17, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Projects Using Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP) Funding</i>
<i>Policy Number 603.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- a) Provide a clear, accurate, and detailed description of the scope of work, technical requirements, and qualifications of consultants necessary for the services to be rendered. The scope of work should detail the purpose and description of the project, services to be performed, deliverables to be provided, estimated schedule for performance of the work, and applicable standards, specifications, and policies;
 - b) Identify the requirements for any discussions that may be conducted with three (3) or more of the most highly qualified consultants following submission and evaluation of proposals;
 - c) Identify evaluation factors including their relative weight of importance in accordance with subparagraph (a)(1)(iii) of this section;
 - d) Specify the contract type and method(s) of payment to be utilized in accordance with § 172.9;
 - e) Identify any special provisions or contract requirements associated with the solicited services;
 - f) Require that submission of any requested cost proposals or elements of cost be in a concealed format and separate from technical/qualifications proposals as these shall not be considered in the evaluation, ranking, and selection phase; and
 - g) Provide a schedule of key dates for the procurement process and establish a submittal deadline for responses to the RFP which provides sufficient time for interested consultants to receive notice, prepare, and submit a proposal, which except in unusual circumstances shall be not less than 14 days from the date of issuance of the RFP.
- 3) Evaluation Factors.
- a) Criteria used for evaluation, ranking, and selection of consultants to perform engineering and design related services must assess the demonstrated competence and qualifications for the type of professional services solicited. These qualifications-based factors may include, but are not limited to, technical approach (e.g., project understanding, innovative concepts or alternatives, quality control procedures), work experience, specialized expertise, professional licensure, staff capabilities, workload capacity, and past performance.
 - b) Price shall not be used as a factor in the evaluation, ranking, and selection phase. All price or cost related items which include, but are not limited to, cost proposals, direct salaries/wage rates, indirect cost rates, and other direct costs are prohibited from being used as evaluation criteria.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: February 17, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Projects Using Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP) Funding</i>
<i>Policy Number 603.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- c) In-State or local preference shall not be used as a factor in the evaluation, ranking, and selection phase. State licensing laws are not preempted by this provision and professional licensure within a jurisdiction may be established as a requirement which attests to the minimum qualifications and competence of a consultant to perform the solicited services.
- d) The following non-qualifications based evaluation criteria are permitted under the specified conditions and provided the combined total of these criteria do not exceed a nominal value of ten percent of the total evaluation criteria to maintain the integrity of a qualifications-based selection:
 - i. A local presence may be used as a nominal evaluation factor where appropriate. This criterion shall not be based on political or jurisdictional boundaries and may be applied on a project-by-project basis for contracts where a need has been established for a consultant to provide a local presence, a local presence will add value to the quality and efficiency of the project, and application of this criteria leaves an appropriate number of qualified consultants, given the nature and size of the project. If a consultant outside of the locality area indicates as part of a proposal that it will satisfy the criteria in some manner, such as establishing a local project office, that commitment shall be considered to have satisfied the local presence criteria.
 - ii. The participation of qualified and certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) sub-consultants may be used as a nominal evaluation criterion where appropriate in accordance with 49 CFR Part 26 and Columbia County's FHWA-approved DBE program.
- 4) Evaluation, Ranking, and Selection.
 - a) Consultant proposals shall be evaluated by Columbia County based on the criteria established and published within the public solicitation.
 - b) While the contract will be with the prime consultant, proposal evaluations shall consider the qualifications of the prime consultant and any sub-consultants identified within the proposal with respect to the scope of work and established criteria.
 - c) Following submission and evaluation of proposals, Columbia County shall conduct interviews or other types of discussions determined three of the most highly qualified consultants to clarify the technical approach, qualifications, and capabilities provided in response to the RFP. Discussion requirements shall be specified within the RFP

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: February 17, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Projects Using Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP) Funding</i>
<i>Policy Number 603.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

and should be based on the size and complexity of the project as defined in Columbia County written policies and procedures (as specified in § 172.5(c)). Discussions may be written, by telephone, video conference, or by oral presentation/interview. Discussions following proposal submission are not required provided proposals contain sufficient information for evaluation of technical approach and qualifications to perform the specific project, task, or service with respect to established criteria.

- d) From the proposal evaluation and any subsequent discussions which have been conducted, Columbia County shall rank, in order of preference, at least three consultants determined most highly qualified to perform the solicited services based on the established and published criteria.
 - e) Notification must be provided to responding consultants of the final ranking of the three most highly qualified consultants.
 - f) Columbia County shall retain acceptable documentation of the solicitation, proposal, evaluation, and selection of the consultant accordance with the provisions of 49 CFR 18.42.
- 5) Negotiation.
- a) Independent estimate. Prior to receipt or review of the most highly qualified consultant's cost proposal, Columbia County shall prepare a detailed independent estimate with an appropriate breakdown of the work or labor hours, types or classifications of labor required, other direct costs, and consultant's fixed fee for the defined scope of work. The independent estimate shall serve as the basis for negotiation and ensuring the consultant services are obtained at a fair and reasonable cost.
 - b) Elements of contract costs (e.g., indirect cost rates, direct salary or wage rates, fixed fee, and other direct costs) shall be established separately in accordance with § 172.11.
 - c) If concealed cost proposals were submitted in conjunction with technical/qualifications proposals, only the cost proposal of the consultant with which negotiations are initiated may be considered. Concealed cost proposals of consultants with which negotiations are not initiated should be returned to the respective consultant due to the confidential nature of this data (as specified in 23 U.S.C. 112(b)(2)(E)).

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: February 17, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Projects Using Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP) Funding</i>
<i>Policy Number 603.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- d) Columbia County shall retain documentation of negotiation activities and resources used in the analysis of costs to establish elements of the contract in accordance with the provisions of 49 CFR 18.42. This documentation shall include the consultant cost certification and documentation supporting the acceptance of the indirect cost rate to be applied to the contract (as specified in § 172.11(c)).

6) Small Purchases.

The small purchase method involves procurement of engineering and design related services where an adequate number of qualified sources are reviewed and the total contract costs do not exceed an established simplified acquisition threshold. Columbia County may use the State’s small purchase procedures which reflect applicable State laws and regulations for the procurement of engineering and design related services provided the total contract costs do not exceed the Federal simplified acquisition threshold (as specified in 48 CFR 2.101). When a lower threshold for use of small purchase procedures is established in State law, regulation, or policy, the lower threshold shall apply to the use of FAHP funds. The following additional requirements shall apply to the small purchase procurement method:

- a) The scope of work, project phases, and contract requirements shall not be broken down into smaller components merely to permit the use of small purchase procedures.
- b) A minimum of three consultants are required to satisfy the adequate number of qualified sources reviewed.
- c) Contract costs may be negotiated in accordance with State small purchase procedures; however, the allow ability of costs shall be determined in accordance with the Federal cost principles.
- d) The full amount of any contract modification or amendment that would cause the total contract amount to exceed the established simplified acquisition threshold would be ineligible for Federal-aid funding. The FHWA may withdraw all Federal-aid from a contract if it is modified or amended above the applicable established simplified acquisition threshold.

7) Noncompetitive.

The noncompetitive method involves procurement of engineering and design related services when it is not feasible to award the contract using competitive negotiation or small purchase

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: February 17, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Projects Using Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP) Funding</i>
<i>Policy Number 603.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

procurement methods. The following requirements shall apply to the noncompetitive procurement method:

- a) Columbia County may use their own noncompetitive procedures which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations and conform to applicable Federal requirements.
 - b) Columbia County shall establish a process to determine when noncompetitive procedures will be used and shall submit justification to, and receive approval from, the FHWA before using this form of contracting.
 - c) Circumstances under which a contract may be awarded by noncompetitive procedures are limited to the following:
 - i. The service is available only from a single source;
 - ii. There is an emergency which will not permit the time necessary to conduct competitive negotiations; or
 - iii. After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined to be inadequate.
 - d) Contract costs may be negotiated in accordance with Columbia County noncompetitive procedures; however, the allow ability of costs shall be determined in accordance with the Federal cost principles.
- 8) Additional Procurement Requirements.
- a) Common Grant Rule.
 - i. Columbia County must comply with procurement requirements established in State and local laws, regulations, policies, and procedures which are not addressed by or in conflict with applicable Federal laws and regulations (as specified in 49 CFR 18.36).
 - ii. When State and local procurement laws, regulations, policies, or procedures are in conflict with applicable Federal laws and regulations, Columbia County must comply with Federal requirements to be eligible for Federal-aid reimbursement of the associated costs of the services incurred following FHWA authorization (as specified in 49 CFR 18.4).
 - b) Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program.

Columbia County shall give consideration to DBE consultants in the procurement of engineering and design related service contracts subject to 23 U.S.C. 112(b)(2) in

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: February 17, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Projects Using Federal Aid Highway Program (FAHP) Funding</i>
<i>Policy Number 603.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

accordance with 49 CFR part 26. When DBE program participation goals cannot be met through race-neutral measures, additional DBE participation on engineering and design related services contracts may be achieved in accordance with Columbia County's FHWA approved DBE program through either:

- i. Use of an evaluation criterion in the qualifications-based selection of consultants (as specified in § 172.7(a)(1)(iii)(D)); or
- ii. Establishment of a contract participation goal.

The use of quotas or exclusive set-asides for DBE consultants is prohibited (as specified in 49 CFR 26.43).

c) *Suspension and Debarment.*

Columbia County must verify suspension and debarment actions and eligibility status of consultants and sub-consultants prior to entering into an agreement or contract in accordance with 49 CFR 18.35 and 2 CFR part 180.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: September 15, 2020	TOPIC: <i>Purchases Using Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Funding</i>
<i>Policy Number 603.3</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

This policy establishes guidelines and minimum standards that Columbia County Transit will use in the management of its third party contracts. This manual is intended to ensure that Columbia County Transit complies with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Georgia Department of Transportation's standards to ensure full and open competition and equitable treatment of all potential sources for all purchases made with funding derived from the Federal, state, and local governments. In all purchasing activity, the goal of Columbia County Transit is to ensure maximum open and free competition consistent with:

- FTA Circular 4220.1F "Third Party Contracting Guidance" or latest version thereof;
- 2 CFR § 200.317 – 200.326

II. POLICY

FTA regulations (2 CFR § 200.319(c) and FTA Circular 4220.1F, Chapter III, § 3a) requires Columbia County Transit to have written procurement procedures. This policy is designed to meet FTA requirements in this regard.

All purchases using FTA Funding will at a minimum meet the requirements outlined in the Columbia County Transit System FTA Procurement Standard Operating Procedures.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: <i>Purchasing Card</i>
<i>Policy Number 604.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish the responsibilities, controls and authorizations for the application, issuance and processing of the Columbia County Government Purchasing Card (“P-Card”) Program for the employees of Columbia County Government.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

- 1) All Elected Officials or Division Directors authorizing the use of procurement cards must:
 - a) insure that all expenditures incurred by his/her division comply fully with the requirements of this and other policies adopted and approved by the Board of Commissioners.
 - b) approve all Purchasing Card transactions of his/her assigned division.
 - c) accept responsibility for the actions of designated Division/Department Purchasing Card Administrator for his/her division.
 - d) Directly, or through the designated Division/Department Purchasing Card Administrator, expressly authorize individual cardholders and establish individual cardholder credit limits.
- 2) All employees issued a purchasing card:
 - a) are responsible for record keeping of the weekly transactions including obtaining and submitting receipts for the purchases with each week’s online statement.
 - b) must sign the Purchasing Card Agreement in order to be issued the card. This agreement must be on file with Procurement.
 - c) is responsible for timely submission of the original detailed receipts to the Division/Department Purchasing Card Administrator no less than weekly.
- 3) The Program Administrator within the Procurement Department:
 - a) is responsible for issuing the Purchasing Card Agreements and Georgia Sales Tax Exemption form to authorized personnel. All Purchasing Card Agreements must

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: <i>Purchasing Card</i>
<i>Policy Number 604.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

be forwarded to the Program Administrator prior to the issuance of the purchasing card.

- b) maintains the purchasing card computer system which tracks the cardholder name, date issued, card number and limits.
 - c) will only grant system access to authorized users who are accountable for keeping track of the purchasing cards issued.
 - d) is responsible for training all Division/Department Purchasing Card Administrators and holding annual purchasing card meetings to update current cardholders.
- 4) The Division/Department Purchasing Card Administrator:
- a) must review the charges, credits and returns for all the purchasing cards assigned to the responsible Division/Department.
 - b) must review the supporting documentation submitted by the cardholder to assess the validity and completeness of the transaction as well as compliance with this policy and other applicable policies. Any lack of documentation or support must be communicated immediately to the cardholder and resolved in a timely manner.
 - c) must approve the periodic transactions posted in the purchasing card computer system.
 - d) is responsible for instruction and guidance for all cardholders under their direction.

III. GENERAL

- 1) This policy applies to all employees of Columbia County Government who are authorized holders of a purchasing card.
- 2) All expenditures authorized under this Policy shall be subject to the availability of funds within the applicable approved departmental budget.
- 3) All purchases must be in compliance with the *Columbia County Purchasing Policy*, the *Columbia County Travel/Training Policy*, and other applicable Financial Management Policies. This Policy establishes minimum standards which must be adhered to; however, more stringent or additional guidelines may be imposed by Elected Officials or Division Directors for use in their divisions. These guidelines

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: <i>Purchasing Card</i>
<i>Policy Number 604.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

and controls should be rigorously monitored within each division.

- 4) A purchasing card may be issued to certain authorized employees for convenience of qualified business transactions and to take advantage of vendor discounts offered to the County. The purchasing card should never be used as a personal credit card and any personal purchases on the card are strictly prohibited, except as otherwise allowed in the *Columbia County Travel/Training Policy*.
- 5) Should the purchasing card be inadvertently used for a personal purchase, the employee is to immediately notify his supervisor and reimburse the County for the purchase. The reimbursement should be attached to the report submitted as in VIII, D. below. Repeated violations can result in the deactivation of cardholder accounts and penalties including possible termination of employment.
- 6) The issuance of a purchasing card to an employee provides the cardholder with the ability to commit County funds to buy certain goods or services. All purchases must be eligible charges to the purchasing card and require the appropriate documentation to adequately safeguard County assets and support authorized purchases.

IV. SAFEKEEPING

Access to the program's computerized data base is restricted to only authorized personnel and any misuse is strictly prohibited and will subject the employee to immediate termination and possible prosecution.

The purchasing card is the property of Columbia County Government and as such should be retained in a secure location.

V. AUTHORIZATION

The cardholder is solely responsible for all transactions. Delegating the use of the purchasing card is **not permissible**. Each authorized user must read and sign a Columbia County Purchasing Card Acknowledgement form, prior to usage of the Purchasing Card.

VI. CARD CANCELLATION

- 1) All cards must be immediately cancelled when a cardholder terminates employment with Columbia County Government or assumes another position that does not require the use of the purchasing card in that division.
- 2) The Department of Human Resources must notify the Procurement Department weekly upon employee termination(s) or transfer(s).

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: <i>Purchasing Card</i>
<i>Policy Number 604.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- 3) The Division/Department Purchasing Card Administrator must obtain the purchasing card from the cardholder, cut the purchasing card, and return the purchasing card to the Procurement Department.
- 4) If any employee is taking a leave of absence, then the purchasing card should be placed on an “inactive” status during the leave; via notification to the Procurement Department.
- 5) The purchasing card may be reactivated upon the cardholder’s return only upon written request from the cardholder’s Division Director or appropriate Elected Official.

VII. DOLLAR LIMITS

- 1) An Elected Official or Division Director will authorize individual cardholders with credit limits and single transaction limits based upon expected usage.
- 2) Cards can be issued but remain deactivated at the request of the Elected Official or Division Director.
- 3) The cards will be activated once authorization is received by Procurement from the Elected Official or Division Director.
- 4) Cardholders limits may remain at \$0.00 and be increased at the discretion of the Division Director.
- 5) Any request to raise the limit must be submitted in writing from the cardholder’s Elected Official or Division Director to the Procurement Department.

VIII. DOCUMENTATION

- 1) All charges on the purchasing card require an original detailed receipt from the vendor as support for the transaction. If the charge is invoiced to the cardholder, then the invoice should be sent directly to the cardholder’s responsible Division.
- 2) Receipts must include at a minimum: 1) vendor name, 2) amount, 3) date of transaction, and 4) description of the items purchased. Receipts that do not include this minimum documentation are **not** acceptable.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: <i>Purchasing Card</i>
<i>Policy Number 604.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- 3) Receipts for authorized meals must include a listing of attendees and the purpose for the meal.
- 4) All purchasing card transactions must be coded and explained in detail in the internet based purchasing card system. A report should be printed, receipts attached, and submitted to the Program Administrator.
- 5) All travel and training purchases charged on the cardholder's account must adhere to the terms outlined in the County's Travel and Training Policy.
- 6) All transaction forms and supporting documentation must adhere to the Georgia Record Retention Policy. This documentation must be available for audit and review for 5 years after date of purchase.

IX. DATES AND DEADLINES

The cardholder's supporting documentation should be submitted to the Division's/Department's Purchasing Card Administrator as soon as possible, preferably daily, but no later than the 14th of the month to ensure that the monthly purchasing card statement is processed in a timely manner. If the information received is incomplete, the Division/Department Purchasing Card Administrator must send a notice to the cardholder via email or appropriate divisional communication tool as a reminder, with a copy to the Elected Official or Division Director. If there is still no response after the notice to the cardholder's appropriate Elected Official or Division Director within 5 business days of the notification, then the Division/Department Purchasing Card Administrator must send a request to the Procurement Department for the cardholder's account to be deactivated. Undocumented charges must be immediately refunded to the County by the cardholder and no further transactions will be allowed. In order for the cardholder to be reinstated, the Division Director/Elected Official, in coordination with the Procurement Manager, will assess the cardholder's history, and determine if reinstatement is warranted.

X. LOST CARDS

If a card is lost or stolen, immediately notify the following:

- Card Issuer
- The Division/Department Purchasing Card Administrator
- Procurement Department

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: <i>Purchasing Card</i>
<i>Policy Number 604.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

XI. VIOLATIONS

The following is a list of violations of the Purchasing Card Policy. Repeated violations can result in the deactivation of cardholder accounts and penalties including possible termination of employment.

- Unacceptable purchases
- Unacceptable documentation
- Missed deadlines for submitting the purchasing card supporting documentation
- Unresolved credits or disputes
- Intentional circumvention of the Purchasing Policy, Travel and Training Policy or authorized limits such as splitting transactions to avoid the single transaction limit
- Misuse of the Purchasing Card
- Failure to follow the Purchasing Card Policy

Cardholders or supervisors/approving officials who knowingly, or through willful neglect, fail to comply with the following may be subject to suspension or termination of card privileges or other disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment and criminal prosecution.

- Applicable requirements of the Columbia County Procurement Manual.
- Columbia County Financial Management Policies.
- Internal policies and procedures governing procurement and the Purchasing Card Program.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: December 15, 2015 AMENDED: July 16, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Purchasing Card – Elected Officials</i>
<i>Policy Number 604.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

To comply with the policy requirements of O.C.G.A. § 36-80-24 regarding the use of County issued government purchasing cards and credit cards, which prohibits county elected officials from using government purchasing cards and government credit cards unless the county governing authority authorizes the issuance of such cards by public vote and has promulgated specific policies regarding the use of such cards.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. “Authorized elected official” means an elected official designated by public vote of the Board of Commissioners to receive a county issued government purchasing card or credit card.
- B. “Card Administrator” means the purchasing card and credit card administrator designated by the Columbia Board of Commissioners.
- C. “County” means Columbia County and/or the Board of Commissioners
- D. “County purchase card,” “county p-card” or “county credit card” means a financial transaction card issued by any business organization, financial institution, or any duly authorized agent of such organization or institution, used by a County official to purchase goods, services and other things of value on behalf of the County.
- E. “Financial transaction card” means an instrument or device as the term is defined in O.C.G.A. § 16-9-30(5).
- F. “User agreement” means the required agreement between the Board of Commissioners and the authorized elected officials which restricts the use of a county purchasing card or credit card.

III. DESIGNATED ELECTED OFFICIALS

- A. The Columbia County Board of Commissioners (“County”), in its discretion, may authorize specific county elected officials to use a county purchasing card or credit card by adoption of a resolution in a public meeting.
- B. No authorized elected official may use a county purchasing card or credit card until and

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: December 15, 2015 AMENDED: July 16, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Purchasing Card – Elected Officials</i>
<i>Policy Number 604.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

unless he or she has executed the County’s purchasing card and credit card user agreement.

- C. The County will not make payments to any business organization, financial institution, or any duly authorized agent of such organization or institution, for amounts charged by an elected official to any purchasing cards or credit cards that are not issued pursuant to this policy or for any purchases that are not authorized by this policy.

IV. CARD ADMINISTRATOR

The Board of Commissioners shall designate a County purchasing card and credit card administrator. The responsibilities of the Card Administrator include:

- A. Manage County issued purchasing cards and credit cards.
- B. Serve as the main point of contact for all County purchasing card and credit card issues.
- C. Serve as liaison to the elected officials authorized to use a purchasing card or credit card and their staff, as well as to the issuer of the purchasing card or credit card.
- D. Provide training on card policies and procedures to the elected officials authorized to use a purchasing card or credit card and their staff.
- E. Develop internal procedures to ensure timely payment of cards.
- F. Assist authorized elected officials to dispute transactions when necessary.
- G. Establish internal procedures to ensure compliance with this ordinance, County procurement ordinances and policies, County purchasing card and credit card user agreements, applicable agreements with the business organization, financial institution, or any duly authorized agent of such organization or institution, issuing card, and state law, specifically, O.C.G.A. §§ 16-9-37 and 36-80-24.
- H. Document audits and other measures to prevent and detect misuse or abuse of the cards.
- I. Ensure monthly transactions are audited monthly according to this policy.
- J. Maintain records for at least seven years or as otherwise provided by the County’s record retention policy.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: December 15, 2015 AMENDED: July 16, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Purchasing Card – Elected Officials</i>
<i>Policy Number 604.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

V. USE OF CARDS

- A. Authorized Purchases. County purchase cards and credit cards may be used to purchase goods and services directly related to the public duties of the authorized elected official only. All purchases are subject to the terms of this ordinance, the County purchasing card and credit card user agreement, and county procurement policies and ordinances.
- B. Only authorized elected officials may use his or her County purchase card or credit card for purchases or payments. The authorized elected official shall use care to ensure that others do not have access to the card account number, expiration date and security code.
- C. Unless otherwise approved by the governing authority or established in the County purchasing card and credit card user agreement, the transaction limits are as follows:
- D. Per Card Payment Cycle: \$5,000.00
- E. Unauthorized Purchases. County purchasing cards and credit cards shall not be used for goods and services not directly related to the official responsibilities of the authorized elected official. Additionally, cards shall not be used to avoid compliance with the County’s purchasing ordinances and procedures, to purchase goods and services exceeding the per transaction or per month limit, or to make purchases not in compliance with the County purchasing card and credit card user agreement.
- F. Receipts and Documentation. Receipts, invoices and other supporting documentation of all purchases made with a county purchasing card or credit card shall be obtained and maintained by the authorized county elected official for five years or as otherwise provided by the County’s record retention policy. If an original or duplicate cannot be produced, a sworn affidavit of the authorized elected official may be substituted. The documentation must include the supplier or merchant information (i.e., name and location), quantity, description, unit price, total price, price paid without sales tax and an explanation of the purchase sufficient to show that the expense was in the performance of official County duties.
- G. Public Records. All receipt and other documentation of purchases are public records and subject to the requirements of O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: December 15, 2015 AMENDED: July 16, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Purchasing Card – Elected Officials</i>
<i>Policy Number 604.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

VI. REVIEW OF PURCHASES AND AUDIT

Proper documentation of purchases, internal controls and other measures prevent and allow detection to misuse or abuse of County issued purchase cards and credit cards. Authorized elected officials and staff that process payments under this program shall cooperate and comply with the procedures established by the County.

- A. Review of Purchases. All purchases by Columbia County Commissioners shall be reviewed monthly for adherence to this policy by the County Manager and/or the Director of Internal Services. All purchases by Columbia County Constitutional Officers shall be reviewed monthly by an independent certified public accountant of his or her choosing. Constitutional Officers may elect to have the County’s County Manager and/or Director of Internal Services perform such review. Utilization of the County Manager or Director of Internal Services, however, shall not be deemed to waive, in whole or in part, the Constitutional Officer’s authority over the use of funds appropriated to him or her in the County budget and shall not be deemed to provide the County with oversight authority over such use of funds other than as narrowly provided for herein.
- B. Audits. The Card Administrator shall perform an annual review of the card program to ensure adequacy of internal policies and procedures, cardholder spending limits, monthly reconciliation procedures and documentation for transactions. Elected officials and staff shall cooperate with such review.

VII. VIOLATIONS

- A. An elected official shall reimburse the County for any purchases made with a County issued purchase card or credit card in violation of this ordinance or the user agreement.
- B. In the discretion of the county governing authority, failure to comply with the procedures outlined in this ordinance may result in:
 - a. A warning;
 - b. Suspension of the elected official’s authority to use a County purchase card or credit card; or
 - c. Revocation of the elected official’s authority to use a County i purchase card or credit card.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: December 15, 2015 AMENDED: July 16, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Purchasing Card – Elected Officials</i>
<i>Policy Number 604.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- d. Nothing in this ordinance shall preclude the county governing authority from referring misuse of a purchase card or credit card for prosecution to the appropriate authorities.

VIII. CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Notwithstanding the foregoing policies, any purchases made with a county issued purchase card or credit card by the clerk of the superior court, judge of the probate court, sheriff and/or tax commissioner shall be subject to the sole discretion and approval of said elected official in the exercise of his/her duties.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>ADDED AND APPROVED: December 10, 2010 AMENDED: May 21, 2013 December 16, 2014 May 19, 2015 August 16, 2016</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Debt Administration</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 605.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

I. PURPOSE

The County shall seek to maintain and, if possible, improve its current municipal bond rating so that borrowing costs are minimized and access to credit preserved.

II. POLICY

- 1) The County shall develop adequate reserves to avoid the necessity of short-term borrowing (maturity of less than one year) to finance operating needs. In the interim, financing in anticipation of a definite fixed source of revenue, such as Tax Anticipation Notes, is acceptable. Short-term borrowing shall be limited to 75% of the source of revenue expected to repay the loan.
- 2) The issuance of long-term debt (maturity of greater than one year) shall be limited to capital improvements or projects which cannot be financed from current revenues or resources. Current resources are defined as that portion of fund balance in excess of required reserves.
- 3) Every effort shall be made to limit the long-term debt maturity schedule to no longer than the estimated useful life of the capital projects or improvements to be financed.
- 4) When the County utilizes either long-term or short-term debt it shall insure that the debt is financed soundly by:
 - a) Conservatively projecting the revenue sources which will repay the debt.
 - b) Financing the improvement over a period not greater than the useful life of the improvement for long-term debt, or December 31st of the calendar year for short-term debt.
 - c) Determining that the cost benefit of the improvement, including interest and any other costs, is positive.
- 5) The County shall limit the total principal of its general obligation long-term debt to 1.75% of the estimated actual value of taxable property as reported annually on the Columbia County, GA tax digest.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 10, 2010 AMENDED: May 21, 2013 December 16, 2014 May 19, 2015 August 16, 2016	TOPIC: <i>Debt Administration</i>
<i>Policy Number 605.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- 6) The County shall maintain a Debt Service Fund which is equivalent to the amount of general obligation debt maturing in the subsequent year.
- 7) Whenever possible the County will finance capital projects by using self-supporting revenue bonds since revenue bonds assure the greatest degree of equity because those who benefit from a project and those who pay for a project are most closely matched.
- 8) General obligation debt shall not be used for enterprise activities.

III. DEBT PLANNING

When the County is considering a possible bond issue, staff shall compile information to present to the Board concerning the following categories. Examples of information to include are:

- 1) Debt Analysis
 - a) Debt capacity analysis
 - b) Purposes for which debt is issued
 - c) Debt structure
 - d) Debt burden and magnitude indicators and ratios as compared to other like communities
 - e) Debt history and trends
 - f) Adequacy of debt and capital planning
 - g) Obsolescence of capital plant
- 2) Financial Analysis
 - a) Stability, diversity, and growth rate of tax sources
 - b) Trends in assessed valuation and collections
 - c) Current budget trends
 - d) Appraisal of past revenue and expenditure estimates
 - e) Evidences of financial planning

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>ADDED AND APPROVED: December 10, 2010 AMENDED: May 21, 2013 December 16, 2014 May 19, 2015 August 16, 2016</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Debt Administration</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 605.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

- f) History and long-term trends of revenues and expenditures
- g) Adherence to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)
- h) Audit results
- i) Liquidity of portfolio and other current assets
- j) Fund balance status and trends
- k) Financial monitoring systems and capabilities

3) Governmental and Administrative Analysis

- a) Government organization structure
- b) Location of financial responsibilities and degree of control
- c) Adequacy of basic service provision
- d) Intergovernmental cooperation/conflict and extent of duplication
- e) Overall County planning efforts

4) Economic Analysis

- a) Geographic and location advantages
- b) Population and demographic characteristics
- c) Wealth indicators
- d) Housing characteristics
- e) Level of new construction
- f) Types of employment, industry and occupation
- g) Evidences of industrial or other decline
- h) Trend of the economy

IV. COMMUNICATION AND DISCLOSURE

- 1) The County will maintain good communications with bond rating agencies to inform them about the County's financial condition. The County shall follow a policy of full disclosure. Significant financial reports affecting or commenting on the County will be forwarded to the rating agencies.
- 2) The County will continue to improve communications with other jurisdictions with

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>ADDED AND APPROVED: December 10, 2010 AMENDED: May 21, 2013 December 16, 2014 May 19, 2015 August 16, 2016</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Debt Administration</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 605.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

which a common property tax base is shared concerning collective plans for future debt issues. Reciprocally shared information on debt plans including amounts, purposes, timing, and types of debt would aid each jurisdiction in its debt planning decisions.

V. REFUNDING BONDS

1) The County should evaluate the following when considering a refunding candidate:

- a) Issuance costs that will be incurred
- b) The interest rate at which the refunding bonds can be issued
- c) The maturity date of the refunded bonds
- d) The call date of the refunded bonds
- e) The call premium on the refunded bonds
- f) The structure and yield of the refunding escrow
- g) Any transferred proceeds penalty.

2) Financial and policy objectives – the County may undertake a refunding to achieve debt service savings, eliminate restrictive bond/legal covenants, or restructure the stream of debt service payments.

3) Financial savings/results –

- a) The refunding should endeavor to achieve a net present value savings of at least \$1,000,000.00. This test can be applied to the entire issue or on a maturity-by-maturity basis.
- b) Federal law permits an issuer to conduct one advance refunding over the life of a bond issue. As such, a higher savings threshold may be required when evaluating an advance refunding candidate.
- c) In certain circumstances, lower savings thresholds may be justified. Such instances include, but are not limited to, when a refunding is being conducted primarily for policy reasons, interest rates are at historically low levels, or the time remaining to maturity is limited making future opportunities to achieve greater savings not likely.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>ADDED AND APPROVED: December 10, 2010 AMENDED: May 21, 2013 December 16, 2014 May 19, 2015 August 16, 2016</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Debt Administration</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 605.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

- 4) Bond structure – When bonds are issued, the County should anticipate the potential for refundings in the future. Careful attention should be paid to the bond structure to address features that may affect flexibility in the future.
- 5) Escrow efficiency – A refunding escrow should be created to be efficient and to optimize savings. An escrow is efficient if escrow securities mature or pay interest when debt service payments of the refunded escrow are due. The lower the cost of the escrow, the more efficient the escrow.

VI. POST ISSUANCE COMPLIANCE FOR GOVERNMENTAL TAX-EXEMPT OBLIGATIONS

- 1) Included within the closing transcript of each bond issue are the Tax and Non-Arbitrage Certificate and the Continuing Disclosure Certificate, which set forth the tax and securities law requirements as provided by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) that must be met in order (i) to preserve the tax-exempt status of the bonds and (ii) to provide the ongoing disclosure about the County that is required by the securities laws. Noncompliance can cause the interest on the obligations to become taxable retroactively to the date of issuance and subject borrowers or their staff to civil enforcement actions. The County shall ensure that it is satisfying its post-issuance obligations in accordance with rules and regulations of the IRS and the SEC.
- 2) The County shall ensure compliance with the following post-issuance tax and securities law compliance requirements:
 - a) Continuing Disclosure. The County shall file annual reports updating the financial and operating data included in the official statement. As described in the continuing disclosure certificate, the County shall file notices of the occurrence of certain events if such events are deemed material by any such borrower. All continuing disclosure filings shall be electronically filed with the Electronic Municipal Market Access (“EMMA”) system maintained by

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>ADDED AND APPROVED: December 10, 2010 AMENDED: May 21, 2013 December 16, 2014 May 19, 2015 August 16, 2016</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Debt Administration</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 605.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board. The website address for EMMA is www.emma.msrb.org.

b) Arbitrage Yield Restriction and Rebate Requirements. Unless a specific exception is satisfied, investment earnings on bond proceeds (e.g. funds on deposit in the construction fund or the debt service reserve fund) in excess of the yield on the bonds (“arbitrage”) are required to be reported and rebated to the IRS every five years. When arbitrage earnings do occur, the arbitrage earnings shall be rebated from total investment earnings on the bond proceeds. The County shall retain a rebate consultant to monitor rebate compliance.

c) Expenditure of Bond Proceeds and Records of Bond-Financed Assets. In order to ensure the proper and timely use of bond proceeds and bond-financed property, the County shall maintain documents relating to the expenditure of bond proceeds. These documents include, but are not limited to, requisitions, draw schedules, invoices, bills, construction contracts and acquisition contracts.

d) Record Retention. The County shall keep all documentation relating to its bond issues for a period of three years after the bonds have been paid in full. Documents that should be retained include (a) basic records relating to the transaction (including the bond documents, the opinion of bond counsel, etc.), (b) documents evidencing expenditure of the proceeds of the bonds and investment of the proceeds of the bonds, and (c) records necessary to satisfy the safe harbor requirements relating to the bidding of guaranteed investment contracts and yield restricted defeasance escrows.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: <i>Accounting and Financial Reporting</i>
<i>Policy Number 606.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

The County is committed to preparing financial reports which are in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), standards set by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and laws of the State of Georgia and Columbia County.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

The Finance Department is responsible for the accounting, reporting, and annual financial audit of the official County financial statements. The Director shall have the responsibility to establish accounting procedures to accomplish these policies.

III. POLICY

- 1) The Finance Department shall produce interim reports as needed to ensure budgetary control of operations and capital programs.
- 2) The County's accounting and financial reporting systems will be maintained in conformance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and standards of the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB).
- 3) A fixed asset system will be maintained to identify all County assets, their condition, historical cost, replacement value, and useful life.
- 4) An annual audit will be performed by an independent public accounting firm with the subsequent issue of a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), including an audit opinion. The CAFR will be submitted annually to the Government Finance Officers' Association (GFOA) to determine its eligibility for the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.
- 5) Audit firms will be selected through the formal bid process. Qualified audit firms will be requested to submit a cost proposal and an audit outline proposal. When awarding the contract for the independent audit all components, including qualification of personnel, number of personnel dedicated to the audit, comparability of references, and cost, will be taken into consideration. Cost will not be the defining component.
- 6) A contract for audit services may be entered into with the qualified audit firm for a term of three years with the option to extend for two years.
- 7) All funds of the County, as well as all component units, will be subject to a full scope audit.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: <i>Revenue</i>
<i>Policy Number 607.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

The County shall attempt to maintain a diversified and stable revenue system to shelter it from short-run fluctuations in any single revenue source. The revenue mix shall combine elastic and inelastic revenue sources to minimize the effect of an economic downturn. Surpluses and elastic revenues identified but not included in the base budget should be dedicated first to reserve requirements and then to capital plant and equipment.

II. POLICY

- 1) The County will estimate its annual revenues conservatively by an objective analytical and conservative process utilizing trend, judgmental, and statistical analysis as appropriate.
- 2) Each existing and potential revenue source will be re-examined annually.
- 3) The use of revenues which have been pledged to bondholders shall conform in every respect to bond covenants which commit those revenues.
- 4) The County shall follow an aggressive policy of collecting revenues.
- 5) Within legal limitations, the County shall maintain a central depository and central disbursement of its revenue to maximize return on investment.
- 6) User fees will be adjusted annually to recover the full cost of services provided, except when the County Commission determines that a subsidy from the General Fund is in the public interest.
- 7) One-time revenues will be used for one-time expenditures only.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: June 7, 2011 May 15, 2012 May 21, 2013 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Reserves/Governmental Funds</i>
<i>Policy Number 608.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

The accumulation of reserves protects the County from uncontrollable increases in expenditures, extraordinary losses, unforeseen reductions in revenues, or a combination of these items. It also allows for prudent replacement and financing of capital construction and replacement projects. The County implemented GASB Statement No. 54, *Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions*, as of fiscal year ended June 30, 2011. This new standard changed the overall definitions and classifications of governmental fund balances.

II. POLICY

Fund equity in the governmental fund financial statements is classified as fund balance. Generally, fund balance represents the difference between current assets and current liabilities. In the fund financial statements, governmental funds report fund balance classifications that comprise a hierarchy based primarily on the extent to which the County is bound to honor constraints on the specific purposes for which amounts in those funds can be spent.

III. CLASSIFICATIONS

1. Nonspendable – Fund balances are reported as nonspendable when amounts cannot be spent because they are either (a) not in spendable form or (b) legally or contractually required to be maintained intact.
2. Restricted – Fund balances are reported as restricted when there are limitations imposed on their use either through the enabling legislation adopted by the County or through external restrictions imposed by creditors, grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments or imposed by law through state statute.
3. Committed – Fund balances are reported as committed when they can be used only for specific purposes pursuant to constraints imposed by formal action of the Board through the adoption of a formal policy. Only the Board may modify or rescind the commitment.
4. Assigned – Fund balances are reported as assigned when amounts are constrained by the Board’s intent to be used for specific purposes, but are neither restricted nor committed. Through policy, authorization to assign fund balance remains with the Board.
5. Unassigned – Fund balances are reported as unassigned as the residual amount when the balances do not meet any of the above criterion. The County reports positive unassigned fund balance in the general fund only. Negative unassigned fund balances may be reported in all governmental funds.

IV. FLOW ASSUMPTIONS

When both restricted and unrestricted amounts of fund balance are available for use for expenditures incurred, the County shall use restricted amounts first and then unrestricted amounts as they are needed. For unrestricted amounts of fund balance, the County shall use fund balance in the following order:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: June 7, 2011 May 15, 2012 May 21, 2013 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Reserves/Governmental Funds</i>
<i>Policy Number 608.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- Committed
- Assigned
- Unassigned

V. MINIMUM FUND BALANCE

The County shall maintain a General Fund unassigned fund balance of not less than 100 days of operations. This minimum fund balance, which may only be used as required by authority of the Board, is to provide for operating contingencies in either revenues or expenditures, and to provide adequate funds to operate without short-term borrowing. To determine the current funding level divide the current unassigned fund balance by the result obtained from dividing the annual fund budget by 365 days. In the event the unassigned fund balance falls below the minimum level of 100 days of operations, the County Manager will present a plan to the Board as part of the subsequent fiscal year’s annual budget to replenish the fund balance to the established minimum level in a reasonable time frame, generally 1 to 3 years. Budget surpluses will first be used towards replenishment, followed by the use of non-recurring revenues.

VI. CONTINGENCY

A contingency amount shall be appropriated annually as part of the budget within the General Fund, and other funds as deemed necessary, and shall be used for paying unexpected or unanticipated expenditures of an operational nature during the fiscal year. Within the General Fund, this amount should approximate one to two percent of the General Fund budget.

VII. CRITERIA

The following criteria shall be used in determining the total amount of fund balance to maintain, unless otherwise specified by legal or contractual requirements.

Category	Days of Operation	Description
Min Fund Balance	100	Use funds for unforeseen contingencies
BOC Assignments	101-180	May use funds for one-time expenses such as capital acquisition, catastrophic events, one-time transfers to other funds, economic incentives, debt reduction, or millage rate reduction to mitigate unforeseen risks and ensure financial stability
Debt/Tax Reduction	181+	Must use funds to reduce debt or designate for future debt service, or to prevent future tax increases or to permit millage rate reduction

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: May 15, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Reserves-Water Utility</i>
<i>Policy Number 608.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

The accumulation of reserves protects the Water Utility from uncontrollable increases in expenditures, extraordinary losses, unforeseen reductions in revenues, or a combination of these items. It also allows for prudent replacement and financing of capital construction and replacement projects. These reserves apply to “unrestricted net assets” as reported in the audited annual financial report.

II. POLICY

Fund equity in government-wide and proprietary fund financial statements is classified as net assets. Net assets are classified as follows:

- Invested in capital assets, net of related debt - This classification represents capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation, reduced by the outstanding balances of any bonds, notes, or other borrowings that are attributable to the acquisition, construction, or improvement of those assets.
- Restricted - Restricted net assets represent constraints on resources that are either externally imposed by creditors, grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments or imposed by law through state statute.
- Unrestricted - Unrestricted net assets consist of net assets that do not meet the definition of the other classifications.

III. UNRESTRICTED CATEGORIES

- 1) **Reserve for Debt Service:** This reserve shall be established to protect bond holders and to preserve a good credit rating. Valuation depends on actual requirements to pay bond obligations, but shall be no less than the maximum annual debt service requirement on all outstanding bonds and loans.
- 2) **Working Capital Reserve:** The measure of working capital (current assets less current liabilities) indicates the relatively liquid portion of total fund equity, which constitutes a margin or buffer for meeting obligations. It is essential that the County maintain adequate levels of working capital in the Water Utility Fund to mitigate current and future risks and to ensure stable services and fees. A working capital reserve shall be established in the Water Utility to protect against volatility in either revenues or expenditures, and to provide adequate funds to operate without short-term borrowing. This reserve, which should provide funds for 100 to 180 days of operations, may be used as required by authority of the Board. The amount required for one operating day is determined by dividing the annual fund budget by 365 days.
- 3) **Renewal and Extension:** This reserve is the residual balance of unrestricted net assets less the above designated reserves. This reserve shall be used only for “one-time” unbudgeted expenditures (those that will not create a recurring burden on the operational budget) of a capital nature and after a rational determination that all other reserves are adequate.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: May 15, 2012	TOPIC: <i>Reserves-Water Utility</i>
<i>Policy Number 608.2</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

IV. CONTINGENCY

A contingency amount shall be appropriated annually as part of the budget and shall be used for paying unexpected or unanticipated expenditures of an operational nature during the fiscal year. This amount should approximate one to two percent of the fund budget.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: Bank Accounts
<i>Policy Number 609.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: Finance / Procurement

I. PURPOSE

- 1) To define bank accounts under the control of the Board, Constitutional Officers, and Authorities functioning within the County.
- 2) To ensure the proper use, authorization, and management of all bank accounts under the control of the Board.
- 3) To ensure that County management is aware of all bank accounts under the control of the Board or which use the Board's Federal identification number.
- 4) To provide an approval process for establishing and maintaining all bank accounts under the control of the Board.

II. ACCOUNTS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE BOARD

- 1) All bank accounts under the control of the Board as established by action of the Board, contracts (i.e., grants), covenants (i.e., bonds), laws, and regulations shall be controlled by the Finance Department of the County. This shall not apply to those accounts which are not under the control of the Board, such as accounts legally allowed to be maintained by Constitutional Officers and Authorities functioning within Columbia County. New bank accounts under the control of the Board shall not be established without approval of the Board.
- 2) The Board's federal identification number shall be used for all accounts under the control of the Board.
- 3) All bank accounts with the Board's federal ID number shall be approved annually by the Board.
- 4) Authorized signers shall be members of the Board or other County representatives as authorized by State Law and/or the Board.
- 5) All accounts using the Board's federal ID number shall be in the name of "Board of Commissioners of Columbia County, GA."
- 6) The Board's central depository and disbursement account shall be used unless a separate account is required by action of the Board, contracts, covenants, laws, and/or regulations.
- 7) The Board shall follow OCGA 45-8-12 which states that the depository shall pledge securities at least equal to not less than 110% of the public funds being secured after the deduction of the amount of deposit insurance.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: Bank Accounts
<i>Policy Number 609.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: Finance / Procurement

III. CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

- 1) Constitutional Officers are legally allowed by the Constitution of the State of GA to maintain bank accounts for use in their operations.
- 2) Accounts maintained by Constitutional Officers functioning within the County are not required to have a separate federal identification number from the Board. In fact, the Board encourages the use of its federal identification number on all accounts of Constitutional Officers functioning within the County.
- 3) All bank accounts with the Board's federal ID number shall be approved annually by the Board.
- 4) Authorized signers shall be the Constitutional Officers or their designees.
- 5) Activity pertaining to these accounts shall be regularly reported to the Finance Department of the County to ensure proper accounting and to be included in the annual financial statements.

IV. AUTHORITIES

- 1) Authorities are separate entities from the Board and are legally allowed to maintain bank accounts for use in their operations.
- 2) Authorities functioning within the County shall have a separate federal identification number from the Board.
- 3) Authorized signers shall be the Authority, officers of the Authority, or the Authority's designees.
- 4) The Board encourages Authorities functioning within the County to contract with the Finance Department of the County to manage their bank accounts.
- 5) Activity pertaining to these accounts shall be regularly reported to the Finance Department of the County to ensure proper accounting.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: February 15, 2011 May 19, 2015 January 19, 2016	TOPIC: <i>Investments</i>
<i>Policy Number 610.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

The County seeks to obtain market rates of return on its investments consistent with constraints imposed by its safety objectives, cash flow considerations, and Georgia state laws. Safety of principal is the foremost objective. Each investment transaction shall first seek to insure that capital losses are avoided, whether they are from defaults or erosion of market value.

II. STANDARDS OF CARE

- 1) Management responsibility for investments is hereby delegated to the Finance Director who shall establish written procedures for the operation of the investment program consistent with this investment policy. Such procedures shall include explicit delegation of authority to other positions responsible for investment transactions.
- 2) The Director shall establish a system of internal controls to regulate activities of subordinate officials. All internal controls, investment procedures, reports, and documentation shall be reviewed annually by an independent auditor.
- 3) Investments shall be made with the judgment and care which persons of prudence, discretion, and intelligence exercise in the management of their own affairs, considering the primary objectives of safety as well as the secondary objectives of liquidity and of obtaining market rates of return.
- 4) The standard of prudence shall be used by the investment officials and shall be applied in the context of managing an overall portfolio of investments. Officials acting in accordance with written procedures and exercising due intelligence shall be relieved of personal responsibility for an individual security's risk or market price changes provided that deviations from expected results are reported in a timely fashion and appropriate action is taken to control adverse developments.

III.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: February 15, 2011 May 19, 2015 January 19, 2016	TOPIC: <i>Investments</i>
<i>Policy Number 610.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

POLICY

- 1) This investment policy applies to all funds under budgetary control of the Board.
- 2) Authorized investments of funds shall be as provided in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA) 36-80-3:
 - a) Obligations of the United States and of its agencies and instrumentalities;
 - b) Bonds or certificates of indebtedness of this state and of its agencies and instrumentalities;
 - c) Certificates of deposit of banks which have deposits insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC); provided, however, that that portion of such certificates of deposit in excess of the amount insured by the FDIC shall be secured by direct obligations of this state or the United States which are of a par value equal to that portion of such certificates of deposit which would be uninsured.
 - d) The State of Georgia Local Government Investment Pool as established by OCGA 36-83-8.
- 3) Safekeeping
 - a) All investment securities which can be physically delivered shall be held in the County custodial financial institution. Collateral securities for CDs shall be delivered to the County's depository bank for safekeeping unless the certificate was purchased from that bank, in which event collateral securities will be delivered to a third party bank with which the County has a fully-executed and approved safekeeping agreement.
 - b) Securities purchased under a repurchase agreement must be delivered to the County's depository bank for safekeeping unless the repurchase agreement is executed with that bank. In that event securities will be delivered to a third party bank as provided for in item 3a above.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: February 15, 2011 May 19, 2015 January 19, 2016	TOPIC: <i>Investments</i>
<i>Policy Number 610.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- c) Any investment of the Columbia County Pension or Retirement Trust Funds, at the request of the Committee, shall be made only in investment instruments so designated by the Committee in charge. Such funds and investments shall be maintained separately from all other County funds.
 - d) Whenever collateral securities or securities purchased under repurchase agreements are “book-entry” type securities (e.g., United States Treasury Bills, notes, bonds, or others), the securities shall be recorded in the name of the County by the Federal Reserve System, and appropriate confirmation shall be delivered to the Finance Department by the safekeeping bank.
- 4) Competitive Selection
- a) At least three quotes shall be received for the investment of all surplus funds except those placed in overnight repurchase agreements as authorized in the master repurchase agreement incorporated into the depository banking services contract. If a specific maturity date is required, then quotes will be requested for instruments which meet the maturity requirement. If no specific maturity (within time limitations) is required, then a market trend (yield curve) analysis will be conducted to determine which maturities would be most advantageous.
 - b) Quotes will be requested from qualified financial institutions for various options with regard to term and instrument. The County will accept the quote which provides the highest rate of return within the maturity required and within the parameters of this policy.
 - c) Records will be kept of the quotes offered, the quotes accepted, and a brief explanation of the decision made regarding the investment instrument. These records will be kept until completion of the County’s annual audit.
- 5) Qualified Institutions
- a) The County shall maintain a list of qualified financial institutions which are

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: February 15, 2011 May 19, 2015 January 19, 2016</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Investments</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 610.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

approved for investment purposes and from which quotes may be solicited.

- b) No quotes will be solicited or accepted from financial institutions which do not appear on the approved list.
 - c) In order to qualify for and remain on the approved list, financial institutions must provide at least on a semiannual basis a consolidated report of condition. In addition, the County will conduct at least annually an evaluation of the credit worthiness of the financial institution. Such evaluations may entail securing a private report on financial institutions from one or more banking industry research organizations.
 - d) The approved financial institutions must provide biographical information (i.e., resumes) on each of its representatives that will be working with the County. A background check may be performed by the County of the representatives through NASDAQ.
 - e) A copy of this policy is to be provided to all qualified institutions who agree to abide by it as a condition of continuation on the approved list.
- 6) Diversification
- a) Prudent investing necessitates that a portfolio be diversified as to instrument and purchasing source. The following guidelines represent maximum limits established for diversification by instrument.
 - U.S. Treasury Obligations..... 100%
 - U.S. Government Agency Securities and Securities Issued by Instrumentalities of Government Sponsored Corporations..... 100%
 - Local Government Investment Pools..... 100%
 - Certificates of Deposit 75%

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: February 15, 2011 May 19, 2015 January 19, 2016</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Investments</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 610.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i></p>

- Obligations of the State of Georgia.....50%
- Obligations of other agencies or instrumentalities of the State of Georgia 25%

b) No more than 50% of the entire portfolio may be placed with any one bank or security dealer.

7) Maturity scheduling

Investment maturities shall be scheduled to coincide with projected cash flow needs, taking into account large routine scheduled expenditures as well as considering sizable blocks of anticipated revenues and cash receipts.

8) Outsourcing

The Committee may recommend and the Board may approve an investment firm to execute the provisions of this section with the Committee maintaining oversight responsibility and veto authority of the investment firm’s activities.

IV. REPORTING

- 1) The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends that state and local government officials responsible for investment portfolio reporting determine the market value of all securities in the portfolio and disclose to the governing body or oversight body at least quarterly in a written report.
- 2) The Director shall present an investment report to the Committee no less than quarterly to include, at a minimum, the following:
 - a. Type of Investment
 - b. Par Value of the Investment
 - c. Rate of Return
 - d. Maturity Date
 - e. Funding Source
 - f. Financial Institution

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: <i>Cash Management</i>
<i>Policy Number 611.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

To maintain an effective system of cash management that anticipates cash needs and plans adequately to satisfy them and ensures efficient utilization of cash in a manner consistent with the overall strategic goals of the County.

II. GENERAL

Cash is required to pay for all assets and services purchased by the County to meet future obligations as they come due. The disbursement of cash, therefore, is a regular occurrence, and a sufficient level of cash should be kept available to meet these requirements. However, cash is not a productive asset as it earns no return. Therefore, only cash necessary to meet anticipated day-to-day expenditures plus a reasonable cushion for emergencies should be kept available. Any excess cash should be invested in liquid income-producing instruments.

III. POLICY

- 1) All activity and balances in the primary accounts shall be monitored by the Finance Department to assess the cash necessary to meet daily obligations and ensure adequate funds are available.
- 2) Cash not required for operations should be invested in accordance with the County's *Investment Policy*.
- 3) A review of accounts receivable listings for past due balances should be performed on a continuous basis. Delinquent accounts should be contacted immediately.
- 4) Cash disbursements should be released at the latest acceptable time, without affecting relationships with vendors. Early payment discounts should be taken advantage of if they result in benefit.
- 5) Bank balances, as shown by the bank statements, should be reconciled monthly with the general ledger balances. Discrepancies between balances should be investigated and reconciled.
- 6) The Finance Department is responsible for the movement of funds between bank accounts maintained by the County. This includes, but is not limited to:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010	TOPIC: <i>Cash Management</i>
<i>Policy Number 611.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- a) Initiating all wire transfer of funds for general business purposes of the County.
 - b) Appropriately funding disbursement accounts, including transfers between accounts of the County.
 - c) Moving depository funds for investment purposes of the County (see *Investment Policy*).
- 7) Efficient cash management strategies, techniques, and procedures shall be used to increase the productivity of cash flows while achieving the following objectives:
- a) Liquidity – maintaining the ability to pay obligations when they become due.
 - b) Cash Optimization – establishing systems and procedures that help minimize investment in non-earning cash resources while providing adequate liquidity.
 - c) Financing – obtaining both short- and long-term borrowed funds in a timely manner at an acceptable cost.
 - d) Financial Risk Management – monitoring and assisting in the control of the County’s exposure to interest rates and other financial risks.
 - e) Coordination – ensuring that cash management goals are communicated and integrated with the strategic objectives and policy decisions of other areas of the County that have an impact on cash flows.

IV. LOCAL BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

Funds required for operational liquidity shall be deposited at a local bank that has been selected through a competitive bidding process. The County will not select a bank solely on the lowest bid provided, but will also consider the bank’s ability to assist and carry out the County’s cash management strategy. The County will use a request for information (RFI) or a request for proposal (RFP) at the end of an existing banking service agreement. Based on the information obtained in response to the RFI or RFP the County will negotiate with a responding bank to consummate an agreement for banking services. The banking service agreement entered between a local bank and the County will be for an initial term of three to five years with a one or two year renewal option.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Cell Phone Usage and Reimbursement</i>
<i>Policy Number 612.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a set of guidelines governing the use of cellular telephones by Columbia County employees and to provide guidelines, criteria, and conditions for reimbursement of business use of personal cellular telephones.

As a general rule, Columbia County shall endeavor to use the reimbursement procedure set forth in this policy as opposed to owning and managing cell phones for employees. Notwithstanding, some Departments may utilize a County owned cell phone when the Division Director deems it to be the most efficient and cost effective method of providing communication.

II. OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITY

- 1) Departments shall be responsible for oversight of employee cell phone usage and shall monitor and review such usage, periodically, to ensure that use is appropriate and that prudent fiscal management guidelines are followed. This periodic review shall include an assessment of each authorized employee's need to use a cell phone for business purposes. Additional oversight and review should be conducted by the Division Director as necessary.
- 2) The Finance Office will manage cell phone allowances and reimbursements.
- 3) Human Resources will process new allowances or changes in allowances that have been approved by the County Commission.
- 4) Procurement will manage the county owned equipment and billing.
- 5) The list of cell phone allowances will be compared to the list of county owned equipment periodically to insure no duplication of benefits.

III. REIMBURSEMENT PLAN

Business Use of Personal Cell Phones

Some employees may need to use cell phones to conduct legitimate County business and such use is a predictable necessity. In these cases, the County will provide a cell phone requirement allowance for employees who must use his/her personal cell phone for business purposes, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The Department must first authorize the employee to use his/her personal cell phone for County business. An authorization form shall be signed by the employee's supervisor with a copy retained by both the employee and the department. The Supervisor must also decide, based on usage, what level of allowance should be granted. The authorization form will identify the employee and the employee's personal cell phone number and be submitted to the Finance

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Cell Phone Usage and Reimbursement</i>
<i>Policy Number 612.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

Office. A copy of the form is attached, as *Exhibit A*.

- 2) The employee is responsible for turning in the first page of his/her cell phone bill to document that the employee still has the cell phone to his/her supervisor whenever requested.
- 3) The cell phone requirement allowance is classified by the IRS as taxable income and will be added to the employee's paycheck. All new allowances and changes to allowance amounts must be approved by the County Commission and forwarded to the Finance office for processing. Finance is responsible for notifying Human Resources of all allowance amounts and changes in allowance amounts or eligibility.
- 4) Certain positions require a usage plan that would far exceed any low cost plan available. These special requirements should be discussed with the supervisor and may be processed on a case-by-case basis. The maximum allowance shall be deemed a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) allowance and shall be reserved for management and key authorized staff who have the need to access email and the web remotely for county business.
- 5) The employee and/or department are responsible for notifying the Finance office and Human Resources if the employee no longer needs to use a cell phone for the job, terminates their employment with the County, or either party chooses to revoke the cell phone authorization.
- 6) Access to the County Personal Digital Assistant server for county as well as personally owned devices is limited and shall be approved by the Deputy County Manager.

Personal Use of County Provided Cell Phones

In instances where the County is providing cellular telephones for use by County employees, employee use of County-owned cell phones is limited to official County business only. There shall be no personal use of County cell phones except in response to family emergencies or unforeseen work schedule changes, and even under these circumstances, only when it is impossible or unreasonable to use a County landline telephone or personal phone.

The County may also own and retain a certain number of cell phones for emergency or disaster recovery purposes as well as cell phones that are required to conduct work outside of Columbia County to any employee who does not have a personal phone. In these instances, the appropriate portions of this policy still apply.

If in these circumstances the employee has a personal phone and uses it for County business, the employee shall be reimbursed upon submittal of the bill outlining the appropriate charges.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Cell Phone Usage and Reimbursement</i>
<i>Policy Number 612.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

COLUMBIA COUNTY

**DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION FOR
BUSINESS USE OF EMPLOYEE'S PERSONAL CELL PHONE**

Employee Name: _____

Employee ID#: _____

Employee's Personal Cell Phone Number: _____

Base Monthly Plan Amount: \$40 \$60 \$120 **Push to Talk:** \$5 \$10

County Department: _____

Department Contact: _____ **Phone No.:** _____

Email: _____

As Department Manager/Director, I verify that the employee listed above is required, due to legitimate business need, to maintain a cell phone to conduct official COUNTY business. I hereby authorize the employee listed above to use his/her personal cell phone for conducting official COUNTY business. The Department will pay the employee a cell phone requirement allowance for using his/her personal cell phone in accordance with the County's "Cell Phone Usage & Reimbursement Policy."

Approval:

Department Manager Signature

Employee Signature

Title

Date

Division Director/Constitutional Official Signature

Date

Committee Approval: Yes No

*****Please attach a copy of the first page of your cell phone bill to this form, (to document that you have a cell phone and your monthly plan cost). Both the employee and the Department should retain a copy.**

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: December 14, 2010 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Internment of an Indigent Decedent</i>
<i>Policy Number 613.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish policy guidelines to determine if a decedent whose death occurs in Columbia County and the family qualify for payment toward internment from County funds.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

- 1) Section 36-12-5 (a) *Official Code of Georgia Annotated* provides that “whenever any person dies in this state and the decedent, his family, and his immediate kindred are indigent and unable to provide for his/her decent internment, the governing authority of the county wherein the death occurs shall make available from county funds a sum sufficient to provide a decent interment of the deceased indigent person or to reimburse such person as may have expended the cost thereof voluntarily, the exact amount thereof to be determined by the governing authority of the county.”
- 2) The County Coroner or designee shall investigate and determine if a decedent whose death occurs within Columbia County and the family meet the guidelines set forth in this policy to qualify for the use of County funds applied to the cost of internment.
- 3) If the County Coroner receives an inquiry about County funds, he or designee shall ask the person to provide the necessary documentation to verify that the decedent and the family qualify as indigent as set forth in the policy.

III. POLICY

The following guidelines must be met in order for the County to provide funds for internment costs of an individual who died within the County boundaries:

- 1) Before the County will release funds for internment costs the individual must qualify as indigent status according to the most current annual update of the United States Department of Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia.
- 2) Once it has been verified that the decedent and the family qualify as indigent, the County Coroner or designee shall notify the representative of the decedent’s family, if any, the County Manager, and the Finance Director and inform them of the indigent status. Once the County Coroner has received verification, he or his designee may proceed to authorize the appropriate party to carry out the internment of the decedent.
- 3) The County will pay or reimburse the party handling the internment or who has paid the expenses of internment of decedent who qualifies as an indigent by the least expensive form of internment available, the actual cost thereof, or \$850, whichever is less.
- 4) The invoice for the cost of the indigent internment shall be sent to the Columbia County Finance Director for payment with all necessary information required by the Finance Office for audit purposes.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: September 20, 2011 AMENDED: January 17, 2017 July 19, 2022 June 18, 2024	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 614.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines, criteria and conditions for reimbursement of business use of personal automobiles. As a general rule, Columbia County shall endeavor to use the reimbursement procedure set forth in this policy as opposed to owning and managing vehicles for employee transportation. Notwithstanding, some Departments may utilize a County owned vehicle when the Division Director deems it to be the most efficient and cost effective method of providing transportation.

II. OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITY

- 1) Departments shall be responsible for oversight of employee vehicle usage and shall monitor and review such usage, periodically, to ensure that use is appropriate and that prudent fiscal management guidelines are followed. This periodic review shall include an assessment of each authorized employee's need to travel for business purposes. Additional oversight and review should be conducted by the Division Director as necessary.
- 2) The Finance Office will manage vehicle allowances and mileage reimbursements.
- 3) Human Resources will process new allowances or changes in allowances that have been approved by the County Commission.
- 4) Fleet Services will manage the county owned vehicles.
- 5) The list of vehicle allowances will be compared to the list of employee assigned county owned vehicles periodically to insure no duplication of benefits.

III. ELIGIBILITY

- 1) Vehicle allowances or mileage reimbursement may be made available to those employees who are determined by the County to have a valid transportation need in order to fulfill their employment duties. For some positions, allowances may be considered part of a normal employment benefits package offered in order to attract and retain qualified employees in the County.
- 2) An employee receiving a vehicle allowance or mileage reimbursement is responsible for maintaining a current, valid US driver's license. Any criminal convictions from any motor vehicle offenses, including speeding, must be reported to the manager immediately providing the date and the details surrounding the offense. If the license is suspended or revoked for any reason, the employee must inform the manager immediately.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: September 20, 2011 AMENDED: January 17, 2017 July 19, 2022 June 18, 2024	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 614.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance</i>

- 3) Employees covered under this policy must maintain automobile insurance covering the vehicle designated for business use with the limits of at least \$100,000 per person, \$300,000 each occurrence and \$500,000 aggregate. The limits set forth cover bodily injury liability and property damage per accident/incident. Employees are required to send a copy of the Insurance Declaration Page of their policy showing the amount of coverage to Human Resources. The employee must be named as an insured driver on the policy.
- 4) A Motor Vehicle Background Check will be performed annually to confirm each employee's driver's license is valid. Additional verifications may be obtained when warranted. The employee must comply at all times with the County's Drug Free Workplace policy. The employee must also notify Human Resources and his/her immediate supervisor of any medical condition or medications that may affect driving abilities.
- 5) Eligibility for a vehicle allowance will discontinue if an employee no longer meets the above criteria, assumes a position within the County where a vehicle allowance is not part of the overall compensation package, or is no longer employed by the County.
- 6) Employees receiving vehicle allowances or mileage reimbursement must also comply with Policy Number 405.1, *Employee Travel and Training Expenses*.
- 7) Lack of compliance with this policy, or other related policies, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, depending upon the severity of the non-compliance.

IV. STANDARDS

- 1) Employees receiving a vehicle allowance must have and maintain a reliable vehicle that is appropriate for the performance of his/her job duties.
- 2) The County prohibits the operation of any vehicle while the driver is consuming or is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. No employee should operate his/her vehicle if taking prescription medication that clearly states not to operate a vehicle.
- 3) **Parking Violations** - All parking violations must be paid ahead of the stipulated deadline. Parking violations and any resulting fees, fines and penalties are the employee's responsibility and must be paid personally by the employee.
- 4) **Moving Violations** - The driver is responsible for compliance with all state motor vehicle requirements for resolution of all moving violations. Any driver who commits serious or multiple moving violations may be classified as a high-risk driver and could face disciplinary action that may result in suspension or termination of employment. To avoid possible disciplinary action, it is most important that every effort be made to maintain a good driving record and to report all moving violations to the Department Manager.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>ADDED AND APPROVED: September 20, 2011 AMENDED: January 17, 2017 July 19, 2022 June 18, 2024</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement Policy</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 614.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance</i></p>

- 5) A reportable motor vehicle accident is any occurrence while driving on County business resulting in bodily injury and/or property damage to any other vehicle/property or to any person. All occurrences with the employee’s vehicle must be reported immediately to his/her Department Manager and Human Resources.

V. REIMBURSEMENT PLAN

- 1) The Department must first authorize the employee to use his/her personal vehicle for County business. An authorization form shall be signed by the employee’s supervisor with a copy sent to Human Resources and a copy retained by both the employee and the department. A copy of the form is attached, as *Exhibit A*.
- 2) The Division Director shall determine, based on usage, whether a vehicle allowance should be recommended to the Board or if mileage reimbursement based on actual miles driven should be utilized.
- 3) All new allowances and changes to allowance amounts must be approved by the Board and forwarded to Human Resources for processing. Human Resources is responsible for notifying Finance of all allowance amounts and changes in allowance amounts or eligibility.
- 4) The vehicle allowance is classified by the IRS as taxable income and will be added to the employee’s pay and processed through payroll. This amount will be included on the employee’s W2 as taxable income at the end of the calendar year.
- 5) Mileage reimbursement based on actual miles driven is not classified by the IRS as taxable income and will be processed as an expense reimbursement through accounts payable. This amount will not be included on the employee’s W2 at the end of the calendar year.
- 6) Mileage reimbursements and vehicle allowances for personal vehicles used while conducting official County business will be at a rate determined by the Board of Commissioners, which is based on the average cost of depreciation, maintenance and repairs, gasoline, oil, insurance and vehicle registration fees. If an employee is reimbursed using mileage reimbursement or a vehicle allowance, then no reimbursement will be given for actual operating expenses. Staff will annually review the approved reimbursement rate in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service published mileage reimbursement allowance and make recommendations to the Board as needed.
- 7) Employees with auto allowances may be reimbursed for actual miles driven only if travel is on official business in excess of a 25-mile radius of the County.
- 8) When two or more employees share a vehicle, the reimbursable travel mileage may only be

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: September 20, 2011 AMENDED: January 17, 2017 July 19, 2022 June 18, 2024	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 614.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance</i>

claimed by the employee who operated his or her personal vehicle.

- 9) The employee and/or department are responsible for notifying the Finance office and Human Resources if the employee is no longer eligible for a vehicle allowance, terminates their employment with the County, or either party chooses to revoke the authorization.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: September 20, 2011 AMENDED: January 17, 2017 July 19, 2022 June 18, 2024	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle Allowance and Mileage Reimbursement Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 614.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance</i>

COLUMBIA COUNTY

**DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION
FOR
BUSINESS USE OF EMPLOYEE'S PERSONAL VEHICLE**

Employee Name: _____

Employee ID#: _____

Base Monthly Plan Amount: _____

County Department: _____

Department Contact: _____ **Phone No.:** _____

Email: _____

As Department Manager/Director, I verify that the employee listed above is required, due to legitimate business need, to travel to conduct official COUNTY business. I hereby authorize the employee listed above to use his/her personal vehicle for conducting official COUNTY business. The Department will pay the employee a vehicle allowance or reimbursement for actual miles driven in accordance with the County's "Vehicle Allowance & Mileage Reimbursement Policy."

Approval:

Department Manager Signature _____ Employee Signature _____

Title _____ Date _____

Division Director/Constitutional Official Signature _____ Date _____

Committee Approval: Yes No

*****Please attach a copy of the Insurance Declaration Page of your insurance policy showing the amount of coverage to this form, both the employee and the Department should retain a copy.**

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 21, 2013 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Donation of Funds/Items</i>
<i>Policy Number 615.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for the acceptance and use of donated funds, materials, equipment, or capital assets; to ensure that donations do not cause unbudgeted expenditures or significant ongoing maintenance responsibility for the County; to ensure that donations are consistent with established goals and objectives for County programs and the County as a whole; and to ensure that donations are used for specified purposes.

II. POLICY

- 1) The County does not allow the active solicitation of donations by County employees in a manner which could be construed as being coercive or a conflict of interest. However, donations to be used for purposes consistent with County policy, goals, and objectives will be accepted with appreciation.
- 2) Any individual or organization may donate funds, materials, equipment, or capital assets to the County for a specific purpose or to help defray general operating costs.
- 3) Donations of nonmonetary items with a value of \$500 or greater must be approved by the Board before being accepted.
- 4) Cash donations received in the amount of \$100 or greater must be approved by the Board before being accepted.
- 5) Any donation of funds, materials, equipment, or capital assets will become the property of the County once received and are governed by applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures of the County.
- 6) The administration and expenditure of all donated funds must follow established County procurement procedures and all laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures which apply to County funds. Donated funds may not be used for any public purpose which is not permissible by law.
- 7) Donors generally specify the use of their donation for the improvement of the quality of life by recipients of the services or enhancement of the operations. When possible, the County will adhere to the wishes of the donor. If the donation cannot be used for the purpose identified by the donor, the receiving County Department will identify other unfunded budgetary needs and notify the donor with the intent to substitute use of the donated funds.
- 8) The County reserves the right to use its discretion in the assignment of donated items or the use of donated funds.
- 9) The County reserves the right to deny any donation.
- 10) The County Manager and Finance Director shall be notified of all donations.
- 11) Monetary donations may require a budget amendment to the receiving department's budget that must be approved by the Board.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 21, 2013 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Donation of Funds/Items</i>
<i>Policy Number 615.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

III. CATEGORIES

- 1) Unrestricted Donations – A donation for which a specified purpose is not designated or whose purpose is to defray the operating costs of the department to which it is given. These donated funds shall be considered to be the first funds spent for the operation of the department to which they are donated.
- 2) Restricted Donations
 - (a) Funds donated for a specific purpose must be accompanied by a written statement of the purpose for which the funds are to be used.
 - (b) All funds donated for a specific purpose must be approved by the Board before being received. The written statement of the specific purpose and any other terms of the donation must be presented to the Board for its approval.
 - (c) The Department Manager of the department to which the funds are donated, with approval of the Division Director, shall have the authority to expend the donated funds, unless otherwise specified.
 - (d) Every effort will be made by the responsible department to expend the donated funds for the purpose identified prior to the end of the specified period or the end of the fiscal year, whichever comes first.
 - (e) Donations received for a specified purpose will be tracked by the Receiving Department. Documentation of the expenditure of the donated funds shall be maintained by the Department as proof of the proper expenditure of the donated funds.
 - (f) Invoices sent to Finance for payment shall be marked “paid by donated funds”.
- 3) Cash Donations
 - (a) Donations will be recorded in the appropriate Fund/Department receiving the funds when received.
 - (b) All donations of money will be in the form of a check payable to the Columbia County Board of Commissioners.
 - (c) All checks are to be surrendered to the Finance Department for proper coding and deposit.
 - (d) Donated funds will be deposited into the primary operating account of the Department, or the County General Fund, or appropriate enterprise fund, unless otherwise specified.
 - (e) The Receiving Department will be responsible for maintaining a summary of donated funds received during the fiscal year and how those funds were spent. This summary is to be submitted to the Finance Department by the end of the fiscal year.
 - (f) All donated funds are to be used during the fiscal year in which they were received. If for some reason this is not possible, the remaining funds must be re-appropriated in the next year’s budget.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 21, 2013 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Donation of Funds/Items</i>
<i>Policy Number 615.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- 4) Gift/Prepaid Cards
 - (a) The receipt of gift or prepaid cards must be in accordance with this policy.
 - (b) Once the card is utilized, a report must be sent to Finance with receipts documenting the expenditure of the funds.
- 5) Other Nonmonetary Items
 - (a) Incidental nonmonetary items (dog food, blankets, etc.) with a value less than \$500 can be accepted without approval of the Board.
 - (b) Nonmonetary items with an estimated useful life in excess of one year should be added to the receiving department's inventory listing at estimated fair market value at the time received.
 - (c) Capital assets accepted by the Board refer to property, land, equipment, or infrastructure with a value of at least \$5,000. Contributed assets are recorded at estimated fair market value at the time received and will be accounted for in accordance with *Policy 602.1, Capital Expenditures*.
 - (d) All donated capital assets will receive standard levels of maintenance during their normal life expectancy.
 - (e) Donations of material and equipment must be consistent with adopted standards and specifications or policies and plans, including, but not limited to, national and local health and safety standards, County maintenance practices, and adopted comprehensive master plans.
 - (f) Items that are damaged will be repaired or replaced as feasible, but the County does not guarantee replacement of any items damaged beyond repair or where the cost to do so is not considered cost effective.

IV. POLICY APPLICATION

1. Donations received by County departments under the control of the Board must be in accordance with this policy.
2. Donations received by County volunteer groups (i.e., Friends of the Library, Columbia County Dive Team, etc.) which obtain administrative oversight from a County department must be in accordance with this policy.
3. Donations received by other groups appointed by or established by resolution of the Board must be in accordance with this policy.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 21, 2013	TOPIC: <i>Payment Card Acceptance</i>
<i>Policy Number 616.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

Acceptance of payment cards as a payment method has become virtually universal within the private sector, and more common within the public sector. Many governments now accept payment cards for taxes, fines, user charges and fees. For a fee, a payment card processing service provider will work with a government to accept and process payment card payments.

While governments may have to absorb extra costs or citizens may have to pay an additional convenience fee for the transaction, establishing a payment card acceptance program provides the following benefits:

- Enhanced customer service and convenience
- Increased certainty of collection
- Accelerated payments and the availability of funds
- Improved audit trail
- Reduced cashiering costs
- Improved overall cash flow and forecasting
- Lessened delinquencies
- Reduced return check processing costs
- Reduced collection costs.

II. GENERAL

- 1) Governments should be aware that different card processing service providers may have significantly different rates and fees depending on the methods they use to process payment card transactions. Fees may include discount rates, interchange fees, bank fees, and administrative fees.
- 2) In most instances, major payment card companies (i.e., VISA, Mastercard, Discover, American Express) do not allow governments to pass on merchant fees associated with payment card acceptance programs directly to customers. However, convenience fees are allowed under certain circumstances in order to recoup the cost of merchant fees.
- 3) Payment card companies have strict regulations that limit the use of convenience fees.
- 4) For governments who offer an alternate payment method (i.e., mail, telephone, or e-commerce) outside the government's normal business practice, a convenience fee may be added to the transaction amount.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 21, 2013	TOPIC: <i>Payment Card Acceptance</i>
<i>Policy Number 616.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

III. POLICY

- 1) A convenience fee may be charged to citizens/customers for using an alternative payment method outside of the County department's normal business practice (i.e., mail, telephone, or e-commerce).
- 2) The fee must be disclosed in advance to the citizen/customer as a charge for the alternative payment method convenience.
- 3) The fee can only be applied to non face-to-face transactions (i.e., mail, telephone, or internet), with the exception of tax payments.
- 4) The fee must be a flat or fixed amount, regardless of the amount of the payment due.
- 5) The fee must be applied to all forms of payment products (i.e., credit cards, debit cards, electronic checks) accepted in the alternative payment method.
- 6) The fee must be included as part of the total transaction amount.
- 7) The fee cannot be added to a recurring transaction (one in which a cardholder authorizes a merchant to automatically charge his/her account number for the recurring or periodic delivery of goods or services without direct participation of the cardholder with each transaction).
- 8) The fee must be assessed by the County and not by a third party.
- 9) The citizen/customer must be given the opportunity to cancel prior to the completion of the transaction.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: JUNE 21, 2016 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Grant Administration</i>
<i>Policy Number 617.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

I. PURPOSE

To provide accurate, current and complete disclosure of the program and financial results of each federal and state grant within the existing budgetary accounting and reporting framework.

II. POLICY

- 1) This policy provides guidelines to ensure the following:
 - a) Federal and state grants are properly authorized by the Board.
 - b) Grants have been properly budgeted in order to maintain budgetary controls.
 - c) Grant transactions are properly identified in the accounting records in order to maintain accounting and reporting controls.
 - d) Grant financial reporting requirements are monitored for compliance.
 - e) Official accounting records required by grant agreements are maintained to the extent possible in a centralized location.
 - f) Availability of matching funds or in-kind contributions.
 - g) The coordination of all grants by all departments.
- 2) Administrative Authority
 - a) Responsibility for programmatic administration of the grants rests with the department that applied for the grant, although the official recipient under the grant is the County. All grants awarded to departments, including constitutional officers, must be included in combined countywide reports under federal and state reporting guidelines.
 - b) In accordance with Resolution 16-1198, the Chairman of the Board shall sign all grant applications, amendments, modifications and agreements, unless the Board has otherwise expressly delegated such authority to the County Manager, the Internal Services Director, constitutional officers or project managers.
 - c) All grant awards must be approved by the Board.
- 3) Accounting, Monitoring and Financial Reporting Authority
 - a) The Finance Department is responsible for the official financial records of the Board and in that capacity is responsible for maintaining adequate records to ensure compliance with federal and state accounting and reporting requirements for all grants administered by departments under the Board and constitutional officers.
- 4) Grant Application Procedures
 - a) Locating grant sources, determining the appropriateness of the grant to the County, and preparation of the agenda package rests with the originating department.
 - b) The originating county department will coordinate with the County Manager to determine the necessity of the application for any specific grant.
 - c) The originating county department will prepare the initial draft of the grant application, which includes at a minimum the following:
 - i. The federal or state agency from which funds originate.
 - ii. Any requirements relating to the grant that would require additional scrutiny by the Board, such as matching funds required and source of funds, certificates of insurance, in-kind contributions, special retention or reporting requirements and any other special consideration that has to be met to obtain the grant.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: JUNE 21, 2016 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Grant Administration</i>
<i>Policy Number 617.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Finance / Procurement</i>

- d) The county department or departments who will contribute programmatic information and any other appropriate personnel as deemed necessary will review the draft.
 - e) The originating department shall submit the grant application to the Chairman of the Board for his signature in accordance with Resolution 16-1198 of the Board of Commissioners of Columbia County, GA, and then submit to the grantor agency for review and consideration.
- 5) Grant Award Procedures
- a) Upon receiving notification of award, the originating department will prepare an Agenda Package for the grant award to be presented to the appropriate Oversight Committee. The Agenda Package consists of, but is not limited to:
 - i. The grant application
 - ii. Any supporting documentation relative to the grant application
 - iii. Any requirements relating to the grant that would require additional scrutiny by the Board, such as matching funds required and source of funds, certificate of insurance, special retention or reporting requirements and any other special consideration that has to be met to obtain the grant.
 - b) Once approved by the Oversight Committee, the grant award is to be submitted to the Board for its approval.
 - c) The original copy of the fully executed grant award document will be maintained by the County Clerk with file copies going to the Finance Department and the initiating department.
 - d) Upon receipt of the fully executed grant agreement, the Finance Department shall do the following:
 - i. Ensure that the grant is established in the financial system. This will include the creation of a grant fund, account numbers for revenues and expenditures and the processing of a budget adjustment. Separate accounts will be created for all budgeted income and expense accounts for each grant. Unallowable costs and cost overruns, upon identification, will be reclassified to regular expense departments of the County.
 - ii. Prepare and maintain a file for each grant that will be available for inspection by the internal, independent, and any state and federal auditors.
- 6) Grant Accounting and Reporting Procedures
- a) The initiating department is responsible for authorizing purchases, preparing reimbursement requests, and submitting all state and federal reports or other reports as may be required.
 - b) The initiating department is responsible for assembling a project completion package. This package will contain the final federal or state grant report and any information required to close out the grant.



	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
701.1	Password Policy
702.1	Firewall Policy
703.1	Anti-Virus Policy
704.1	Data Security Policy
705.1	BLANK
706.1	Video Surveillance and Recording Policy
707.1	Acceptable Use Policy
708.1	BLANK
709.1	BLANK
710.1	BLANK
711.1	Data Center Access Policy
712.1	Data Closet Access Policy
713.1	Mobile Device Usage Policy
714.1	BLANK
715.1	Third-Party Access Policy
716.1	VPN Usage and Access Policy
717.1	Service Desk Problem & Request Management Policy



718.1	Wireless Network Access and Usage Policy
719.1	Voicemail Policy
720.1	Change Management Policy
730.1	Information Security Policy
731.1	Information Security Awareness Policy
732.1	Computer Administrative Rights Policy
733.1	Technology Physical Security Policy
734.1	Security Incident Response Policy
735.1	Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI-DSS) Program Policy
750.1	Technology Asset Life Cycle Management Policy
751.1	Hardware Asset Life Cycle Management Policy
752.1	Software Asset Life Cycle Management Policy
753.1	Hardware Sanitization
780.1	Technology Contingency Planning Policy
781.1	Data Backup Policy
790.1	Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Program

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: January 20, 2015 February 20, 2018 December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Password Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 701.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

Passwords are a critical part of information and network security. Passwords serve to protect user accounts, but a poorly chosen password, if compromised, could put the entire network at risk. As a result, all employees of Columbia County are required to take appropriate steps to ensure that they create strong, secure passwords and keep them safeguarded at all times.

The purpose of this policy is to set a standard for creating, protecting and changing passwords such that they are strong, secure and protected.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of Columbia County who have or are responsible for a computer account, or any form of access that supports or requires a password, on any system that resides at any Columbia County facility, has access to the Columbia County network or stores any non-public Columbia County information.

III. GENERAL POLICY

- 1) Passwords must be changed according to the following parameters, provided that the user is utilizing Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) as part of the network login process:
 - a) Passwords must be changed at least once every three-hundred and sixty-five (365) days. This provision applies to all employees except as noted in b,c,d,e, and f below.
 - b) Employees who use computers to which payment card equipment (credit card readers, etc.) are attached are subject to Payment Card Industry (PCI) minimum requirements, which may be more stringent than this policy. In the event of a conflict between PCI standards and this policy, the more stringent requirement will apply to these personnel.
 - c) Employees who are subject to Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC) certification requirements may be subject to minimum requirements that are more stringent than this policy. In the event of a conflict between GCIC standards and this policy, the more stringent requirement will apply to these personnel.
 - d) Passwords for accounts created specifically for server administrative purposes are to be reset every ninety (90) days.
 - e) Passwords for temporary employees will reset every ninety (90) days.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: January 20, 2015 February 20, 2018 December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Password Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 701.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- f) In the event of an incident that results in a lost phone / device or a compromised password, the employee will be required to change their password immediately.
- 2) Old passwords cannot be re-used for a period of three-hundred and sixty-five (365) days. For personnel whose passwords reset once per year, passwords may not be re-used consecutively.
- 3) Minimum password age: 1 day
- 4) Account lockout duration: 30 minutes
- 5) Account lockout threshold: 5 attempts
- 6) Reset account lockout after: 30 minutes
- 7) Users will be notified two (2) weeks in advance of password expiration date. At this time, users will be prompted to select a new password.
- 8) All passwords must conform to the guidelines described below.

IV. PASSWORD CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES

Passwords are used to access any number of county systems, including the network, e-mail, the internet/intranet, and voicemail. Poor, weak passwords are easily cracked and put the entire system at risk; therefore, strong passwords are required. Try to create a password that is also easy to remember.

- 1) Passwords must be at least ten (10) characters in length, cannot be based on dictionary words/common names, and must contain at least 3 of the following 4 types of characters:
 - a) Lower case letters (i.e. a-z)
 - b) Upper case letters (i.e. A-Z)
 - c) Numbers (i.e. 0-9)
 - d) Special characters (=[\];,./~!@#\$\$%^&*()_+{ }|:<>?, etc.)

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: January 20, 2015 February 20, 2018 December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Password Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 701.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- 2) In addition, passwords must:
 - a) Not be a single word found in the dictionary (i.e. “secret”), whether spelled forwards or backwards, or a single word preceded or followed by a digit (i.e. “secret1”, “1secret”).
 - b) It is acceptable to use real words in passwords as long as you use more than one and still include the different required character types. Modified dictionary words are even better.
 - c) Not include user name or login name
 - d) Not be a common keyboard sequence, such as “qwerty89” or “abc123”
- 3) Additional tips for creating good, cryptic, hard-to-guess passwords:
 - a) Longer passwords are better.
 - b) Avoid including personal information, names of family, places, pets, birthdays, hobbies, etc.
 - c) Avoid words that are slang, jargon, etc.
 - d) Avoid passwords based on the organization’s name or geographical location.
- 4) Pass Phrases are passwords composed of several words rather than a single word and special characters. Pass phrases can actually be more secure and easier to remember than a more complicated, obscure password. An example of a pass phrase which incorporates some of the rules described within this policy is: “M3ry_H3d_3_Little_L3mb”, which uses a phrase, incorporates special characters, and replaces certain letters with numbers.

V. PASSWORD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

- 1) Passwords must be treated as confidential information. No employee is to give, tell or hint at their password to another person, including Information Technology (IT) staff, administrators, superiors, other co-workers, friends and family members, under any circumstances.
- 2) If someone demands your password, refer them to this policy or have them contact Information Technology.
- 3) Passwords are not to be transmitted electronically over the unprotected Internet, such as via e-mail. However, passwords may be used to gain remote access to county resources via the county’s IPsec-secured Virtual Private Network or SSL-protected Web site.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: January 20, 2015 February 20, 2018 December 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Password Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 701.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- 4) No employee is to keep an unsecured written record of his or her passwords, either on paper or in an electronic file. If it proves necessary to keep a record of a password, then it must be kept in a controlled access safe in a hardcopy form, in an encrypted file or in electronic form.
- 5) Do not use the “Remember Password” feature of applications.
- 6) Passwords used to gain access to county systems must not be used as passwords to access non-county accounts or information.
- 7) If possible, don’t use the same password to access multiple county systems.
- 8) If an employee either knows or suspects that his/her password has been compromised, change the password immediately and notify Information Technology.
- 9) The Information Technology department may attempt to crack or guess users’ passwords as part of its ongoing security vulnerability auditing process. If a password is cracked or guessed during one of these audits, the user will be required to change his or her password immediately.

VI. ENFORCEMENT

Any employee who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: January 20, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Firewall Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 702.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

Columbia County operates perimeter firewalls between the Internet and its private internal network in order to create a secure operating environment for Columbia County’s computer and network resources. A firewall is just one element of a layered approach to network security. The purpose of this Firewall Policy is to describe how the County’s firewall will filter Internet traffic in order to mitigate risks and losses associated with security threats, while maintaining appropriate levels of access for users.

The Firewall Policy is subordinate to Columbia County’s general Security Policy, as well as any governing laws or regulations.

II. SCOPE

This Firewall Policy refers to any County-deployed firewalls. All firewalls will (at minimum) perform the following security services:

- Access control between the trusted internal network and untrusted external networks.
- Block unwanted traffic as determined by the firewall rule set.
- Hide vulnerable internal systems from the Internet.
- Hide information, such as system names, network topologies and internal user IDs from the Internet.
- Log traffic to and from the internal network.
- Provide robust authentication.
- Provide virtual private network (VPN) connectivity.

All employees of Columbia County are subject to this policy and required to abide by it.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

Columbia County IT department is responsible for implementing and maintaining County firewalls, as well as for enforcing and updating this policy. Logon access to the firewall will be restricted to Columbia County Network Communications staff. Password construction for the firewall will be consistent with the strong password creation practices outlined in Columbia County’s *Password Policy 701.1*.

Any questions or concerns regarding any firewall implementation should be directed to servicedesk@columbiacountyga.gov or 706.312.3499, option 1.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: January 20, 2015 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Firewall Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 702.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

IV. POLICY

The approach adopted to define firewall rule sets is that all services will be denied by the firewall unless expressly permitted in this policy. County firewalls permit the following outbound and inbound Internet traffic.

- Outbound – All Internet traffic to host and service outside of Columbia County unless blocked by IronPort or other filtering applications.
- Inbound – Only Internet traffic from outside Columbia County that supports the business mission of Columbia County as defined by the County Manager’s Office in conjunction with Columbia County’s IT department.

Operational Procedures

- Columbia County employees may request changes to the firewall’s configuration in order to allow previously disallowed traffic. A firewall change request outlining full justification must be submitted to the IT department for approval. All requests will be assessed to determine if they fall within the parameters of acceptable risk. Approval is not guaranteed, as associated risks may be deemed too high. If this is the case, an explanation will be provided to the original requestor and alternative solutions will be explored.
- Columbia County employees may request access from the Internet for services located on the internal County network. Typically, this remote access is handled via a secure, encrypted virtual private network (VPN) connection.
- VPN sessions will have an absolute timeout length of twenty-four (24) hours. An inactivity timeout will be set for thirty (30) minutes. At the end of these timeout periods, users must re-authenticate to continue or re-establish their VPN connection. A VPN connectivity request form, with full justification, must be submitted to the IT department for approval. Approval is not guaranteed.
- From time to time, outside vendors, contractors, or other entities may require secure, short-term, remote access to Columbia County’s internal network. If such a need arises, a third-party access request form, with full justification, must be submitted to the IT department for approval. Approval is not guaranteed.
- Turnaround time for the above stated firewall reconfiguration and network access request is approximately three (3) business days from the receipt of the request form.
- Firewall logs will be backed up daily and archived daily. Firewall logs will be reviewed at a minimum of two (2) times a day.

V. ENFORCEMENT

Wherever possible, technological tools will be used to enforce this policy and mitigate security risks. Any employee who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: January 20, 2015 January 19, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Anti-Virus Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 703.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

A virus is a piece of potentially malicious programming code that will cause some unexpected or undesirable event. Viruses can be transmitted via e-mail or instant messaging attachments, downloadable Internet files, or any media used to transmit and store electronic files. Viruses are usually disguised as something else; therefore, their presence is not always obvious to the computer user. A virus infection can be very costly to Columbia County in terms of loss of data, loss of staff productivity and/or loss of reputation. The goals of Columbia County's Information Security Program are focused on building an effective defense against all forms of intrusion, including viruses. The purpose of this policy is to describe the means by which Columbia County will pursue effective virus detection and prevention.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all computers that are connected to the Columbia County network via a standard network connection, wireless connection, modem connection or virtual private network connection. The definition of computers in this context includes desktop workstations, laptop computers, handheld computing devices and servers.

III. DEFINITIONS

Anti-Virus: A software utility that detects, prevents, and removes viruses, worms, and other malware from a computer.

Virus: Malicious software (malware) comprised of small pieces of code that can be attached to legitimate programs and cause damage to computers.

IV. REFERENCES

- Columbia County Comprehensive Policy Manual, *730.1 Information Security Policy.*
- Columbia County Comprehensive Policy Manual, *731.1 Information Security Awareness Policy.*

V. GENERAL POLICY

- Licensed copies of anti-virus software will be installed on all supported equipment. The most current available version of the anti-virus software package will be taken as the default standard.
- All computers attached to the Columbia County network must have standard, supported anti-virus software installed. This software must be active, be scheduled to perform virus checks at regular intervals and have its virus definition files kept up to date.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: January 20, 2015 January 19, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Anti-Virus Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 703.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- Any activities with the intention to create and/or distribute malicious programs onto the Columbia County network (e.g. viruses, worms, Trojan horses, e-mail bombs, etc.) are strictly prohibited.
- If an employee receives what he/she believes to be a virus, or suspects that a computer is infected with a virus, it must be reported to the IT Service Desk immediately at 706-312-3499, option 1. Report the following information (if known): virus name, extent of infection, source of virus, and potential recipients of infected material.
- No employee should attempt to destroy or remove a virus, or any evidence of that virus, without direction from the IT department.
- Any virus-infected computer will be removed from the network until it is verified as virus-free.

VI. RULES FOR VIRUS PREVENTION

Columbia County maintains a robust and proactive anti-virus program on servers and computers. Incoming emails are also scanned to eliminate as much malware as possible. The rules below are provided as foundational information for employees regarding proactive anti-virus / anti-malware activities.

- Always run the standard anti-virus software provided by Columbia County.
- Never open any files or macros attached to an e-mail from an unknown, suspicious or untrustworthy source.
- Never open any files or macros attached to an e-mail from a known source (even a coworker) if you were not expecting a specific attachment from that source.
- Be suspicious of e-mail messages containing links to unknown Web sites. It is possible that the link is a malicious executable (.exe) file disguised as a link. Do not click on a link sent to you if you were not expecting a specific link.
- Certain files are blocked by the e-mail system. Please see the IT Department intranet site, which is secure and limited to employees only, for a list of file extensions that are blocked.
- Never copy, download or install files from unknown, suspicious or untrustworthy sources or removable media.
- Avoid direct disk sharing with read/write access of electronic data. Always scan removable media for viruses before using it.
- If instructed to delete e-mail messages believed to contain a virus, be sure to also delete the message from your Deleted Items or Trash folder.
- Back up critical data and system configurations on a regular basis and store backups in a safe place.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: January 20, 2015 January 19, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Anti-Virus Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 703.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- Regularly update virus protection on personally-owned home computers that are used for business purposes. This includes installing recommended security patches for the operating system and other applications that are in use.

VII. IT DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The following activities are the responsibility of the Columbia County IT department:

- The IT Department is responsible for maintaining and updating this Anti-Virus Policy.
- The IT Department will keep the anti-virus products it provides up-to-date in terms of both virus definitions and software version in use. Virus definitions are updated regularly. Servers and desktop computers are scanned frequently. The anti-virus client downloads program patches, as needed, from a Management Server.
- The IT Department will apply any updates to the services it provides that are required to defend against threats from viruses.
- The IT Department will install anti-virus software on all Columbia County owned desktop workstations, laptops and servers.
- The IT Department will take appropriate action to contain, remove and assist in recovery from virus infections. In order to do so, the IT department may be required to disconnect a suspect computer from the network or disconnect an entire segment of the network as part of the department's security incident response plan.
- The IT Department will attempt to notify users of Columbia County systems of any credible virus threats via e-mail or telephone messages. Virus reports will not be acted upon until validated. Employees should not forward these or any virus warning messages in order to keep network traffic to a minimum.

VIII. DEPARTMENT AND INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The following activities are the responsibility of Columbia County departments and employees:

- Departments must ensure that all departmentally managed computers have virus protection that is in keeping with the standards set out in this policy.
- All employees are responsible for taking reasonable measures to protect against virus infection.
- Employees must not attempt to either alter or disable anti-virus software installed on any computer attached to the Columbia County network without the express consent of the IT department.
- Employees are expected to participate in training on information security awareness (including viruses) at multiple times during their career with Columbia County, including:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: January 20, 2015 January 19, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Anti-Virus Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 703.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- At their time of hire/orientation.
- Biannual information security awareness required of all employees.
- Individual or group training which may be required as part of county-sponsored phishing training campaigns.

IX. ENFORCEMENT

Violations of this policy represent a danger to the integrity and security of Columbia County's technological resources and may likely represent a danger to public safety; therefore, any willful violation by an employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Additionally, if the violation is of a criminal nature, then the County will seek prosecution of the person(s) in violation.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Data Security</i>
<i>Policy Number 704.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

This document defines the data security policy of Columbia County. Columbia County takes the privacy of our employees and citizens very seriously. To ensure that we are protecting our sensitive data from security breaches, this policy must be followed and will be enforced to the fullest extent.

II. INTENT

The goal of this policy is to inform employees at Columbia County of the rules and procedures relating to data security compliance. The data covered by this policy includes, but is not limited to, all electronic information found in e-mail, databases, applications and other media; paper information, such as hard copies of electronic data, employee files, internal memos and so on.

III. AUDIENCE

This policy applies to all employees, management, contractors, vendors, business partners and any other parties who have access to County data.

IV. DATA CLASSIFICATION

Columbia County's data is comprised of three (3) classifications of information:

- 1) Public/Unclassified. This data is defined as information that is generally available to anyone within or outside of the County. Access to this data is unrestricted, may already be available and can be distributed as needed. Public/unclassified data includes, but is not limited to, marketing materials, annual reports, County financials, etc.

Employees may send or communicate a public/unclassified piece of data with anyone inside or outside of the County.

- 2) Private. This data is defined as County information that is to be kept within the County. Access to this data may be limited to specific departments and cannot be distributed outside of the workplace. Private data includes, but is not limited to, work phone directories, organizational charts, County policies, etc.

All information not otherwise classified will be assumed to be Private.

Employees may not disclose private data to anyone who is not a current employee of Columbia County.

- 3) Confidential. This data is defined as personal or County information that may be considered potentially damaging if released and is only accessible to specific groups [e.g. payroll, HR, etc]. Confidential data includes, but is not limited to, social security numbers, contact information, tax forms, accounting data, security procedures, etc.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Data Security</i>
<i>Policy Number 704.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Columbia County considers it a top priority to protect the privacy of our citizens and employees.

Employees may only share confidential data within the department or named distribution list.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of every employee who works at Columbia County to protect our data. Even unintentional abuse of classified data will be considered punishable in accordance with the extent and frequency of the abuse. All employees are responsible for adhering to the policy and reporting any activities that do not comply with this policy.

VI. MANAGEMENT

Management is responsible for ensuring that their direct reports understand the scope and implications of this policy. HR must also ensure that all employees have a signed copy of this policy in their file.

Ownership of this policy falls to the County Manager's Office. For any questions about this policy, or to report misuse of County or personal data, please contact the County Manager's Office. The IT department will work in conjunction with the County Manager to maintain data access privileges, which will be updated as required when an employee joins or leaves the County.

VII. ENFORCEMENT

Employees found to be in violation of this policy by either unintentionally or maliciously stealing, using or otherwise compromising County or personal data may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and appropriate legal action.

VIII. EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I agree to the terms and conditions set forth in this policy:

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Witness Name: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Video Surveillance and Recording Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 706.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

Columbia County is utilizing a video management system to monitor public areas to help provide security and safety for individuals and property. Video monitoring for surveillance purposes is limited to uses that do not violate the reasonable expectation of privacy. Video monitoring will be conducted in a professional, ethical, and legal manner.

The objective of this policy is to provide guidelines regarding the use of the video management system owned and operated by Columbia County, and the video recorded thereby. The existence of this policy does not imply or guarantee that any camera will be monitored in real-time 24 hours a day, nor at any specific time.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Columbia County personnel in the use of camera surveillance, video recording, and distribution.

III. ACCESS

Only authorized personnel will have access to the video management system. Personnel needing access must receive authorization from their division director or elected official. Use of the video management system will be restricted to the use for which access is approved.

Once the request has been approved and a level of access has been determined, the access will be set up by the IT Department as designated and approved.

IV. APPROPRIATE USE

All information obtained from the video management system shall only be used for official purposes. Legitimate safety and security purposes for surveillance camera monitoring and video recording review include but are not limited to:

- Protection of individuals, property and buildings including building perimeter, entrances and exits, customer service locations, elevators, parking areas, etc.
- Investigation of criminal activity and specific complaints.
- Support of law enforcement investigations.
- Monitoring of traffic and pedestrian activity.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: REMOVED: October 18, 2022	TOPIC:
<i>Policy Number 705.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

This section is blank intentionally.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Video Surveillance and Recording Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 706.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- Monitoring of special event activity.
- Monitoring of access control systems including the monitoring and recording of access transactions at entrances to buildings and other areas.
- Patrol of public areas.
- Enforcement of parking policy.
- Protection of pedestrians.

Anyone who violates the intended use of this system is subject to disciplinary action.

V. OPERATION

The video management system is intended to remain operational 24 hours a day and seven days per week unless interrupted by power, network, or other mechanical failure.

Certain cameras have the ability to be controlled remotely by users with certain levels of access. The ability to control the movement of the cameras will be determined by the level of access the user is granted. The cameras have preset movements that will be programmed to fulfill the primary purpose of the cameras.

In the event of an emergency situation, all staff not involved in management of the system or responding to such emergencies shall immediately cease activities involving the control of camera equipment. This will allow emergency response staff to access the cameras to best respond to the situation.

VI. MAINTENANCE

The IT Department shall be notified immediately in the event any part of the system malfunctions or becomes inoperative.

Should it be determined that a system component has been intentionally damaged, a Risk Management report will be completed or the Columbia County Sheriff's Office will be contacted to investigate, whichever is appropriate.

VII. VIDEO EXPORTING

Personnel with access to video will be required to indicate the need to export video upon their request for access. If the request is approved, such exports will only be done for the purpose for which specific access was granted.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Video Surveillance and Recording Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 706.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

VIII. RETENTION AND SECURITY OF RECORDS

- The designated retention period for video surveillance records is 72 hours (3 days), at which time the system will begin to overwrite older records.
- Any exported video will be subject to retention schedules for which the video was created. For example, if a video is exported and submitted as evidence, the video would be subject to evidentiary retention requirements.
- The video surveillance transmission and storage equipment will be maintained in a secure area that is only accessible by authorized personnel.
- Any exported video will be maintained in a secure fashion.

IX. DISTRIBUTION AND OPEN RECORDS REQUESTS

- Distribution of video beyond authorized users shall be strictly regulated.
- Law enforcement personnel are authorized to export and utilize for evidentiary and administrative purposes as delineated by department policy. Any other distribution shall be required to follow open records requirements.
- Any entity wishing to submit an open records request will be directed to the appropriate office maintaining the video data or to the County Clerk's Office. Staff will only distribute video within their department and within the County as such distribution conforms to policy as well as the use for which access was granted.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: March 17, 2020 AMENDED: January 19, 2021 October 18, 2022</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Acceptable Use Policy</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 707.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i></p>

I. PURPOSE

Columbia County has devoted a significant amount of fiscal and human resources to the acquisition, installation, configuration, and maintenance of various types of technology. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees understand the acceptable uses of the technology resources that have been provided in order to maintain a productive and secure working environment.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all departments, offices and other units of Columbia County Government including any and all other government employees, contractors or other persons authorized to access Columbia County technology hardware, software, and network resources.

III. DEFINITIONS

Electronic Mail (email): A digital mechanism for exchanging messages through Internet or intranet communication platforms. End users use a client software (such as Microsoft Outlook) to create, send, and receive messages from other users.

Internet: A globally-connected network system that is used to transmit data through various types of media.

Mobile Device: A hand-held tablet, phone, or other device that is made for portability and typically connects wirelessly to networks and associated devices.

Network: A group of computer systems and other devices that are linked together in order to facilitate communication and resource sharing among users.

Social Media: A wide-ranging term that encompasses any internet-based software platform that facilitates content sharing among users.

User: A person who uses technology in the course of performing their job duties.

IV. REFERENCES

This policy shall work in conjunction with all other technology policies as approved and distributed as part of Columbia County’s Comprehensive Policy Manual (CPM).

V. RESPONSIBILITY

The **Technology Services Director**, working in partnership with the County Manager’s Office, Division Directors, and Department Heads, will develop policies that direct the appropriate use of Columbia County technology resources.

The **Information Technology Department** maintains primary responsibility for implementing and enforcing technology policy, including the monitoring of acceptable use as defined herein.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: March 17, 2020 AMENDED: January 19, 2021 October 18, 2022</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Acceptable Use Policy</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 707.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i></p>

Certain departments such as **Broadband Utility, Fire Rescue, GIS, Water Utility, and Traffic Engineering** may require certain personnel to maintain the capability to perform various IT-related functions within the scope of their employment. This capability is only authorized with the knowledge and permission of the County Manager’s Office.

County Department Managers are responsible for ensuring their employees use technology tools in a manner that is productive and protects the equipment and system security and integrity.

Employees are responsible for using equipment issued to them in the manner for which it is intended and as it is described in this policy.

VI. POLICY

Columbia County shall establish policies, standards, and procedures that address the acceptable uses of County-supplied technology in order to ensure that the County’s investment is properly applied and used for business purposes. These policies shall address, but are not limited to:

- Identifying the proper and improper uses of technological tools, including the County network, County-supplied hardware and software, email, social media, mobile devices, and physical facilities.
- Identifying means of reporting and responding to unauthorized use.

VII. GENERAL PROVISIONS

The following provisions apply to all uses of technology described within this policy.

All usage of Columbia County technology resources may be monitored and employees should neither expect nor demand any right to privacy.

Computer transactions resulting from the use of technology supplied by the County are the property of the County and are thus subject to open records laws.

Employees will be provided with certain technology tools that they will use in the execution of their job functions. It is the responsibility of the employee to secure these tools and take reasonable care of them. Exercising a lack of care or attention to technology tools that results in the damage or destruction of a piece of equipment will involve the Risk Management Department and shall be subject to the provisions of the *Enforcement* section of this policy.

Any questions regarding the appropriate use of technology resources can be directed to the IT Service Desk at 706-312-3499 or servicedesk@columbiacountyga.gov.

Access to all systems and platforms should adhere to the County’s *Password Policy* as found in the Comprehensive Policy Manual.

General Unauthorized Use

Employees may not engage in the following or similar activities. These prohibitions apply to all

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: March 17, 2020 AMENDED: January 19, 2021 October 18, 2022</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Acceptable Use Policy</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 707.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i></p>

aspects of technology as described in this policy:

Using Columbia County technology resources for personal business.

Using resources in support of unlawful activities as defined by federal, state, and local law, including the sending or sharing with unauthorized persons any information that is confidential by law, rule or regulation.

Utilizing resources for activities that violate conduct policies established by the County.

Using technology to access, copy, add, alter, damage, delete or destroy any data or computer software unless specifically authorized.

Any other activity addressed in “Unauthorized Use” sections of this policy that address specific types of technology.

Enforcement and Violations

Any employee who violates this policy or improperly uses Columbia County technology resources shall be subject to the provisions of the *Enforcement* section of this policy.

VIII. GENERAL NETWORK, HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE SYSTEM USE

Authorized Use

Hardware and software is purchased, owned, and maintained by Columbia County. It is provided to assist in conducting business, and employees who are authorized to access County network resources must do so to perform business functions with or on behalf of the County.

Any employee that needs to use the network in the course of performing their job duties must fill out and sign a *New Hire / Transfer Resource Request Form* as maintained by the IT Department.

Unauthorized Use

Moving equipment that is not intended to be portable such as desktops, scanners, monitors, or printers, is not authorized for personnel outside of the IT Department (except for specific non-IT personnel with technical responsibilities and training, authorized through mutual consent of the IT Manager and the customer department manager or division director). The authorized means of moving equipment is to contact the IT Service Desk so that IT resources can be allocated to the task. This provision applies to individual devices as well as moves of multiple devices to facilitate office relocation, renovation, or construction.

Installing software that has not been authorized by the IT Department.

Using hardware, software, or other tools in order to circumvent protective security measures that have been put in place by the County.

Attaching devices that have not been authorized by the IT Department. (Examples: devices such as USB drives, printers and hard drives).

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: March 17, 2020 AMENDED: January 19, 2021 October 18, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Acceptable Use Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 707.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Accessing network resources via a personal, privately-owned device (computers, laptops, tablets, phones) unless authorized by the IT Department.

Using network resources to play or download games, music or videos that are not in support of business functions.

Leaving workstations or devices unattended without engaging password protection.

Permitting another person to perform work under your County network login unless that person is a member of IT or GIS working on a known issue in their respective area of responsibility.

Employees are encouraged to contact the IT Service Desk or the GIS Department, depending on the issue, to confirm that any on-site contact is legitimate.

Utilizing unauthorized peer-to-peer networking or peer-to-peer file sharing. Use of cloud-based sharing platforms is governed under the County's *Internet-Based Services Policy*.

Performing or attempting to perform any activities, without authorization from IT, which may compromise or attempt to discover weaknesses in the security of the network.

IX. INTERNET

Internet Access

The County provides Internet access to employees so that it may be used for activities that support County business, including (but not limited to) access to Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) systems, compiling research/information, taking job-related training, and similar activities.

Employees that need Internet access *to fulfill their job duties* must fill out and sign *New Hire / Transfer Resource Request Form*. IT will set up internet access for the employee subject to the conditions in this policy.

Internet access for personal use during normal business hours is permitted, but must not interfere with the employee's work, subject to the interpretation of the employee's supervisor.

Sites that are deemed as security risks or are otherwise objectionable (per the *Unauthorized Use* section below) will be restricted.

Unauthorized Use

Using the Internet in a manner that impairs performance or otherwise damages any system, including but not limited to computer gaming and streaming of non-work-related audio or video.

Stealing, damaging and/or deleting any electronic data which the employee is not authorized to access, modify, or delete.

Transmission of any material that is in violation of United States or Georgia Law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Threatening or obscene material

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: March 17, 2020 AMENDED: January 19, 2021 October 18, 2022</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Acceptable Use Policy</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 707.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i></p>

- Copyrighted material or data considered confidential under local, state or federal laws.
- Offensive or disruptive messages which contain real or implied sexual content, innuendoes, racial slurs, gender specific comments or any other comments that offensively address age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, disability or national origin.

Searching for jobs outside of the Columbia County organization.

Advertising or conducting personal business.

X. SOCIAL MEDIA

This policy addresses the use of social media as 1) a platform for County news and information, and 2) a personal tool used by employees for non-work-related purposes.

Social Media Access (Official County Platforms)

An Official County Social Media Platform is an account with a social media provider such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc., intended for the sharing of information. The creation of an official Columbia County presence on social media, as well as the use, standards, and procedures for posting and editing are the purview of the County Manager’s Office.

Editing official social media platforms is permitted only for authorized personnel. The authorizing authority is the County Manager’s Office. Requests should be directed from department managers to division directors through the Public Information Officer (PIO).

It is the responsibility of the authorized user to monitor official county social networking sites to ensure they show current and accurate information.

Personnel who administer official County social media accounts will use a valid county email address for sign-up and other administrative purposes. Additionally, there should be *at least* two persons with access and administrative capabilities on each media platform.

Personnel may not create a personal account that they represent as an official County account.

County social media platforms shall use the official county logo for branding.

County social networking sites will be controlled by a secure user name and password, if possible in accordance with the County’s official *Password Policy* (depending on platform).

No County employee will create or operate an “alternative” site purporting to be the official County social media platform.

No confidential information may be released through social media platforms.

Social Media Access (Business or Personal Use)

In general, use of social media in a County office environment is discouraged because it is not typically part of business software solutions. Social media access through the Internet is available until it is determined by the County Manager’s Office that it is not beneficial to the

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: March 17, 2020 AMENDED: January 19, 2021 October 18, 2022</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Acceptable Use Policy</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 707.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i></p>

County, at which time it may be curtailed or removed.

If permitted by the County Manager’s Office, the necessity of employees to have social media access for *business use* (to conduct research, monitor media, etc.) is subject to the discretion of their department head and/or division director.

If employees opt to use social media platforms *using their personal resources*, the following provisions shall apply:

- Employees should only use personal email addresses and associated credentials in order to access personal social media accounts. It is inappropriate to use a County-issued email address for a personal social media account.
- Employees shall not engage in social media activity that may harm or tarnish the image, reputation and/or goodwill of Columbia County and/or any of its employees. Employees are prohibited from making discriminatory, disparaging, defamatory or harassing comments when blogging or otherwise engaging in online activities.
- Employees may not attribute personal statements, opinions or beliefs to Columbia County when engaged in social media activity. If an employee is expressing his or her personal beliefs and/or opinions online, the employee may not, expressly or implicitly, represent themselves as an employee or representative of Columbia County.
- Employees assume any and all risk associated with their online activities.

Excessive use of social media on personal devices during business hours may be detrimental to productivity and department managers and/or division directors must proactively establish expectations for social media use with their employees.

XI. EMAIL USE POLICY

Email General Provisions

The County shall provide software tools for retrieving and distributing email to all employees to whom an account is assigned.

Email messages composed, sent or received on the email system are and will remain the property of Columbia County, not the employee. Email is considered as a public record and is subject to public information requests and public record laws.

Confidentiality of email messages should not be assumed. Messages can be retrieved and read even though they have been erased from the employee’s email account.

Email is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of the privilege.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: March 17, 2020 AMENDED: January 19, 2021 October 18, 2022</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Acceptable Use Policy</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 707.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i></p>

Email Access

In order to gain access to the Internet and/or County computer systems, an employee’s supervisor must submit a request to the IT Service Desk by completing a *New Hire / Transfer Resource Request Form*.

Employees shall only be granted email privileges following completion of new hire orientation or, at minimum, must receive orientation within three business days of reporting to work.

Employee and Management Responsibilities

Department heads must ensure that employees under their supervision use email in a manner that is productive and protects the security and integrity of Columbia County data and systems.

Employees should check email regularly, take actions as needed, and delete unwanted messages.

Employees are responsible for their own use of email.

Employees are not authorized to retrieve or read email messages not sent to them.

Personal email use by an employee during business hours must not interfere with the employee’s work, subject to interpretation by the employee’s supervisor.

Unauthorized Uses of Email

Transmitting material that is in violation of United States or Georgia Law is prohibited. This material includes, but is not limited to:

- Abusive, threatening or obscene material.
- Copyrighted material or data considered confidential under local, state or federal laws.
- Offensive or disruptive messages which contain real or implied sexual content, innuendoes, racial slurs, gender specific comments or any other comments that offensively address age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, disability or national origin.

Job searches outside of the Columbia County organization.

Sending email related to personal business.

Sending chain letters.

Broadcasting email of commercial, personal, social or political messages or other non-job related solicitations.

Misusing email by sending to large groups or recipient lists of large numbers of people for any of the reasons described in this section.

Knowingly forwarding or clicking on links within email that contain malware, worms, Trojan horses, or any other variety of malicious software as described in the *Information Security Awareness Policy*.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: March 17, 2020 AMENDED: January 19, 2021 October 18, 2022</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Acceptable Use Policy</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 707.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i></p>

XII. MOBILE DEVICES

Columbia County provides employees with various mobile devices that are used to support job functions. These devices are typically tablets and cell phones that enable staff to work in the field. The acceptable use of Mobile Devices is described in the County’s *Mobile Device Usage Policy*.

XIII. PAYMENT CARD INDUSTRY / CREDIT CARDS

Certain job functions within Columbia County government require employees to accept payments from customers. Specialized equipment is often required for these jobs, so procedures, security measures, and training are advised for any personnel filling these roles. These functions are described in the County’s *PCI-DSS Policy*.

XIV. ACCESS TO FACILITIES

Employees may have access to County facilities in which technological assets are stored and operated. Employees are only authorized access to technology facilities and assets as required by their job function. Employees are responsible for acting in the following manner in regard to physical security:

- Be alert and aware of suspicious persons in or near organizational premises. Report or challenge suspicious characters or activities as is appropriate and safe.
- Keep computer equipment in your possession secure at all times whether on organizational premises or away from the organization.
- Report loss or theft of any sensitive documents, memory storage devices, or computer equipment to management and document it with appropriate forms.
- Be sure information assets (including paper) are disposed of properly in accordance with County policies and procedures.
- Suspected violations of physical security must immediately be reported to the employee’s department head and the IT Service Desk.

XV. ENFORCEMENT

Monitoring

Monitoring of compliance with this acceptable use policy shall take place through supervisory monitoring as well as electronic monitoring. “Monitoring” in this context does not mean that the electronic communications of individual employees will be monitored on an ongoing, active, continuous basis without due cause.

If, in the course of monitoring activity, the Information Technology Department becomes aware of usage that endangers the integrity of Columbia County technology resources, the department may take one of the following steps:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: March 17, 2020 AMENDED: January 19, 2021 October 18, 2022</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Acceptable Use Policy</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 707.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i></p>

- Depending on the severity of the issue, IT shall act proactively to stop the dangerous activity, which may include involuntary removal of use of technology rights for employees.
- IT shall inform the department head of the offending parties of the activity and its consequences. Notice may also be provided at the Division and County Manager level depending on severity.
- IT will capture and store information in order to provide to management, law enforcement, or other parties as needed.

Violations

Any employee who, after receiving training related to the acceptable use of County technology resources, is found to have participated in behavior that has violated policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Violations of this policy may also result in a requirement for employees to take additional training related to the acceptable use of the equipment entrusted to them.

Third-Party entities who do not conform to the policies that are described herein may be forbidden entry (physical and/or electronic) and their organization may be in danger of losing existing and future contracts with Columbia County.

Reporting Unauthorized Internet Usage

Any suspected unauthorized use of the Columbia County technology resources should be reported immediately to the department head of the business unit and then to the Information Technology Department through the Service Desk.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: REMOVED: March 17, 2020	TOPIC:
<i>Policy Number 708.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

This section is blank intentionally.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: REMOVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC:
<i>Policy Number 709.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

This section is blank intentionally.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: REMOVED: September 19, 2023	TOPIC:
<i>Policy Number 710.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

This section is blank intentionally.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Data Center Access Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 711.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

The procedures described in this document have been developed to maintain a secure Data Center environment and must be followed by personnel working in the Data Center. It is important that any department having a requirement for the installation of infrastructure in the Data Center fully understand and agree to these procedures. The Data Center provides specific environmental, enhanced security access, fire alarms/suppression, Uninterruptible Power Supplies (UPS), campus backbone connectivity, and a number of other elements required by the mission-critical resources that it houses.

II. GENERAL

A. Overview

Security for the Data Center is the responsibility of the Information Technology Department. The IT Manager is responsible for the administration of this policy. The following are the general requirements, policies and practices that govern access to this sensitive area. It is important that all county staff and business associates follow these policies and practices. Failure to do so is considered grounds for personnel action.

B. Primary Guidelines

The Data Center is a restricted area requiring a much greater level of control than normal non-public county spaces. Only those individuals who are expressly authorized to do so may enter this area. Access privileges will be granted to individuals who have a legitimate business need to be in the Data Center. Furthermore, this area may only be entered to conduct authorized county business. Any questions regarding policies and procedures should be addressed to the IT Manager.

The only exception allowed to the Data Center Access Policies and Procedures is temporary suspension of these rules if it becomes necessary to provide emergency access to medical, fire and/or law enforcement officials, etc.

III. Levels of Access

There are three “Levels of Access” to the Data Center – General Access, Limited Access, and Escorted Access.

1. **General Access** is given to people who have free access authority into the Data Center. General Access is granted to IT Department staff whose job responsibilities require that they have access to the area. Individuals with General Access will be granted a key combination to the Data Center door. Individuals with General Access to the area may allow properly authorized

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Data Center Access Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 711.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

individuals Escorted Access to the Data Center. If a person with General Access allows Escorted Access to an individual, the person granting access is responsible for escorting the individual granted access and seeing to it protocol is followed.

2. **Escorted Access** is closely monitored access given to people who have a legitimate business need for infrequent access to the Data Center. A person given Escorted Access to the area must sign in and out under the direct supervision of a person with General Access, must provide positive identification upon demand, and must leave the area when requested to do so. The sign in log will be maintained by the IT administrative coordinator.
3. **Limited Access** is granted to a person who does not qualify for General Access but has a legitimate business reason for unsupervised access to the Data Center. Limited Access personnel cannot authorize others to be granted unsupervised access to the Data Center. Limited Access personnel can only grant Escorted Access to individuals where related to the grantor's business in the Data Center. The grantor is responsible for these individuals and must remain with them at all times while in the Data Center.

IV. DATA CENTER DOOR

All doors to the Data Center must remain locked at all times and may only be temporarily opened for periods not to exceed that minimally necessary to:

- a) Allow officially approved and logged entrance and exit of authorized individuals
- b) Permit the transfer of supplies/equipment as directly supervised by a person with General Access to the area
- c) Prop open a door to the Data Center **ONLY** if necessary to increase airflow into the Data Center in the case of an HVAC failure. In this case, staff personnel with General Access must be present and limit access to the Data Center
- d) IT Department contact information will be posted on all doors

V. EXCEPTION REPORTING

All infractions of the Data Center Access Policies and Procedures shall be reported to the IT Department. If warranted (e.g.: emergency, imminent danger, etc.) law enforcement will be notified as soon as reasonably possible.

Any unauthorized personnel found in the Data Center must be reported to a member of the IT Department. The unauthorized individual should be escorted from the Data Center and a full report should be immediately submitted to the IT Manager.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Data Center Access Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 711.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Individuals with General Access to the area are to monitor the area and remove any individual who appears to be compromising either security of the area or its activities, or who are disrupting operation. It is particularly important that individuals with General Access show initiative in monitoring and maintaining the security of the Data Center.

VI. REQUESTING ACCESS TO THE DATA CENTER

Departments/projects that have equipment in the Data Center may request access to the Data Center. The individuals designated by the requesting department/project will be granted access once the IT Manager authorizes them.

Upon approval by the IT Manager, the IT staff will setup an appointment with the person requesting access in order to provide the person with a copy of the county's Data Center Access Policies and Procedures.

When a person who has access to the Data Center terminates his/her employment or transfers out of the department, the department must notify the IT Manager as soon as possible so that the person's access to the Data Center can be removed. This is extremely important in cases where the employee was terminated for cause.

VII. GENERAL DATA CENTER OPERATIONS POLICIES FOR DEPARTMENTS/PROJECTS

1. **General Hosting Policy for Data Center Capacity Planning.** The IT Department must be consulted for any new equipment to be installed in the Data Center. It is advisable to consult with the IT Department as early as possible to confirm your equipment can actually be hosted.
2. **General Policy on Infrastructure Work in the Data Center.** The IT Department must be notified of all work pertaining to infrastructure in the Data Center. This includes things such as equipment installation/removal, construction or any other activity that adds/removes assets from the Data center.
3. **General Safety Policy.** All individuals in the Data Center must conduct their work in observance with all applicable safety policies.
4. **General Cleanliness Policy.** The Data Center must be kept as clean as possible. All individuals are expected to clean up after themselves. Boxes and trash need to be disposed of properly. Tools must be replaced to their rightful place. Food and drink are not allowed in the Data Center. The Data Center will not be used as a storage space and must be kept free of all unnecessary items or clutter.
5. **Exceptions.** Exceptions will need to be approved by the Deputy County Manager.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Data Closet Access Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 712.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

The procedures described in this document have been developed to maintain a secure Data Closet environment and must be followed by personnel working in data closets. It is important that any department having a requirement for the installation of infrastructure in data closets fully understand and agree to these procedures. Each county data closet provides specific environmental, enhanced security access, fire alarms/suppression, Uninterruptible Power Supplies (UPS), campus backbone connectivity, and a number of other elements required by the mission-critical resources that it houses.

II. GENERAL

A. Overview

Security for data closets is the responsibility of the Information Technology Department. The IT Manager is responsible for the administration of this policy. The following are the general requirements, policies and practices that govern access to these sensitive areas. It is important that all county staff and business associates follow these policies and practices. Failure to do so is considered grounds for personnel action.

B. Primary Guidelines

Data closets are restricted areas requiring a much greater level of control than normal non-public county spaces. Only those individuals who are expressly authorized to do so may enter these areas. Access privileges will be granted to individuals who have a legitimate business need to be in data closets. Furthermore, these areas may only be entered to conduct authorized county business. Any questions regarding policies and procedures should be addressed to the IT Manager.

IT data assets are sometimes collocated within building electrical, mechanical and custodial closets. The office responsible for the area should ensure only staff and vendors who are expressly authorized to do so may enter these areas.

The only exception allowed to the Data Closet Access Policies and Procedures is temporary suspension of these rules if it becomes necessary to provide emergency access to medical, fire and/or law enforcement officials, etc.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Data Closet Access Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 712.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

III. Levels of Access

There are three “Levels of Access” to the data closets – General Access, Limited Access, and Escorted Access.

1. **General Access** is given to people who have free access authority into data closets. General Access is granted to IT Department staff whose job responsibilities require that they have access to the area. Individuals with General Access will be granted a key to the data closet doors. Individuals with General Access to the area may allow properly authorized individuals Escorted Access to data closets. If a person with General Access allows Escorted Access to an individual, the person granting access is responsible for escorting the individual granted access and seeing to it protocol is followed.
2. **Escorted Access** is closely monitored access given to people who have a legitimate business need for infrequent access to data closets. A person given Escorted Access to the area must be under the direct supervision of a person with General Access, must provide positive identification upon demand, and must leave the area when requested to do so.
3. **Limited Access** is granted to a person who does not qualify for General Access but has a legitimate business reason for unsupervised access to the data closet. Limited Access personnel cannot authorize others to be granted unsupervised access to data closets. Limited Access personnel can only grant Escorted Access to individuals where related to the grantor’s business in the data closet. The grantor is responsible for these individuals and must escort them in the data closet at all times.

IV. DATA CLOSET DOORS

All doors to data closets must remain locked at all times and may only be temporarily opened for periods not to exceed that minimally necessary to:

- a) Allow officially approved and logged entrance and exit of authorized individuals
- b) Permit the transfer of supplies/equipment as directly supervised by a person with General Access to the area
- c) Prop open a door to a data closet ONLY if necessary to increase airflow into the data closet in the case of an HVAC failure. In this case, staff personnel with General Access must be present and limit access to the data closet
- d) IT Department contact information will be posted on all doors

V. EXCEPTION REPORTING

All infractions of the Data Closet Access Policies and Procedures shall be reported to the IT Department. If warranted (e.g.: emergency, imminent danger, etc.) the law enforcement will be notified as soon as reasonably possible.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Data Closet Access Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 712.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Any unauthorized personnel found in a data closet must be reported to a member of the IT Department. The unauthorized individual should be escorted from the data closet and a full report should be immediately submitted to the IT Manager.

Individuals with General Access to the area are to monitor the area and remove any individual who appears to be compromising either security of the area or its activities, or who are disrupting operation. It is particularly important that individuals with General Access show initiative in monitoring and maintaining the security of all data closets.

VI. REQUESTING ACCESS TO DATA CLOSETS

Departments/projects that have equipment in data closets may request access to those areas. The individuals designated by the requesting department/project will be granted access once the IT Manager authorizes them.

Upon approval by the IT Manager, the IT staff will setup an appointment with the person requesting access in order to provide the person with a copy of the county's Data Closet Access Policies and Procedures.

When a person who has access to data closets terminates his/her employment or transfers out of the department, the department must notify the IT Manager as soon as possible so that the person's access to any data closets can be removed. This is extremely important in cases where the employee was terminated for cause.

VII. GENERAL DATA CLOSET OPERATIONS POLICIES FOR DEPARTMENTS/PROJECTS

1. **General Hosting Policy for Data Closet Capacity Planning.** The IT Department must be consulted for any new equipment to be installed in any county data closets. It is advisable to consult with the IT Department as early as possible to confirm your equipment can actually be hosted.
2. **General Policy on Infrastructure Work in Data Closets.** The IT Department must be notified of all work pertaining to infrastructure in county data closets. This includes things such as equipment installation/removal, construction or any other activity that adds/removes assets from these areas.
3. **General Safety Policy.** All individuals working in data closets must conduct their work in observance with all applicable safety policies.
4. **General Cleanliness Policy.** Data closets must be kept as clean as possible. All individuals are expected to clean up after themselves. Boxes and trash need to be disposed of properly. Tools must be replaced to their rightful place. Food and drink are not allowed in data closets. The Data closets will not be used as a storage space or custodial closet and must be kept free of all unnecessary items or clutter.
5. **Exceptions.** Exceptions will need to be approved by the Deputy County Manager.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Mobile Device Usage Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 713.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define standards, procedures, and restrictions for end users who have legitimate business requirements to access County data from a mobile device connected to an unmanaged network outside of Columbia County's direct control. This mobile device policy applies to, but is not limited to, all devices and accompanying media that fit the following device classifications:

- Laptop/notebook/tablet computers
- Mobile/cellular phones
- Smartphones
- PDAs
- Home or personal computers used to access County resources
- Any mobile device capable of storing County data and connecting to an unmanaged network.

The policy applies to any hardware and related software that could be used to access County resources, even if the equipment is not County sanctioned, owned, or supplied.

This policy intends to prevent this data from being deliberately or inadvertently stored insecurely on a mobile device or carried over an insecure network where it can potentially be accessed by unsanctioned resources. A breach of this type could result in loss of information, damage to critical applications, loss of revenue, and damage to the County's public image. Therefore, all users employing a mobile device connected to an unmanaged network outside of Columbia County's direct control to backup, store, and otherwise access County data of any type must adhere to this policy.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Columbia County employees, contractors, freelancers, and other agents who utilize either County owned or personally owned mobile device to access, store, back up, relocate or access any County data. Such access to this confidential data is a privilege, not a right. Consequently, employment at Columbia County does not automatically guarantee the initial and ongoing ability to use these devices to gain access to County information.

Addition of new hardware, software, and/or related components to provide additional mobile device connectivity will be managed at the sole discretion of IT. Non-sanctioned use of mobile devices to back up, store, and otherwise access any enterprise-related data is strictly forbidden.

This policy is complementary to any previously implemented policies dealing specifically with data access, data storage, data movement, and connectivity of mobile devices to any element of the enterprise network.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Mobile Device Usage Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 713.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

III. AFFECTED TECHNOLOGY

Connectivity of all mobile devices will be centrally managed by Columbia County’s IT department and will utilize authentication and strong encryption measures. Although IT is not able to directly manage external devices – such as home PCs – which may require connectivity to the County network, end users are expected to adhere to the same security protocols when connected to non-County equipment. Failure to do so will result in immediate suspension of all network access privileges so as to protect the company’s infrastructure.

IV. APPROPRIATE USE

It is the responsibility of any employee of Columbia County who uses a mobile device to access corporate resources to ensure that all security protocols normally used in the management of data on conventional storage infrastructure are also applied here. It is imperative that any mobile device that is used to conduct County business be utilized appropriately, responsibly, and ethically. Failure to do so will result in immediate suspension of that user’s account. Based on this, the following rules must be observed:

Access Control

1. IT reserves the right to refuse, by physical and non-physical means, the ability to connect mobile devices to County infrastructure. IT will engage in such action if it feels such equipment is being used in such a way that puts the County’s systems, data, users, and citizens at risk.
2. Prior to initial use on the County network or related infrastructure, all mobile devices must be registered with IT. Columbia County IT will maintain a list of approved mobile devices and related software applications and utilities. Devices that are not on this list may not be connected to the County infrastructure. If a preferred device does not appear on this list, contact the Service Desk at servicedesk@columbiacountyga.gov or 706.312.3499. Although IT currently allows only listed devices to be connected to enterprise infrastructure, it reserves the right to update this list in future.
3. End users who wish to connect such devices to non-County network infrastructure to gain access to enterprise data must employ, for their devices and related infrastructure, County-approved security measures deemed necessary by the IT department. Enterprise data is not to be accessed on any hardware that fails to meet Columbia County’s established enterprise IT security standards.
4. All mobile devices attempting to connect to the County network through an unmanaged network (i.e. the Internet) will be inspected using technology centrally managed by Columbia County’s IT department. Devices that have not been previously approved by IT, are not in compliance with IT’s security policies, or represent any threat to the County network or data will not be allowed to connect. Laptop computers or personal PCs may only access the County network and data using a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection. VPN client

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Mobile Device Usage Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 713.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

access will be provided to users as required. Smart mobile devices such as smartphones, and PDAs will access the County network and data using Mobile VPN software installed on the device by IT.

Security

1. Employees using mobile devices and related software for network and data access will, without exception, use secure data management procedures. All mobile devices must be protected by a strong password, and all data stored on the device must be encrypted using strong encryption. See the Columbia County’s password policy for additional information. Employees agree to never disclose their passwords to anyone, particularly to family members if business work is conducted from home.
2. All users of mobile devices must employ reasonable physical security measures. End users are expected to secure all such devices used for this activity whether or not they are actually in use and/or being carried. This includes, but is not limited to, passwords, encryption, and physical control of such devices whenever they contain enterprise data. Any non-County computers used to synchronize with these devices will have installed anti-virus and anti-malware software deemed necessary by Columbia County’s IT department. Anti-virus signature files on any additional client machines – such as a home PC – on which this media will be accessed, must be up to date.
3. Passwords and other confidential data as defined by Columbia County’s IT department are not to be stored unencrypted on mobile devices.
4. Any mobile device that is being used to store County data must adhere to the authentication requirements of Columbia County’s IT department. In addition, all hardware security configurations (personal or company-owned) must be pre-approved by Columbia County’s IT department before any enterprise data-carrying device can be connected to it.
5. IT will manage security policies, network, application, and data access centrally using whatever technology solutions it deems suitable. Any attempt to contravene or bypass these security measures will be deemed an intrusion attempt and will be dealt with in accordance with Columbia County’s security policy.
6. Employees, contractors, and temporary staff will follow all enterprise-sanctioned data removal procedures to permanently erase County-specific data from such devices once their use is no longer required.
7. In the event of a lost or stolen mobile device it is incumbent on the user to report this to IT immediately. The device will be remotely wiped of all data and locked to prevent access by anyone other than IT. If the device is recovered, it can be submitted to IT for re-provisioning.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Mobile Device Usage Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 713.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Help & Support

1. Columbia County's IT department will support its sanctioned hardware and software, but is not accountable for conflicts or problems caused by the use of unsanctioned media, hardware, or software. This applies even to devices already known to the IT department.
2. Employees, contractors, and temporary staff will make no modifications of any kind to County-owned and installed hardware or software without the express approval of Columbia County's IT department. This includes, but is not limited to, any reconfiguration of the mobile device.
3. IT reserves the right, through policy enforcement and any other means it deems necessary, to limit the ability of end users to transfer data to and from specific resources on the enterprise network.

Organizational Protocol

1. IT can and will establish audit trails and these will be accessed, published and used without notice. The end user agrees to and accepts that his or her access and/or connection to Columbia County's networks may be monitored to record dates, times, duration of access, etc., in order to identify unusual usage patterns or other suspicious activity. This is done in order to identify accounts/computers that may have been compromised by external parties. In all cases, data protection remains Columbia County's highest priority.
2. The end user agrees to immediately report to his/her manager and Columbia County's IT department any incident or suspected incidents of unauthorized data access, data loss, and/or disclosure of County resources, databases, networks, etc.

V. POLICY NON-COMPLIANCE

Any employee who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: REMOVED: September 18, 2018	TOPIC:
<i>Policy Number 714.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

This section is blank intentionally.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Third-Party Access Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 715.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

The Purpose of Columbia County’s Third-Party Access Policy is to establish the rules for third-party access to Columbia County information systems and the data center, third-party responsibilities, and protection of Columbia County information.

II. SCOPE

Columbia County’s Third-Party Access Policy outlines responsibilities and expectations of any individual from an outside source (contracted or otherwise) who requires access to our information systems for the purpose of performing work. This policy also outlines the responsibilities and expectations of Columbia County employees responsible for the contracting and/or supervising of a third party. A third party could consist of, but is not limited to: software vendors, contractors, consultants, business partners, and security companies.

III. POLICY

Data Center Third Party Policy Guidelines

1. All third-party access to the data center should be scheduled to occur during regular business hours. If this is not possible, a staff member from the IT department will be scheduled after hours to accompany the third party.
2. When third parties are scheduled to have access to the data center, Columbia County IT department must be notified in advance of the date, time, and type of work to be performed.
3. When the third party arrives, he/she will report to the staff contact that scheduled the visit. The staff contact will escort the third party to the data center. At this point, the third party is to be informed that he/she will take further direction from the IT staff point person in relation to their activity in the data center.
4. Prior to the onset of any work, the third party will describe the activities that are planned.
5. The IT staff point person is responsible for explaining what measures need to be taken to protect the computer hardware and software, explain protective measures to the third party, and ensure that the measures are adhered to. In an attempt to offset delays in the work of the third-party individual(s), the IT staff will attempt to minimize the delays within the constraint of safeguarding the systems. The third party will need to clearly understand that they are to allow time for the IT staff to do what needs to be done to protect the computer systems before starting their work.
6. The third party will report to and receive instructions from the IT staff point person regarding their work in the data center. The IT staff point person will also be kept informed of the status of the work, as well as the notification that the work is completed before leaving the area.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Third-Party Access Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 715.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Information Systems Third-Party Policy Guidelines

1. Any third-party agreements and contracts must specify:
 - a. The work that is to be accomplished and work hours. Also, any configuration information of any installed software as well as virus checking of that software.
 - b. Columbia County information that the third party should have access to.
 - c. The minimum security requirements that the third party must meet (i.e., method for remote access).
 - d. How Columbia County information is to be guarded by the third party. Signing of the County's non-disclosure agreement is required.
 - e. Strict use of County information and information resources for the purpose of the business agreement by the third party. Any other County information acquired by the third party in the course of the contract cannot be used for the third-party's own purposes or divulged to others.
 - f. Feasible methods for the destruction, disposal, or return of Columbia County information at the end of the contract.
2. The third party must comply with all applicable Columbia County standards, agreements, practices and policies, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Acceptable use policies.
 - b. Software licensing policies.
 - c. Safety policies.
 - d. Auditing policies.
 - e. Security policies.
 - f. Non-disclosure policies.
 - g. Privacy policies.
3. Columbia County will provide an IT point of contact for the third party whether it is one person from the IT department or an interdepartmental team. This point of contact will liaise with the third party to ensure they are in compliance with these policies.
4. The third party will provide Columbia County with a list of all additional third parties working on the contract. The list must be updated and provided to Columbia County within eight business hours of any staff changes.
5. Third party access to systems must be uniquely identifiable and authenticated, and password management must comply with the Columbia County Password Policy.
6. Any third party computer/laptop/PDA/tablet PC that is connected to Columbia County systems must have up-to-date virus protection and patches. The third party will be held accountable for any damage occurred to Columbia County in the event that an incident occurs.
7. If applicable, each third party on-site employee must acquire a Columbia County ID badge from the IT department that must be displayed at all times while on the premises. The badge must be returned to Columbia County upon termination or completion of a

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Third-Party Access Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 715.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- contract.
8. Each third-party employee that has access to Columbia County sensitive information should be cleared to handle that information.
 9. If applicable, an explanation of how Columbia County's information will be handled and protected at the third party's facility/site must be addressed.
 10. Third-party employees must report all security incidences to the appropriate Columbia County personnel.
 11. The third party must follow all applicable change control procedures and processes.
 12. All software used by the third party in providing service to Columbia County must be properly inventoried and licensed.
 13. All third-party employees are required to comply with all applicable auditing regulations and Columbia County auditing requirements, including the auditing of the third-party's work.
 14. Regular work hours and duties will be defined in the contract. Work outside of defined parameters must be approved in writing by appropriate Columbia County management.
 15. All third-party maintenance equipment on Columbia County's network that connects to the outside world via telephone lines, leased line, or the network will remain disabled except when in use for authorized maintenance.
 16. Upon departure of the third party from the contract for any reason, the third party will ensure that all sensitive information is collected and returned to the company or destroyed. The third party will also provide written certification of that destruction. All equipment and supplies must also be returned, as well as any access cards and identification badges. All equipment and supplies retained by the third party must be documented by authorized Columbia County management.
 17. Columbia County will eliminate third-party physical access to facilities after the contract has been completed or terminated. The following steps must be performed:
 - a. Remove third party authentication and all means of access to systems.
 - b. If needed, make sure that incoming e-mail is re-routed to an appropriate person.
 - c. Archive any third-party software configuration, and transfer ownership to designated internal staff.
 - d. Get a written statement from the third party that any software created and/or installed by the third-party is free of viruses and any other malicious code.

IV. ENFORCEMENT

Any employee who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>VPN Usage and Access Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 716.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

Columbia County allows remote access VPN connections for approved employees, consultants, and 3rd party vendors. VPN access may be provided via Cisco IPSec client, Cisco Anyconnect, or Netmotion client. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for all forms of remote access VPN connections to the Columbia County Board of Commissioners network.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Columbia County personnel, consultants, and 3rd party vendors who may access Columbia County's network via remote access VPN.

III. Access

Only authorized personnel will have access to Columbia County's network via remote access VPN. County personnel needing access must receive authorization from their department head, division director, or elected official for approval. Accounts for non-County personnel must be approved by the County Manager or the Deputy County Manager. Use of remote access VPN will be restricted to the use for which access is approved.

Once the request has been approved and a level of access has been determined, the access will be set up by the IT Department as designated and approved.

IV. APPROPRIATE USE

- VPN provides secure access into Columbia County Board of Commissioners' network. VPN does not provide Internet connectivity. Users are responsible for providing their own Internet service via dial-up, cable modem, DSL, or other means in order to use Columbia County's VPN service.
- VPN clients will only be installed on Columbia County issued pcs or laptops for County personnel. The VPN client will not be supported on personal laptops, desktops, tablets, or mobile devices.
- User accounts will be created only at the request of the department head or division director by submitting a signed work order request to the IT ServiceDesk.
- Accounts for non-Columbia County users must be approved by the County Manager or the Deputy County Manager. Non-Columbia County users must comply with all Columbia County security policies.
- Users must sign and agree to the VPN policy before use.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>VPN Usage and Access Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 716.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- Employees and vendors will be limited to the resources to which they need access.
- It is the responsibility of users with VPN privileges to ensure that unauthorized persons are not allowed access to Columbia County's internal network.
- VPN Access will be controlled by a secure username and password. Shared accounts are not permitted.
- Only Columbia County IT approved VPN clients and operating systems are permitted.
- Users will be disconnected after 30 minutes of inactivity.
- All users are subject to auditing.

V. OPERATION

The remote access VPN system is intended to remain operational 24 hours a day and seven days per week unless interrupted by power, network, or other mechanical failure.

VI. Enforcement

Any employee who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Service Desk Problem & Request Management</i>
<i>Policy Number 717.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. OVERVIEW

The Service Desk is the front line for receiving customer-submitted incidents as well as service requests. The Service Desk works to provide customers with advice, guidance, and the rapid restoration of services. Analysts log incidents or requests into the IT service management system and either resolve the ticket or escalate it to the next level of support.

II. CONTACTING THE SERVICE DESK

The Service Desk operates Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, excluding county holidays. To report a problem or submit a request, use one of the mechanisms listed below.

- Phone: 706.312.3499 (FIXX)
- Email: servicedesk@columbiacountyga.gov
- FAX: 706.868.3398
- In person at the IT Office in Building C
- After hours support is provided for 24x7 departments and mission critical services by calling 706.868.3390

Before contacting the Service Desk, users are encouraged to find a resolution by utilizing available documentation, application and on-line help, and posted FAQ's when possible.

When contacting the Service Desk, please provide as much information as possible including contact information, computer name, a description of the problem and any error messages. This will assist the Service Desk with logging, triaging, and routing problems without repeated calls to gather problem details.

III. SERVICE DESK PROBLEM MANAGEMENT

Severity Levels and Priority Codes

A problem is an unplanned or unexpected event that deviates from standard activities or normal operating conditions. The following severity levels and priority codes document the prioritization and resolution of problem types. These definitions will be consistently communicated and utilized by all Service Desk analysts when dealing with commonly shared problem, requests, and changes.

Severity Levels are designed to work in conjunction with Priority Levels. Severity Levels identify the pure business impact of a problem or request whereas Priority Codes offer a way to capture the business situation or requirement on a personal level. Both the Severity Level and the Priority Code must be assessed and captured on the Service Desk ticket. The use of these criteria is designed to assist in workflow prioritization based on common definitions.

Severity Levels – a code that identifies a technology failure, which has direct business impact.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Service Desk Problem & Request Management</i>
<i>Policy Number 717.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

The code allows the Service Desk to respond appropriately with the proper resources within a predefined timeframe. It is not based on the emotions or circumstances of the customer.

Severity Level Definitions

Severity	Scope	Target Customer Status Update Time	Target Resolution Time
Critical 1 A major production outage, performance degradation or instability causing significant impact to the County	- Many or most customers are unable to function - Mission critical system(s) down - Mission critical application(s) down - Mission critical server/circuit down	Every 60 minutes or as agreed upon with the customer(s)	4 hours or less
High 2 Large numbers of customers are impacted. Entire office, department or campus is experiencing a similar problem. Small number of customers cannot use a mission critical application	- Multiple customers unable to function - Major performance issues - Multiple customers running on contingencies or work-around	Every 2 hours or as agreed upon with the customer(s)	8 hours or less
Medium 3 Individual unable to use non-mission critical applications(s). Customers can work with minimal impact to their productivity	- Customer having difficulty, but basically operational - Customer unable to carry out necessary tasks	Upon request	24 hours or less
Low 4 (default) Individual request or problem that does not impact business.	- Standard service, install, move, add, change - Customer has simple question or problem - How to's	Upon request	2 business days or less or as scheduled

***Note** – The IT Manager and Deputy County Manager will be notified immediately for all Severity 1 and 2 incidents.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Service Desk Problem & Request Management</i>
<i>Policy Number 717.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Priority Code – A code that allows the customer’s unique situation, title, or emotion to be documented and taken into account when the Service Desk priorities its workflow. This code allows the IT Department to respond appropriately with the proper resources within an acceptable timeframe.

Priority Code Definitions

Priority 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VIP is experiencing an impact to productivity or requires special attention - Individual is experiencing significant productivity loss - Existing/new employee is completely inoperable
Priority 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual is requesting faster than average response based on business need - Individual is requesting scheduled service that has a hard deadline for resolution fulfillment
Priority 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual is experiencing average operation impact from problem or request and does not have above average or extenuating circumstances
Priority 4 (default)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual has made a service request in advance of need that is easily handled within resolution time - Usually a Severity 4 request

IV. SUPPORT LEVELS

Level 1

Basic level of support where incidents and requests are logged into the Service Desk system, triaged, troubleshoot, and elementary problems are resolved. Examples of this include basic “how to” questions, hardware diagnostics, password resets, etc.

Level 2

At this level of support, incidents and requests are logged into the Service Desk system, the relevant details are obtained, and the call is routed to the appropriate IT support resource. (Desktop, Network, Application support, Server, or Operations)

Level 3

These problems usually involve advanced levels of support that require specialized technical or application expertise and possibly outside vendor assistance.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Service Desk Problem & Request Management</i>
<i>Policy Number 717.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

All Calls should be handled by the Service Desk to maintain an accurate record of County service requests.

V. SCHEDULED DOWNTIME

From time to time, it will be necessary to make systems unavailable for the purpose of performing upgrades maintenance, or housekeeping tasks. Systems affected include servers, phone systems, applications, and network infrastructure. The goal of these tasks is to ensure maximum system performance and prevent future system failures.

Service Desk will inform all affected users 2 business days prior to any scheduled downtime. The notification will include what systems/services will be affected and predicted duration of the downtime. A follow-up reminder will be provided the business day of the scheduled downtime. All affected users will be informed upon completion of scheduled downtime.

VI. EMERGENCY DOWNTIME

Unexpected circumstances may arise where systems or services will be interrupted without prior notice. Every effort will be made to avoid such circumstances. However, incidences may arise involving a compromise of system security, the potential for damage of equipment or data, or emergency repairs. Once IT realizes emergency downtime has happened, Service Desk will inform all affected users by e-mail and/or phone if available. Service Desk will inform all affected users by e-mail and/or phone once the emergency downtime has ended.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021 <i>Policy Number 718.1</i>	TOPIC: <i>Wireless Network Access and Usage Policy</i>
	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

Columbia County has a wireless network that spans across over 100 wireless access points throughout all County facilities and parks. The wireless network is intended for use by County personnel to access Columbia County's network and for use by the citizens to access the Internet while at County maintained locations. Use of the wireless network will be conducted in a professional, ethical, and legal manner.

The objective of this policy is to provide guidelines regarding access and use of Columbia County Board of Commissioners' wireless network.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Columbia County personnel who use the wireless network and to all citizens that access Columbia County's the public wireless network.

III. ACCESS

Only authorized personnel will have access to Columbia County's internal network via wireless access. Personnel needing access must receive authorization from their division director or elected official for approval. Use of the wireless network will be restricted to the use for which access is approved.

Patrons of Columbia County maintained locations will have access to the Internet only via the wireless network. Use of the wireless network is not guaranteed.

IV. APPROPRIATE USE

- Only approved wireless devices will be permitted to access Columbia County's wireless network.
- Devices will be issued by Columbia County's IT department only at the request of the department head or division director by submitting a signed work order request with the IT ServiceDesk.
- Departments will be responsible for all costs incurred by the purchase of wireless devices for permanent assignment to that department.
- Wireless adapter software will be configured by Columbia County IT staff with appropriate security settings.
- Vendors and patrons may use Columbia County's wireless network to access the Internet only.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Wireless Network Access and Usage Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 718.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- All wireless access to the Internet will be filtered for appropriate content. Inappropriate content will be blocked.
- No right to privacy is granted for data transmitted across Columbia County’s wireless network.
- Employee security settings may be changed as needed. All users with permanent wireless devices will be contacted by Columbia County IT in order schedule a time to make necessary changes on the wireless adaptor software.
- All computers connected to Columbia County’s network via wireless must comply with the Columbia County wireless policy and all applicable Columbia County Security policies.
- Employees, vendors, and patrons will be limited to the resources to which they need access.
- It is the responsibility of users with wireless privileges to ensure that unauthorized persons are not allowed access to Columbia County’s internal network.
- It is unacceptable to use the County’s wireless network for making, distributing and/or using unauthorized duplicates of copyrighted material, including software applications, proprietary data, and information technology resources. This includes sharing of entertainment (e.g., music, movies, video games) files in violation of copyright law.
- Only Columbia County IT staff has the authority to install wireless access points. Any unauthorized access points will be immediately disconnected and Columbia County IT staff will take possession of the unit. All information of unauthorized access point(s) will be routed to the proper authorities to investigate.

V. OPERATION

Columbia County’s wireless network is intended to remain operational 24 hours a day and seven days per week unless interrupted by power, network, or other mechanical failure. Columbia County can disable the public wireless network at its discretion upon the approval of the IT Manager, the Deputy County Manager or the County Manager. Public access for patrons is provided at best effort levels with no guarantee of service, signal strength, or bandwidth. Public access will not be provided to the detriment of the county network.

VI. Enforcement

Any employee who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Voicemail Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 719.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

Columbia County provides voicemail to County employees for business purposes. Employees should monitor their use to these purposes in mind. The use of voicemail at Columbia County should comply with the other County policies regarding IT equipment usage and disclosure of information.

Personal use of voicemail is allowable but should not interfere with or conflict with business use. Employees should exercise good judgment regarding the reasonableness of personal use.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Columbia County personnel in the use of voicemail services.

III. CONFIDENTIALITY

Columbia County does not guarantee the confidentiality or privacy of voicemail messages and makes no promises regarding their security. Decisions as to what information to include in such messages should be made with this in mind.

Columbia County reserves the right to conduct routine maintenance, track problems, and maintain the integrity of its systems. As is the case with all data, voicemail messages may be revealed by such activities.

Columbia County does not monitor the contents of voicemail messages as a routine matter. However, such monitoring may be conducted when required to protect the integrity of the systems or to comply with legal obligations.

Columbia County reserves the right to inspect the contents of voicemail messages in the course of an investigation. Columbia County will comply with all legal requirements for access of such information.

IV. APPROPRIATE USE

- Do not use the County's Voicemail system to defame, harass, intimidate or threaten any other person(s), or to send unnecessarily repetitive messages (for example, chain mail).
- Do not give your password to anyone or allow anyone else to access your mailbox.
- Do not use anyone else's password or voicemail box.
- Do not use a County voicemail box for outside personal business use.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Voicemail Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 719.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

V. OPERATION

The County's voicemail system is intended to remain operational 24 hours a day and seven days per week unless interrupted by power, network, or other mechanical failure.

VI. Enforcement

Any personnel found in violation of this policy will be subject to, but not limited to, loss of voicemail privileges.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: March 15, 2016 June 18, 2019 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Change Management</i>
<i>Policy Number 720.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

The objective of Technology Change Management is to minimize the adverse impact of required changes on system integrity, preserve security, honor service level agreements, and enable the coordination and planning of changes in order to provide a stable operating environment.

This policy authorizes the establishment of a Technology Advisory Board (TAB), which is responsible for overseeing all changes made to information technology and communication systems throughout Columbia County.

II. SCOPE

The Technology Advisory Board authority encompasses all IT systems, communication systems and other forms of technology that support critical business functions. The TAB operates under the authority of the Deputy County Manager and the Director of Technology Services, and is responsible for any changes made to any of the following:

- A. **Software applications.** Any changes to software used in production, such as installations of new software, patches, and version upgrades. This provision includes operating systems, business applications, and device control software.
- B. **Hardware.** Addition, removal, or relocation of network, telephony or server/storage devices or wiring. This includes all devices connected to the production network with the exception of those devices indicated below in the "Out of Scope Items" section.
- C. **Data.** Any changes to databases such as changes in the table structure or changes in source data, or changes to the database software.
- D. **Schedule changes.** Any changes to the schedule of periodic or batch processes, such as backups, file transfers, accounting updates, etc.

Out-of-Scope Items. Certain changes to systems which can be classified as routine maintenance and/or replacement are not subject to the Change Management requirements as described within this policy. The changes that are not within the scope of this policy include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Password resets
- User adds/changes/deletions
- System reboots
- Security group changes
- File permission changes
- Changes to non-production systems

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: March 15, 2016 June 18, 2019 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Change Management</i>
<i>Policy Number 720.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- Disaster recovery plan updates
- Installation and connection of the following individual end-user devices to the production network: PCs, tablets, monitors, printers, multifunction devices, video projectors and telephones.

The actions listed above that are repeatable should be documented as part of a department Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), and their execution should be tracked at the department level through customer service or task-oriented “service desk” systems and associated inventory programs.

III. REFERENCES

This policy refers to or works in conjunction with the following Columbia County or Technology Services Division policies:

- Columbia County Comprehensive Policy Manual, *Information Security Policy*
- Columbia County Comprehensive Policy Manual, *Technology Contingency Policy*
- *Technology Services Division Standard Operating Procedure Policy*
- *Technology Services Division Service Outage Notification Policy*

IV. DEFINITIONS

Change: Any new or modified technology component deliberately introduced to the technology production environment that may affect a technology service level or otherwise affect the functioning of the network or one of its components.

Change Manager (CM): The Change Manager is a member of the TAB who is responsible for changes in a particular area of responsibility.

Change Requester (CR): The department or person requesting a change.

Impact: A measure of how a proposed change will affect operations.

Subject Matter Expert (SME): A person who is well-versed in the technical nature of the change that must take place. This person may be called upon throughout the change process due to their knowledge and expertise.

Technology Advisory Board (TAB): The TAB is a cross-functional technology group set up to evaluate change requests for business need, priority, cost/benefit, and potential impacts to other systems or processes.

Trusted Operating Procedure (TOP): A well-documented and thoroughly-tested process

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: March 15, 2016 June 18, 2019 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Change Management</i>
<i>Policy Number 720.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

that has been demonstrated on a repeated basis.

V. POLICY

Columbia County will utilize Technology Change Management through achieving the objectives described below:

- Establish the Technology Advisory Board (TAB)
- Define a general process for managing change
- Define Impact levels and Recording Requirements for each Change
- Describe the role of the Change Manager

Technical Advisory Board

The TAB is composed of the following personnel: Deputy County Manager, Technology Services Division Director, Information Technology Manager, Assistant Information Technology Manager, Network Communications Manager, Broadband Utility Manager, GIS Manager, Sheriff's Office IT Manager (or their designee).

TAB Meetings:

- TAB business will typically be conducted during the Monthly Technology Meeting.
- A special TAB meeting may be called at any time by the Deputy County Manager or the Director of Technology Services.

Typically, the TAB will make recommendations for approval or rejection, or may direct further discussion as needed related to the scope, requirements, and plan for the project.

Change Management Process

The general process to be followed in any project requiring change management includes the steps listed below (with variance depending on the scope and impact of the change):

1. Assessment: Staff determines that a change is needed, determines the impact and risk, develops options for implementing the change, evaluates the needs (technical, personnel, financial, etc.) so that this information can be articulated to the TAB.
2. Change Request: A process through which the need for a change is recorded. This should be performed through tracking tools/forms made available on the Technology

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: March 15, 2016 June 18, 2019 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Change Management</i>
<i>Policy Number 720.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Services Division site on the County intranet.

3. Review: The Change Request is evaluated by the TAB at a Monthly Technology Meeting. The result is to be recorded in the aforementioned tracking tools.
4. Planning: Processes related specifically to each change incident. Planning takes place throughout the life of the change, and should involve SME at each step.
5. Communication: Consistent and relevant communications with users regarding the plans for the change are essential, especially in regard to key dates. The Technology Services Division will create and maintain an *Outage Notification Policy* to define measures for communicating change information to customers.
6. Implementation: The execution of the change. The CM will determine the optimal time to execute the change and will communicate with affected users.
7. Documentation: Describes the creation of documents that are needed to support the effects of the change going forward, such as installation instructions, system schematics, troubleshooting instructions, etc., subject to the division *Standard Operating Procedures Policy*.
8. Post-Change Review: This is an opportunity for the CM to work with personnel involved to discuss lessons learned and opportunities for improvement.

Impact

Changes are to be categorized according to their Impact. The impact level definitions listed below are meant as guidelines to establish a common terminology for assessing impact. Regardless of impact level, the change management process should generally follow steps in the *Change Management Process* section of this policy.

- Trusted Operating Procedure (TOP) – A repeatable change that has been tested, documented, and features low risk and predictable outcomes.
- Low – A change that generally affects a small, well defined group of users, a single function of an application and/or a single piece of hardware.
- Medium – A change that generally affects many users across multiple departments. Work should be performed in a scheduled maintenance window when users are not using the application or hardware. Users’ normal work should not be significantly impacted by any downtime the change may cause.
- High – A change that generally is enterprise-wide in scope, encompassing multiple groups of users, applications, and/or pieces of hardware. Work should be performed in a scheduled maintenance window.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: March 15, 2016 June 18, 2019 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Change Management</i>
<i>Policy Number 720.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- Emergency – Change is to fix a problem that has impacted or will impact the users. The existing situation does not allow for the normal change process to be followed, and is addressed in the later section of this policy entitled “EMERGENCY CHANGES”.

A Change Manager will be determined by the TAB based on the type of change requested.

Requirements for Approval and Documentation

Approval Levels, Change Request notice, and required documentation for changes are defined in the chart below:

Impact Level	Approval Requirement	Change Request Requirement	Process Documentation Requirement
Trusted Operating Procedure (TOP)	TAB Member (within area of responsibility)	Task Management System	SOP
Low	TAB Member (within area of responsibility)	Task Management System	Event-dependent (see Note 1)
Medium	TAB	Technology Services Division Project List	Event-dependent (see Note 1)
High	TAB	Technology Services Division Project List	Event-dependent (see Note 1)
Emergency	TAB Member (within area of responsibility)	Task Management System (post-incident)	Event-dependent (see Note 1)

Note 1: In the event that a change includes standard, repeatable processes or the implementation of new equipment or software with unique operating instructions, the processes or instructions should be incorporated into the SOP of the respective department. For example, new software may have installation instructions or user security instructions. Changes to equipment should be logged in the inventory of the respective departments.

Change Manager

Once a Change Request has been approved by the TAB, the Change Manager (CM) and designated staff will work with the customer(s) to execute the change in a manner as described in the *Change Management Process* section of this policy (with variation as needed). Actionable items for tracking progress through completion should be captured through the department’s designated project management tools.

The CM will coordinate the appropriate personnel based on the change requirements,

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: March 15, 2016 June 18, 2019 September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Change Management</i>
<i>Policy Number 720.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

schedule meetings necessary to complete tasks, coordinate with outside vendors when necessary, and communicate progress to the TAB. The CM is likewise responsible for making changes in the change request tracking tools prior to Monthly Technology Meetings / TAB Meetings.

Emergency Changes

Emergency changes are those that are time-sensitive and critical in nature. Emergency changes may not allow for the normal Change Management process to be followed. Depending on the severity of the situation, the CR will utilize email or voice communications to seek verbal approval from the TAB member with oversight of the affected area of responsibility. It is the responsibility of the TAB member approving the change to notify the Director of Technology Services and the Deputy County Manager. Personnel executing emergency changes are expected to use reasonable judgement under the circumstances to make the change as safe as possible, and should take steps to properly document the change following the conclusion of the emergency.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 15, 2018 RENUMBERED FROM 714.1 to 730.1: September 18, 2018 AMENDED: September 21, 2021 AMENDED: May 20, 2025	TOPIC: <i>Information Security Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 730.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

Columbia County, GA is dedicated to building a robust Information Security Program that will support, maintain, and secure the County’s infrastructure and data systems while ensuring that customer service and business functions are satisfied. The Information Security Policy (ISP) that follows is intended to establish the key components of a strong government-wide information security program. The ISP is intended to build a program that will have the following characteristics:

- Inventory County technology infrastructure, to include hardware, software, and facility assets that are integral to the County’s technological profile.
- Protect critical County infrastructure.
- Manage risk associated with infrastructure and data systems.
- Maintain and enhance intrusion detection, mitigation, and eradication capabilities related to cybersecurity events.
- Protect data that is collected by, stored within, and maintained on County systems.
- Restore information assets that have been compromised to a secure and operational status.
- Improve awareness of cybersecurity risk among County employees, officials, and contractors.

II. SCOPE

This policy defines the scale of Columbia County’s cybersecurity program, establishing the requirements that are to be met in order for the County to maintain a program that is intended to ensure that the ongoing security needs of personnel that utilize Columbia County technology resources are met.

This policy applies to all departments, agencies, employees, contractors, service providers, consultants, and offices of Columbia County, GA Government that utilize Columbia County technology resources.

Exceptions to the policy shall be addressed as noted in Section VI.F *Exception Management* found below.

III. DEFINITIONS

- **Information Security:** Protecting information and information systems from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction in order to provide—
 - integrity, which means guarding against improper information modification or destruction, and includes ensuring information nonrepudiation and authenticity;

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: May 15, 2018 RENUMBERED FROM 714.1 to 730.1: September 18, 2018 AMENDED: September 21, 2021 AMENDED: May 20, 2025</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Information Security Policy</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 730.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i></p>

- confidentiality, which means preserving authorized restrictions on access and disclosure, including means for protecting personal privacy and proprietary information; and
- availability, which means ensuring timely and reliable access to and use of information.
- accountability, which means assigning responsibility for various information security functions to staff and ensuring that they faithfully execute their duties.
- **Information Security Policy:** A set of policies issued by an organization to ensure that all information technology users within the domain of the organization or its networks comply with rules and guidelines related to the security of the information stored digitally at any point in the network or within the organization's boundaries of authority.
- **Risk:** A measure of the extent to which an entity is threatened by a potential circumstance or event, and typically a function of: (i) the adverse impacts that would arise if the circumstance or event occurs; and (ii) the likelihood of occurrence.

IV. REFERENCES

The guiding document(s) for the Columbia County Cybersecurity Framework shall be publications released by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) as Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) documents. The County will strive to use the publications as best-practice examples for policies and procedures as much as is practical within the requirements of county government. This provision does not preclude the use of other guiding documents from official government, academic, or corporate sources.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

A. Employees

- Responsibility for Information Security is not only the duty of Technology professionals. All officials and employees, regardless of responsibility, hierarchy, or pay grade, assume responsibility for Information Security when they use a County-supplied technology asset. Education and Awareness of Information Security policies are paramount to a program of proactive and ongoing Information Security.

B. Commission

- Programs, plans, and policies of Columbia County Divisions and Departments are subject to the approval of the Columbia County Commission.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

<p>APPROVED: May 15, 2018 RENUMBERED FROM 714.1 to 730.1: September 18, 2018 AMENDED: September 21, 2021 AMENDED: May 20, 2025</p>	<p>TOPIC: <i>Information Security Policy</i></p>
<p><i>Policy Number 730.1</i></p>	<p>POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i></p>

- All systems maintained by the County must comply with the Commission-approved Information Security Program and its associated plans, policies and requirements as described within this document.

C. Technology Services Division

- The Technology Services Director (“Director”) has primary responsibility for the County’s Information Security program coordination and project management, which includes reporting the status of planning, testing, and auditing activity to County Administration and the Commission as needed. The Director is responsible for coordinating the activities of the Information Security Working Group. Authority is delegated to managers within Technology Services Division (TSD) Departments as required to facilitate efficient administration of the program.
- TSD Departmental Managers are responsible for ensuring sufficient financial, personnel and other resources are available as needed.
- Technology Services Division (TSD) Personnel are responsible for the formulation of policies and procedures and the ultimate satisfaction of the requirements within this and other related security-oriented policies. TSD Personnel have a professional obligation in ensuring that policies are observed, followed and maintained.

VI. POLICY

Columbia County shall establish and maintain an Information Security Program with the following components: A) Information Security Framework; B) Information Security Working Group, C) Information Security Plan; D) Issue and System-Specific Security Policies and Procedures; E) Risk Management; F) Exception Management Process; and G) Annual Information Security Program Review of all the components described herein.

A. Information Security Framework

Columbia County shall adopt the NIST Cybersecurity Framework as the model for developing the capability to perform NIST-related core functions such as Govern, Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover, as well as their associated categories and controls.

B. Information Security Working Group

The Information Security Working Group (ISWG) is an inter-disciplinary team of County personnel that are responsible for managing the Information Security Program. The team will consist of the TSD Division Director, TSD Department Managers, a representative from the

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 15, 2018 RENUMBERED FROM 714.1 to 730.1: September 18, 2018 AMENDED: September 21, 2021 AMENDED: May 20, 2025	TOPIC: <i>Information Security Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 730.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Columbia County Sheriff’s Office, other TSD personnel charged with security responsibilities, and at least two members from other technology-dependent departments. Policy-and-program-related updates and changes are to be referred as recommendations to the County Manager’s Office for approval through the appropriate channels. The ISWG will review and update the Information Security Program and security-sensitive technologies, risks, policies, plans, and procedures on an annual basis at a minimum, but will meet as needed to review emerging concerns. This requirement is addressed in the section of this document entitled *Annual Review*.

C. Information Security Plan

This Information Security Framework requirement will be fulfilled by the creation and maintenance of a *Columbia County Information Security Plan* with the following characteristics:

- Assesses current Security-oriented threats and risk and creates initiatives to address them through enhanced policies and procedures.
- Defines the County’s process for addressing the requirements of the functions of the Security Framework.
- Assesses and Prioritizes needs for policy-related work in order to meet threats and ensure compliance with the categories defined in the Security Policies section of this policy.
- Identifies needs for new or updated Standard Operating Procedures for security functions.
- Determines methods for the remediation of shortcomings discovered during the Annual Review Process.

D. Issue and System-Specific Security Policies & Procedures

Columbia County shall maintain policies and procedures that address the security functions, categories, and controls identified by NIST in the most recent version of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework. Staff shall also have the authority to recommend new policies and procedures that address current events and advances in technology as needed to maintain the integrity of County technological assets.

E. Risk Management

The County will integrate important components of risk management into its information security policies, which may include, but is not limited to, the following activities: determine the county’s risk tolerance, regularly assess risk related to technology use, perform risk management and mitigation practices, and coordinate with other county divisions on Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) activities as appropriate. Measures of risk and risk mitigation will be included as part of reporting to County Administration.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 15, 2018 RENUMBERED FROM 714.1 to 730.1: September 18, 2018 AMENDED: September 21, 2021 AMENDED: May 20, 2025	TOPIC: <i>Information Security Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 730.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

F. Exception Management

All exceptions to this policy, regardless of source, must be submitted in writing to the Columbia County Board of Commissioners, ATTN: County Manager, 630 Ronald Reagan Drive, Evans, GA 30809.

Requests for exceptions to the policy will be evaluated as they are identified, and will be documented. Exceptions will only be valid if they are approved in writing.

All exceptions granted are to be considered temporary and may be reviewed and/or revoked at any time if the existence of the exception is determined to be a detriment to the integrity of the County computer network and/or other technology assets. At minimum, exceptions shall be reviewed on an annual basis during an Annual Process Review.

Customers of Columbia County Community Broadband Utility (C3BU) are not subject to the provisions of this policy if their reason for contracting with C3BU is to receive services from C3BU for the conduct of their own commercial business needs.

G. Annual Review

The Information Security Program, including policies, frameworks, responsibilities, etc. will be reviewed at minimum on an annual basis by the ISWG. Recommendations for changes will be noted and submitted to County Administration for direction and guidance. These recommendations must be completed and forwarded to Administration by the end of January of each calendar year so that any changes requiring funding can be accommodated as part of the budgeting process for the next fiscal year. Changes may be incorporated into the Information Security Plan and other related policies and procedures, subject to official approval processes.

In the event of a security-sensitive situation requiring immediate policy or procedural action, the ISWG may meet and act as appropriate to ensure the safety and security of the county's technological assets.

VII. VIOLATIONS

Violations of this policy represent a danger to the integrity and security of Columbia County's technological resources and may likely represent a danger to public safety; therefore, any willful violation by an employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Additionally, if the violation is of a criminal nature, then the County will seek prosecution of the person(s) in violation.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: September 18, 2018 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Information Security Awareness Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 731.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

Columbia County maintains a highly-networked technical environment with a variety of devices that provide employees with access to important and often sensitive information. Organizations must protect the integrity, confidentiality, and availability of information in such an environment by ensuring that each person involved understands their roles and responsibilities related to information security. The goals of the Security Awareness & Training Program are:

- Develop a program of security awareness training that provides fundamentals of information security and best practices for all employee who have access to IT assets.
- Influence organizational policies and procedures so that security awareness becomes part of the governmental culture of Columbia County.
- Monitor employee progress through various security awareness classes and programs.
- Improve employee knowledge and awareness of threats to their professional and personal technology footprint.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of Columbia County, vendors, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers, or other personnel who require logical or physical access to Columbia County facilities and/or information systems.

III. DEFINITIONS

Awareness: Activities which seek to focus an individual’s attention on an information security issue or set of issues.

Security: A condition that results from the establishment and maintenance of protective measures that enable an enterprise to perform its mission or critical functions despite risks posed by threats to its use of information systems.

Technology Resource: A Columbia County-issued computer device or account(s) and credentials required for access to the Columbia County network and software applications.

Training: Activities intended to produce relevant and needed information security skills and competencies among employees.

IV. REFERENCES

- Columbia County Comprehensive Policy Manual, *731.1 Information Security Policy*.
- Columbia County Comprehensive Policy Manual, *732.1 Computer Administrative Rights Policy*.
- NIST Special Publication 800-50, *Building an Information Technology Security Awareness and Training Program*, www.nist.gov
- PCI Security Standards Council, *Information Supplement: Best Practices for Implementing a Security Awareness Program*, www.pcisecuritystandards.org

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: September 18, 2018 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Information Security Awareness Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 731.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

V. RESPONSIBILITY

There are multiple layers of responsibility that are essential to implementing and maintaining an effective Security Awareness & Training Program (the “Program”).

- The **Technology Services Division (TSD)** is the Division responsible for developing, administering, and assessing the Program. The departments of TSD, including Training and Information Technology, are responsible for seeking training materials and tools, determining relevance of concepts and context for the organization, and scheduling classes as needed to meet the goals of the Program.
- **Administration:** The Columbia County Manager’s Office has established the requirements for the Security Awareness & Training Policy and supports the mission of TSD to build the Program.
- **Columbia County Departments and Offices** are all responsible for ensuring that managers, supervisors, and employees abide by the policies set in place to protect the County’s technical environment.

VI. POLICY

Columbia County shall perform the following tasks related to the creation and maintenance of the Program:

- Proactively monitor the information security environment and assess threats to the organization that can be mitigated through employee awareness.
- Inform and train all users of their respective security responsibilities. This requirement extends to the following groups:
 - *All Personnel* should recognize threats, recognize security as beneficial to their business practices and daily duties, report potential security issues (“if you see something, say something”), and make security a habit. This general level of awareness will be supported by the Training Department through classes.
 - *Privileged Users* should recognize the importance of their capability to have advanced rights to systems and facilities, and be familiar with the responsibilities they have because of these rights. The responsibilities of this class are described in a separate *Administrative Privileges Policy* and other associated policies.
 - *Third-party Stakeholders* (e.g., suppliers, customers, partners) should recognize the responsibility that they have to protect Columbia County’s information resources. The responsibilities of this class are detailed in separate policies that apply to specific access control functions.
 - *Department Heads, Division Directors, and Administrators* are responsible for the overall administration of the County government, and thus have a role in monitoring compliance with the Program.
 - *Physical Security Personnel* are responsible for access to County facilities which may include sensitive technology infrastructure. The responsibilities of this class are detailed in separate policies that apply to access control functions.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: September 18, 2018	TOPIC: <i>Information Security Awareness Policy</i>
AMENDED: September 21, 2021	
<i>Policy Number 731.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- *Information Security Personnel* are often TSD personnel with advanced training and responsibilities for IT-related roles. It is the responsibility of their respective managers to ensure that training and certifications in these areas remains current.

The Training Department shall administer the training program of Security Awareness. Administration of the program is comprised of the following requirements:

- Develop and offer instruction on the classes described below:
 - *Basic Security Awareness Training* for new employees.
 - This class is mandatory and will be administered to new hires (preferably at new hire orientation).
 - Training will occur in a facilitated class and will not exceed thirty minutes.
 - Access to technology resources may be provisionally granted prior to the receipt of training, but the Training should be received at the earliest opportunity following the beginning of employment. If training is not received within thirty days, the employee’s account(s) will be disabled.
 - This class is an introductory-level training class and does not preclude an employee from being required to attend the General Security Awareness Training.
 - *General Security Awareness Training* for all employees with access to technology resources.
 - This class may be offered either online or through facilitated, classroom-based training and should not exceed 1 – 1 ½ hours in length.
 - It is mandatory that employees must attend this class at least once every two years.
 - The Training Department should offer facilitated training at minimum on a quarterly basis.
 - *Administrative Account Awareness Training* for employees to whom administrative privileges have been granted. Requirements for this training are detailed in the *Computer Administrative Rights Policy (732.1)*.
 - Additional awareness-related voluntary classes as needed, with the approval of the County Manager’s Office.
- Determine relevant course materials and acquire or develop them as needed. Relevance will be determined through ongoing review of security industry trends, current events, etc.
- Schedule and teach/facilitate classes, take attendance, and ensure employee participation.
- Request an appropriate level of funding for supporting the Program.
- Develop metrics that can illustrate the impact of the Program.
- Recognize contributions of employees to the Program.
- Report the level of participation in the training program to Division Directors and Administration.
- Develop and maintain a *Columbia County Information Security Awareness Handbook* that describes the Program and key concepts in an easy-to-understand format regardless of the

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: September 18, 2018 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Information Security Awareness Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 731.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

employee’s level of technical expertise or level of responsibility. This handbook will be available on the County intranet.

- Training completion shall be documented in personnel records.
- When it is determined by a manager or through the recommendation of IT personnel that an employee needs refresher or remedial training in order to correct deficiencies in their security awareness, the employee will attend the next available class or take online training within two weeks.
- Upon promotion/reassignment from a position without technology access to a position *with* access, an employee must obtain Basic Security Awareness Training within 30 days.

VII. ENFORCEMENT

Monitoring of security awareness shall take place through management/supervisory monitoring as well as electronic monitoring and testing through Information Technology. “Monitoring” in this context does not mean that the electronic communications of individual employees will be monitored on an ongoing, active, continuous basis.

Any employee who, after receiving the Basic or General Security Awareness Training, is found to have participated in behavior that has violated policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Violations of this policy may also result in a requirement for employees to take the appropriate level of Security Awareness training again, even if they have completed the course within the last two years.

Third-Party Stakeholders who do not conform to the policies that are described, their responsibilities may be forbidden entry (physical and/or electronic) and their organization may be in danger of losing existing and future contracts with Columbia County.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: September 18, 2018	TOPIC: <i>Computer Administrative Rights Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 732.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

This policy defines the requirements surrounding the creation, use, monitoring, and decommissioning of local administrative accounts on technology resources within the Columbia County computer network. This policy is intended to ensure the highest level of stability, security, and usability for County computer systems by limiting the assignment of administrative rights.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of Columbia County, vendors, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers, or other personnel who require privileged access or administrative rights to Columbia County computers and/or information systems.

III. DEFINITIONS

Authorized User: A technology resource user that is authorized (and, therefore, trusted) to perform functions that ordinary users are not authorized to perform.

Local Administrator: A user with privileges that permit them to execute functions such as software installations or configuration modifications on a single computer or group of computers.

Privileged Account: Individuals who have access to set “access rights” for users on a given system. Sometimes referred to as system or network administrative accounts.

Technology Resource: A Columbia County-issued computer device or account(s) and credentials required for access to the Columbia County network and software applications.

IV. REFERENCES

- Columbia County Comprehensive Policy Manual, *730.1 Information Security Policy*.
- Columbia County Comprehensive Policy Manual, *731.1 Security Awareness Policy*.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

The Columbia County Information Technology Department (IT) is the organization responsible for the management of network accounts subject to Computer Administrative Rights Management, to include the creation of such accounts, assignment, modification, and removal of rights, as well as the monitoring of these accounts to determine compliance with security policies.

VI. POLICY

Administrative rights are typically reserved for IT personnel who are responsible for providing administrative services such as system maintenance and user support. In unique circumstances, administrative rights may be issued to non-IT staff on a temporary or ongoing basis to perform tasks within the scope of their employment. Users who have demonstrated the following capabilities and needs may be granted (but are not guaranteed) Local Administrator rights:

- The ability to configure and manage their workstations.
- Possession of the understanding of the responsibility of maintaining appropriate security measures to protect Columbia County technology resources.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: September 18, 2018	TOPIC: <i>Computer Administrative Rights Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 732.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- Providing a justifiable need for such rights.
 - An individual employee’s ability to install or uninstall software in an office or mobile environment in which IT support can be easily obtained is *insufficient* justification for requesting administrative rights. Software installation services can be acquired from the IT Department by contacting the IT Service Desk.

The granting of Local Administrative rights does not extend to other Privileged Account access. All grants of administrative privileges must be justified on their individual merits.

REQUESTING ADMINISTRATIVE RIGHTS

Requests for assignment of local administrative rights must be submitted through the IT Service Desk by the department manager or division director or the employee who, in their opinion, requires administrative rights. Each request for local administrative rights must include justification for the request.

A request must be approved by the Information Technology Manager and the Director of Technology Services.

TRAINING

Prior to rights being granted, the employee must receive training in their responsibilities per the Columbia County *Information Security Awareness Policy*. This is a facilitated class (typically one-on-one) in which the employee will be informed of their responsibilities and the consequences of misuse associated with administrative rights.

Employees will be required to sign a document stating that they have received the training, they understand their responsibilities, and they agree to be held accountable for the violation of the provisions of this policy.

USER RESPONSIBILITIES

Once granted administrative rights, authorized users are responsible for:

- Maintaining the integrity of their workstations.
- Maintaining software licensing for any software personally installed on their workstation. Users must communicate with IT *prior to* the installation of any software so that it can be validated and documented by Information Technology. Software that is not approved by IT shall not be installed on any County technology resource.
- Exercising username and password discipline, such as not sharing their username and password with others for access to the County network.
- Reporting any system failures and/or compromises to the IT Service Desk immediately.
- Adhering to County policies, particularly as they applying to security and software use.

Under no circumstances should a user remove the County-supplied anti-virus software from a County-provided system. Removing this software will be grounds for instant removal of access rights and potential disciplinary action.

IT will continue to support equipment even if the primary user has administrative rights. IT will

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: September 18, 2018	TOPIC: <i>Computer Administrative Rights Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 732.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

provide system patches, application software patches, and antivirus/security updates through the system wide client management platform to all County workstations. Users must not block or in any manner disable and/or revise any services on the workstation that may prevent these and any other routine maintenance procedures.

IT may not be able to restore any configuration customized by the user. In the event of a computer failure, IT will restore the original base image of the workstation, comprised of an operating system and any software maintained by the IT Department. All County-issued workstations must be administered in acceptance with standard configurations, and all workstations must:

- Be joined to the County Active Directory domain
- Have management software installed to facilitate administration and upgrades
- Have properly configured and supported antivirus software
- Have service packs or patches as deemed necessary by IT staff

MANAGEMENT

A list of authorized users granted administrative rights will be maintained by the IT Department.

IT reserves the right to audit the actions of any Authorized User at any time.

If an Authorized User has taken actions, either willful or accidental, that require IT intervention to correct, or has otherwise affected the integrity of the County network, administrative rights will be removed from that user and the appropriate chain-of-command will be notified.

IT is under no obligation to restore rights to an employee who has lost them.

VII. ENFORCEMENT

Due to the highly sensitive and important nature of network security, the Information Technology Department will monitor local administrative accounts through local and remote electronic means. “Monitoring” in this context does not mean that the electronic communications of individual employees will be monitored on an ongoing, active, continuous basis.

Any employee found to have violated this policy may have their Local Administrator access rights revoked, be subject to additional training, be denied access privileges to the County’s network, and suffer disciplinary action up to and including termination. Depending on the severity of the violation, civil or criminal prosecution under state and/or federal statutes may apply.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: November 16, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Technology Physical Security Policy</i>
AMENDED: <i>Policy Number 733.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

The limitation of physical access to a location is a preventative measure intended to safeguard County technology assets from accidental damage, disruption, intrusion, or physical tampering at the site of the installation of the asset; therefore, a *Technology Physical Security Policy* establishes the practice of managing physical access to locations in which technology assets are housed and ensuring that only authorized personnel have access to the facilities and assets located within.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of Columbia County, vendors, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers, or other personnel who use or manage physical structures in which County technological assets are located.

III. DEFINITIONS

Authorization: Access privileges granted to a user, program, process, or the act of granting those privileges.

Access Control: The process of granting or denying specific requests to: 1) obtain and use information and related information processing services; and 2) enter specific physical facilities.

Facility: A specific place in which technological assets are housed, referring to a data center, data closet, etc. in which equipment is installed.

Location: A site or building in which county business takes place. A location may or may not necessarily have a *facility* in which technology assets are located.

Physical Access: The ability of a person to physically access areas or premises where information systems and technology assets reside.

Technology Asset: Any technological device which is intended for connection to a network and/or which is used for the collection, storage, or transmission of data.

IV. REFERENCES

This policy shall work in conjunction with all other technology policies as approved and distributed as part of Columbia County's Comprehensive Policy Manual (CPM), particularly:

- *707.1 Acceptable Use Policy*
- *715.1 Third-Party Access Policy*
- *730.1 Information Security Policy*
- *731.1 Information Security Awareness Policy*

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: November 16, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Technology Physical Security Policy</i>
AMENDED: <i>Policy Number 733.1</i>	
	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

V. RESPONSIBILITY

Various parties are responsible for the application of this policy, as follows:

The **Technology Services Director**, working in partnership with the County leadership, will develop policies and procedures that address the physical security of Columbia County technology assets and the structures in which they are housed.

The **Facilities Management Director (FMD)** is the entity responsible for overall physical security of county facilities. The FMD and Technology Services Director will coordinate their efforts to ensure that appropriate and complementary security measures are employed.

The **Technology Services Division (TSD)** will have responsibilities described in this policy for coordinating physical security as it applies to technical inventory, personnel documentation, etc. All other departments are to contribute information pertaining to this policy to TSD as requested.

Departments such as **Broadband Utility, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Information Technology (IT), and Traffic Engineering** maintain facilities with technology assets related to their areas of responsibility. The **Water Utility (WU)** also has this responsibility for SCADA networks and equipment. For purposes of this policy these are known as “Owner Departments” (OD). These departments are bound by the provisions of this policy, and are to carry out the responsibilities described herein for their assets.

Other Columbia County Offices and Departments: Departments and offices that are not part of the TSD maintain physical access control to their locations and the facilities located therein. These entities are responsible for the physical security of the facilities at those locations that have not been explicitly designated as being the responsibility of an OD.

Employees: Employees may have access to facilities in which technological assets are stored or operated, and have responsibilities related to security awareness, defined later in this policy and in other related county policies.

VI. POLICY

Columbia County shall establish standards, and procedures that address Physical Access to County facilities that house technology assets. The standards and procedures, as well as additional information described within this policy, should be kept within a *Technology Physical Security Manual* (the “Manual”) to be maintained by the Technology Services Division and updated as changes occur. The Manual must include the contents listed below (at minimum):

- Minimum Security Standards for county facilities that house components of the county network or major technology installations, including, but not limited to, the following types of sites: Internet Point-of-Presence (POP), Data Centers, Data Closets (or other sites in which network equipment is stored), Tower Sites / Shelters, Traffic Control Cabinets, and

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: November 16, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Technology Physical Security Policy</i>
AMENDED: <i>Policy Number 733.1</i>	
	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Traffic Control Centers (TCC). The sites are defined in the Manual.

- **Responsibility:** Information regarding the maintenance responsibility for each of the technology facilities.
- **Personnel:** A list of personnel who require access to data centers, data closets, or other areas in which technology assets are present. This list should include county employees as well as personnel who are employed by outside agencies with whom the county has contracts and/or with whom maintenance responsibilities are shared.
- **Access:** Procedures that describe the process by which personnel are expected to request access to facilities, as well as procedures for granting, recording, and removing access.
- **Inventory:** It is the responsibility of each OD to maintain an inventory of 1) facilities under their direct responsibility, and 2) technology assets housed within those facilities.
- **Mapping:** The GIS Department will maintain a geodatabase layer with locations of all facilities in which equipment is located.

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

- All data closets and data centers operated by the County government fall within the responsibility of the IT Department, with two exceptions: Broadband Utility facilities (maintained by Broadband) and sites maintained by Water Utility (for SCADA sites). These facilities and departments are not exempt from the provisions of this policy.
- The information stored in the Manual may be captured electronically and made available to selected personnel through an intranet page, but it is not to be published or released for public consumption. The Manual refers to county security practices and will be exempt from Open Records Requests per OCGA 50-18-72.25.
- **Policy and Procedural Review:**
 - The standards and procedures described within this policy and the Manual should be reviewed on an annual basis (at minimum) to affirm that they are relevant and accurate.
 - The procedures in the Manual should be reviewed when new facilities are constructed, purchased, or renovated in order to affirm that the security measures are still appropriate.
 - If there is a breach (or attempted breach) of security, procedures must be reviewed as soon as possible by the OD, in conjunction with a Security Incident Response reported to and led by the IT Department.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: November 16, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Technology Physical Security Policy</i>
AMENDED: <i>Policy Number 733.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

VII. ENFORCEMENT

Monitoring

Monitoring of compliance with this policy shall take place through multiple means, including but not limited to physical and electronic locks/access control, video monitoring, sign-in and sign-out procedures conducted at points of entry, and management/supervisory monitoring.

Security Breach

If, in the course of monitoring activity, a department becomes aware that a physical breach of security has occurred, the breach must be reported to 1) the department head of the business unit for immediate action if applicable and 2) the Information Technology Department through the Service Desk at 706-312-3499. IT will enact the *Security Incident Response Plan* and the procedure appropriate to investigate and remedy the breach.

Disciplinary Action

Any employee who, through action or inaction, has contributed to a breach of physical security, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Violations of this policy may also result in a requirement for employees to take training related to their responsibilities related to physical security. Third-Party entities who do not conform to the policies that are described may be forbidden entry (physical and/or electronic) and their organization may be in danger of losing existing and future contracts with Columbia County.

Auditing

The Technology Services Division or a designee thereof will regularly conduct physical security audits of facilities in order to satisfy the following requirements. The audits should include, but are not limited to, the following tasks:

- Confirm that facilities are inventoried and mapped per policy.
- Confirm that facilities are secured from unauthorized entry.
- Document situation in shared facilities (data closets, storage, electrical, janitorial, etc.).
- Examine lists of personnel with facility access to determine if access is still required.

Reports of findings and plans for remediation are to be submitted to the County Manager's Office.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2020	TOPIC: <i>Security Incident Response Policy</i>
AMENDED:	
<i>Policy Number 734.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

Columbia County departments and related agencies are dependent upon the County computer network for fulfilling their operational requirements; therefore, it is essential that a policy and related procedures are in place to define the response to any incident in which the network may have been compromised.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Columbia County Departments, Offices, and Agencies that utilize Columbia County technology resources to fulfill their respective missions.

III. DEFINITIONS

Computer Security Incident: a violation of imminent threat of violation of computer security policies, which can include any of the following occurrences:

- Loss of information confidentiality (data theft)
- Compromise of information integrity (damage to data or unauthorized modification).
- Theft of physical IT asset including computers, storage devices, printers, etc.
- Damage to physical IT assets including computers, storage devices, printers, etc.
- Denial of service
- Misuse of services, information, or assets
- Infection of systems by unauthorized or hostile software
- An attempt at unauthorized access
- Unauthorized changes to organizational hardware, software, or configuration
- Reports of unusual system behavior
- Responses to intrusion detection alarms

Security Incident Response Plan: A plan that defines what constitutes a security incident and outlines the incident response phases. The plan addresses information exchange, incident assessment, damage mitigation, response strategy, documentation, and preservation of evidence.

IV. REFERENCES

This policy refers to or works in conjunction with the following Columbia County or Technology Services Division policies:

- *Data Backup Policy*
- *Data Classification Policy*
- *Information Security Policy*
- *Technology Asset Life Cycle Management Policy*
- *Technology Contingency Policy*

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2020	TOPIC: <i>Security Incident Response Policy</i>
AMENDED:	
<i>Policy Number 734.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

This policy has been influenced by the following guidelines:

- *NIST Special Publication 800-61, Computer Security Incident Handling Guide*

V. RESPONSIBILITY

The Technology Services Director (“Director”) has the responsibility to develop policies related to the County’s response to security incidents. The Director must confirm that plans and procedures are developed, maintained, and tested within County departments.

Technology Services Division (TSD) Departmental Managers are responsible for ensuring that financial, technical, personnel and other resources are available for incident response, and that plans and procedures are developed within their respective departments to meet the requirements of this policy.

Technology Services Division personnel are responsible for the execution of policies and procedures and the ultimate satisfaction of the requirements within this and other related incident response and contingency-oriented policies.

Non-TSD Departments that maintain their own technical resources are expected to understand security incidents as they affect their particular platforms and participate in incident response planning and training with departments of the TSD.

VI. POLICY

General Policy Provisions

Columbia County shall develop an incident response capability, in the form of a *Security Incident Response Plan* (the “Plan”) that addresses four phases of incident response: 1) Preparation & Prevention; 2) Detection & Analysis; 3) Containment, Eradication, and Recovery; and 4) Post-Incident Activity. The requirements of the individual phases are described in the section of this policy entitled *Security Incident Response Plan Components*. The Plan itself describes the *general* means by which the County will respond, but it is the responsibility of individual TSD (and other) departments to develop a *specific* response capability and procedure for incidents.

The Plan must operate in accordance with any cybersecurity / ransomware insurance maintained by the County. Communications and documentation required by the insurance policy must be incorporated into our response to ensure our eligibility for payment.

The Plan must include a communications component so that public relations personnel have guidance regarding how to communicate with the media and/or the public about the situation.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2020	TOPIC: <i>Security Incident Response Policy</i>
AMENDED:	
<i>Policy Number 734.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Support from the County Attorney must be included as part of the Plan because there may be legal and regulatory issues resulting from the incident.

Law Enforcement involvement must be included in the Plan because a crime may have been committed. Data gathered during the incident and the response may be needed for prosecution.

The Plan should be a “living document” that can be updated as needed to reflect evolution in tactics used to provide security for County systems.

Security Incident Response Plan Structure

The structure of the Plan should address the phases and the steps necessary prior to an incident, during an incident, and after an incident in order to ensure that the County takes a comprehensive approach to security incident management.

Preparation & Prevention:

This phase addresses the proactive policies, procedures, and practices in which County personnel should be engaged to prepare to respond in the event of an incident.

1. *Process* for Reporting Security Incidents.
2. *Resources* that are need such as response team members, roles, and contact information.
3. *Inventory* of Hardware and Software, to include configuration, support contacts, etc.
4. *Policies and Procedures* that address critical information such as host security, end-point security (anti-virus and malware), perimeter security, etc.
5. *User Awareness* and training program.
6. *Insurance* for Privacy and/or Security events.

Detection & Analysis

This phase provides actionable items that are based on the actual occurrence of an incident.

1. *Identify* the attack surface, vectors of attack, and the features that provide clues for each.
2. *Analyze* the characteristics of the attack to determine which response is appropriate.
3. *Document* the attack so that record-keeping is managed for the incident.
4. *Prioritize* the level of response based on the systems(s) that are under attack and data that may have been compromised.
5. *Notify* stakeholders through established communications protocols.

Containment, Eradication, and Recovery

In this phase, the Incident Response Team has performed the steps described in the previous phase and must begin the process of eliminating the threat. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2020	TOPIC: <i>Security Incident Response Policy</i>
AMENDED:	
<i>Policy Number 734.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

for each department should identify types of attacks and the generally-accepted methods by which the department will respond. Staff should be trained and flexible in their response and use the SOP as a guideline as needed. The SOP should be updated frequently in order to incorporate new information related to containment, eradication, and recovery from attacks.

Post-Incident Activity

The plan must address the consequences of an incident and how to properly address shortcomings in any phase of the response, as well as identify strategies and tasks for mitigation.

1. *Damage Assessment* in order to determine the damage and cost of the attack to the organization, including physical damage, data loss, personnel time, etc.
2. *Policy / Procedure Assessment* in order to update policies and procedures as needed to address shortcomings that may have contributed to the intrusion.
3. *Response Assessment* to determine if the response was correct and if could be improved.
4. *Prosecute illegal activity* if the source of the intrusion is known. Law enforcement cooperation is essential in order to prosecute that attacker(s) if possible.

VII. ENFORCEMENT

Violations of this policy represent a danger to the integrity and security of Columbia County’s technological resources and may likely represent a danger to public safety; therefore, any willful violation by an employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2020 AMENDED:	TOPIC: <i>Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI-DSS) Program Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 735.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

Columbia County has made a significant investment in technology and the application of computer-based applications to deliver services to employees and citizens, and multiple applications used by the County accept credit and debit cards as payment for services. The PCI Security Standards Council has established a set of standards, known as PCI-DSS (Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards), to provide criteria for compliance with organizations that accept payment cards. This policy exists in order to establish Columbia County’s guidelines and procedures for compliance with the PCI-DSS standards.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of Columbia County, vendors, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers, or other personnel who are involved with any and all aspects of the payment process that requires the capture, processing, or use of payment card data.

III. DEFINITIONS

Internet: A globally-connected network system that is used to transmit data through various types of media.

Payment Card Data: A general term that describes primary account numbers (PAN), cardholder name, expiration date, service code, and sensitive authentication data.

PCI-DSS: Payment Card Industry, Data Security Standards. A set of standards, established by the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Security Standards Council, that all organizations, including online retailers, must follow when storing, processing and transmitting their customer’s credit card data.

Software-As-A-Service (SaaS): A model for the distribution of software in which the customer accesses the solution over the Internet rather than from an on-premise (local) server.

IV. REFERENCES

This policy shall work in conjunction with all other technology policies as approved and distributed as part of Columbia County’s Comprehensive Policy Manual (CPM). Where applicable and practical for local implementation, the County will also use the standards established by the PCI Security Standards Council, whose website is located at (<https://www.pcisecuritystandards.org/>).

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2020 AMENDED:	TOPIC: <i>Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI-DSS) Program Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 735.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

V. RESPONSIBILITY

Various parties are responsible for the application of this policy, as follows:

Technology Services Division: Departments of the Technology Services Division (TSD, which includes Broadband Utility, Geographic Information Systems, and Information Technology) are responsible for acquiring, coordinating, implementing, supporting, and managing technology resources. When technology requires PCI-DSS compliance, TSD departments must have an active role in monitoring transmissions and managing the usage of the equipment.

Columbia County Offices and Departments: Departments and Offices that use software and hardware tools for payment transactions are responsible for developing and enforcing guidelines and procedures that support compliance with PCI-DSS standards.

Employees have the responsibility to use software and hardware tools in a manner consistent with the guidelines and procedures developed within their departments.

VI. POLICY

Columbia County shall establish policies, standards, and procedures that address the following aspects of compliance with PCI-DSS standards:

- Employee education and training about PCI-DSS Standards.
- Business Process Integration with business software applications.
- Government-wide PCI-DSS Compliance Strategy. This requirement does not necessarily mean that the County will become PCI-compliant, but it requires the County to assess the components of compliance for our payment-oriented business processes and implement steps as needed to protect customer information and payment card data.
- Reporting of payment transactions.

The information described above will be compiled into a single document, the *Columbia County, Georgia PCI-DSS Handbook*, that describes the County’s approach to PCI-DSS, which can be updated with inventory and procedural information as needed to satisfy any potential audit requirements.

VII. ENFORCEMENT

Monitoring

Monitoring of compliance with this PCI-DSS policy shall take place through management/supervisory monitoring as well as electronic monitoring. “Monitoring” in this context does not mean that the electronic communications of individual employees will be monitored on

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2020 AMENDED:	TOPIC: <i>Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI-DSS) Program Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 735.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

an ongoing, active, continuous basis without due cause.

If, in the course of monitoring activity, the Information Technology Department becomes aware of usage that endangers the integrity of Columbia County technology resources and/or customer information, the department may take one of the following steps:

- Depending on the severity of the issue, IT shall act proactively to stop the dangerous activity, which may include involuntary removal of rights for employees.
- IT shall inform the department head of the offending parties of the activity and its consequences. Notice may also be provided at the Division and County Manager level depending on severity.
- IT will capture and store information in order to provide to management, law enforcement, or other parties as needed.

Violations

Any employee who, after receiving training related to PCI-DSS standards, is found to have violated policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Violations of this policy may also result in a requirement for employees to take additional training related to PCI-DSS policies and procedures.

Any suspected violation of PCI-DSS policies and procedures should be reported immediately to the department head of the business unit, the Finance Department, and the Information Technology Department (through the Service Desk) so that service providers may be alerted as necessary.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Technology Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 750.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish requirements for policies and procedures by which Columbia County’s Technology Assets are managed in order to ensure that equipment, business practices, contracts, and inventory management meet the needs of the organization.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all departments, agencies, employees, contractors, service providers, consultants, and offices of Columbia County, GA Government that utilize Columbia County technology resources.

III. REFERENCES

This policy refers to or works in conjunction with the following Columbia County or Technology Services Division (TSD) policies:

- *Columbia County Hardware Asset Life Cycle Management Policy*
- *Columbia County Software Asset Life Cycle Management Policy*
- *Technology Services Division Standard Operating Procedure Policy*

IV. DEFINITIONS

- **Hardware/Hardware Asset:** A physical component of a computer network, to include servers, network devices, PCs, tablets, phones, printers, or input devices.
- **Hardware Asset Management:** The process of tracking and managing the physical components of computers and computer networks, from acquisition through disposal. The goal of hardware asset management is to account for all hardware assets within the IT infrastructure to provide comprehensive inventory visibility, which in turn will support vendor contract, lease management, and budgetary forecasts.
- **License:** Permission from a Vendor, usually in exchange for funds guaranteed by a contractual agreement, to use one or more software applications or components thereof.
- **Maintenance:** Services provided to the County from a software vendor / manufacturer / provider (“Vendor”) which provides the County with the ability to contact the Vendor for support in case of a software problem. The costs for a Maintenance may be expended on a monthly or annual basis depending on the type of Maintenance Agreement or Licensing that the County has agreed to purchase.
- **Maintenance Contract:** A contractual agreement with a Vendor to provide certain software-related services to the County.
- **Module:** A component of a software package that may satisfy a specific business function. Individual modules can often be licensed or purchased separately from a Vendor in order to expand the capability of software.
- **Site:** A geographic location in which technology assets belonging to the County are housed.
- **Software/Software Asset:** The programs and operating systems that are typically installed on a physical component (hardware) within a computer network. These programs include end-

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Technology Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 750.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

user line-of-business software, office productivity tools, network/system diagnostic utilities, development tools, network monitoring software, and so on.

- **Software Asset Management:** The process of tracking and managing software titles, licenses, versions, dependencies, interfaces, and installations. The goals of this activity are maximization of technology resource use, enhancement of customer productivity, cost management, and reduction of business, legal, and security risks.
- **Technology Life Cycle:** A description of how technological components are acquired, used, maintained, replaced, and disposed of within an organization.
- **Vendor:** A company that manufactures or otherwise provides software assets to the County in exchange for monetary remuneration or exchange of services.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

This policy exists to ensure that the software life cycle is an orderly, regulated process managed in the best interests of Columbia County by authorized, qualified personnel in certain departments. References to “**Department**” in this policy apply to any department or office of Columbia County with the responsibility for managing the life cycle of equipment or software, identified as TSD Division departments, Fire Rescue, Traffic Engineering, and Water Utility (for SCADA purposes). Other County departments may not participate in the aforementioned activities without the explicit permission of the Administrator’s Office.

VI. TECHNOLOGY LIFE CYCLE TIMELINE

The Technology Life Cycle (TLC) for any individual piece of equipment or application is subject to the following general timeline:

1. **Acquisition:** Refers to the process by which an asset is procured for the County.
2. **Installation and Configuration:** The process by which an asset is put in place for use and set up for operation by the end user.
3. **Maintenance:** The ongoing process by which an asset is supported by designated personnel within the Departments.
4. **Replacement:** The process by which an asset is phased out of operational use and replaced by other equipment (which would have been brought in via the Acquisition process above, starting the cycle again).
5. **Disposal:** The process by which an asset is destroyed, sold, or otherwise removed from service to the County.

VII. POLICY

Departments will create policies and procedures that address the key areas described below.

1. Software: The division will create a *Software Asset Life Cycle Management Policy* and additional policies and procedures as needed to address the Technology Asset Life Cycle Timeline as it applies to software, including (but not limited to) the following items:
 - a. Software license management
 - b. Software inventory tracking, including subordinate modules of software

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Technology Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 750.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- c. Software installation and security
 - d. Application security
2. Hardware: Departments will establish a *Hardware Asset Life Cycle Management Policy* and additional policies and procedures as needed to address the Technology Asset Life Cycle Timeline as it applies to hardware, including (but not limited to) the following items:
- a. Hardware inventory acquisitions and tracking
 - b. Hardware troubleshooting and repair
 - c. Hardware security configuration and control information
 - d. Hardware replacement schedule and processes
3. Certificates and Domains: Departments will establish policies and procedures as needed related to each part of the Technology Life Cycle Timeline as they apply to certificate and domain management, including (but not limited to) acquisition responsibility and methodology, inventory tracking, and expiration/renewal of certificates and domains.
4. Locations: Departments shall maintain an inventory of locations at which their assets are stored and/or operated, including customer end-points, towers, data closets, etc.
5. Processes: Departments shall be subject to the following guidelines in regard to these important processes:
- a. Departments shall maintain Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) composed of department-specific information and processes as they apply to the Technology Life Cycle timeline.
 - b. SOPs and other documents shall be assembled into a Knowledge Base (KB) in which relevant information can be kept for quick reference. In addition to SOPs, the KB will include informational, non-procedural documentation that provides context and for technology operations. Basic KB requirements for TSD Departments are found in the *Technology Services Division Standard Operating Procedures Policy*.

VIII. ENFORCEMENT

Any employee who is found to have willfully violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Hardware Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 751.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish requirements for policies and procedures by which Columbia County’s Hardware Technology Assets are effectively and proactively managed so that equipment, business practices, contracts, and inventory management meet the needs of the organization.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to the departments of the Technology Services Division (“TSD”) and all other County Departments that participate in the purchase, deployment, and maintenance of hardware, software, and other technology-related resources.

III. REFERENCES

This policy refers to or works in conjunction with the following Columbia County or Technology Services Division policies:

- *Hardware Sanitization Policy*
- *Technology Asset Life Cycle Management Policy*
- *Technology Services Division Standard Operating Procedure Policy*
- *Technology Standards and Replacement Guide*

IV. DEFINITIONS

Hardware/Hardware Asset: A physical component of a computer network, to include servers, network devices, PCs, tablets, phones, printers, or input devices such as GPS Data Collectors.

Hardware Asset Management: The process of tracking and managing the physical components of computers and computer networks, from acquisition through disposal.

License: Permission from a Vendor, usually in exchange for funds guaranteed by a contractual agreement, to use one or more software applications or components thereof.

Maintenance: Services provided to the County from a vendor / manufacturer / provider (“Vendor”) which provides the County with regular updates, upgrades, and/or the ability to contact the Vendor for support in case of software issues.

Maintenance Contract: An agreement with a Vendor to provide certain services to the County.

Technology Life Cycle: A description of how technological components are acquired, used, maintained, replaced, and disposed of within an organization.

Upgrade: A change in hardware that typically results in the replacement of a piece of equipment or components thereof. Upgrades may entail a project involving testing, training, network down-time, etc. in order to accomplish the change.

Vendor: A company that manufactures or otherwise provides hardware and software assets to the County in exchange for monetary remuneration or exchange of services.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Hardware Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 751.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

V. RESPONSIBILITY

This policy exists to ensure that the software life cycle is an orderly, regulated process managed in the best interests of Columbia County by authorized, qualified personnel in certain departments. References to “**Department**” in this policy apply to any department or office of Columbia County with the responsibility for managing the life cycle of equipment or software, identified as TSD Division departments, Fire Rescue, Traffic Engineering, and Water Utility (for SCADA purposes). Other County departments may not participate in the aforementioned activities without the explicit permission of the Administrator’s Office.

VI. TECHNOLOGY LIFE CYCLE TIMELINE

The Technology Life Cycle for any hardware device is subject to the following general timeline:

1. **Acquisition:** Refers to the process by which an asset is procured for the County.
2. **Installation and Configuration:** The process by which an asset is put in place for use and set up for operation by the end user.
3. **Maintenance:** The ongoing process by which an asset is supported by designated personnel/departments of the Department.
4. **Replacement:** The process by which an asset is phased out of operational use and replaced by other equipment (which would have been brought in via the Acquisition process above, starting the cycle again).
5. **Disposal:** The process by which an asset is destroyed, sold, or otherwise removed from service to the County.

VII. POLICY

The standards regarding the life cycle of hardware shall apply to:

- Desktop Computers
- Workstation Computers
- Laptop Computers
- Phones
- Printers
- Scanners
- Projectors
- Monitors
- Servers
- Switches
- Routers
- Wireless Access Points
- Bridges
- Cabling
- Any device attached to the County network.
- Government-wide software and OS platforms running on the devices noted herein.

The following sections address the individual components of the Life Cycle for hardware. The procedures mandated herein must be reviewed on a regular basis in order to maintain accuracy.

1. Acquisition

- As part of the SOP/Knowledge Base (KB) for each department, there should be a description of the procedure by which new hardware is acquired, including references to the policies,

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Hardware Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 751.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

vendors, financial aspects of purchasing, programs used for tracking and recording purchases, etc. Purchases must adhere to Columbia County Procurement policies.

- There must be a database in place to track and retrieve records of purchases of equipment.
- There must be an inventory kept of all hardware and its characteristics such as model, serial, date purchased, location, etc.). Equipment will become part of the County inventory at its time of purchase and will be subject to replacement.
- Hardware Inventory management is subject to the separate section of this document entitled *Hardware Inventory Tracking*.
- Once equipment is purchased, the Vendor from whom it was procured should be added to a database of Vendors maintained by Information Technology.

2. Installation and Configuration

- As part of the SOP/KB for each department, there should be references for the installation and configuration of new hardware.
- Instructions are required based on the level of complexity and customization required. Processes that are repeatable and used often should be documented, while those that must be conducted by a person with special skills, certifications, or knowledge, or vary widely in their application, may not require step-by-step documentation.
- Equipment for which instructions are supplied by a Vendor, or for which Vendors must be contracted to perform installation and configuration, are exempt from this requirement except for commentary in the SOP/KB that states “Installation and Configuration of this equipment is performed by <CONTRACTOR COMPANY/NAME>” or similar language.
- At the time of installation, any default accounts and passwords on any piece of equipment must be modified or removed.

3. Maintenance and Troubleshooting

- As part of the SOP/KB for each department, there should be a description of the expected process by which various pieces of equipment are maintained, if the equipment requires regular maintenance). “Maintenance” in this context refers to the application/update of Operating Systems, Drivers, firmware, and various hardware components that may be subject to failure.
- Instructions are required based on the level of complexity and customization required to maintain the equipment. Processes that are simple, repeatable, and used often should be documented, while those that are more complex in nature must be conducted by a person with special skills, certifications, or knowledge, or vary widely in their application *may not* require step-by-step documentation, although references should be made to provide guidance on the complex process.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Hardware Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 751.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

4. Replacement

- In general, computer equipment should be replaced according to the schedule described in the document entitled *Technology Standards and Replacement Guide*.
- Instructions are required based on the level of complexity and customization required. Processes that are repeatable and used often should be documented, while those that must be conducted by a person with special skills, certifications, or knowledge, or vary widely in their application, may not require step-by-step documentation.
- As part of each budgeting cycle, Departments must be prepared to provide a list of equipment that is slated for replacement during a fiscal year.
 - Enterprise Fund and Special Revenue-funded departments are responsible for budgeting for their own hardware replacements and software licensing. These departments must budget appropriately for equipment that is at the end of its lifecycle, since the deployment of equipment that is beyond lifecycle limits 1) may place the County in danger of being in violation of Microsoft licenses and 2) may make the individual piece of equipment susceptible to security risks and 3) may be unable to run required applications.
 - Equipment beyond its lifecycle limit as described in IT's *Technology Standards and Replacement Guide* is liable to be removed from the County network.

5. Disposal

- As part of the SOP/KB for each department, there should be a procedure that describes the means by which replaced equipment is disposed of.
- Each piece of equipment should be assessed to determine if it is necessary to delete data (regardless of sensitivity) from the equipment. Hardware that stores or has stored data must be electronically cleansed ("sanitized") in accordance with Columbia County's *Hardware Sanitization Policy*.
- Redeployment of Devices
 - Equipment that is out of life-cycle and has been replaced should not be redeployed under any circumstances. Exceptions, if they exist, must be documented and evaluated on an annual basis.

VIII. HARDWARE INVENTORY TRACKING

Each department will maintain an electronic inventory that tracks all of the hardware that they acquire, install, configure, maintain, and dispose of.

- The inventory should be deliverable in paper or electronic means to auditors, management, elected officials, staff, etc.
- The inventory should capture applicable information about each device, including, but not limited to, serial number, model number, manufacturer, category/type, location, status,

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Hardware Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 751.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

customer-to-whom-assigned, last-logged-in, etc. It is understood that the characteristics of various devices will differ and may be acquired and stored through different means.

- Hardware assets should be inventoried by software tools that automatically discover the equipment and record their characteristics. Non-networked assets are exempt from this requirement, but they must still be tracked through manual means.
- Network communication assets must be inventoried and mapped using software tools that graphically illustrate the network topology.
- Inventory should be periodically checked by manual means to ensure accuracy.
- The inventory must be able to generate reports (or electronic output in data exchange formats such as TXT, CSV, etc.) that may include, but are not limited to, the list below:
 - List of all items
 - List of items by locations
 - List of items by replacement year
 - List of items by type
 - List of items by support/maintenance responsibility
 - List of items by model number

IX. ENFORCEMENT

Penalties for violation of this policy will vary depending on the nature and severity of the violation. Unauthorized use of equipment and licenses may be considered to be contractual violations and/or criminal offenses punishable by law. Penalties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, reprimand, suspension and/or termination of employment.
- Civil or criminal prosecution under applicable law(s).

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Software Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 752.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

To establish requirements for policies and procedures by which Columbia County’s Software Technology Assets are effectively and proactively managed so that software solutions, business practices, contracts, inventory management, and risk meet the needs of the organization.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to the departments of the Technology Services Division (“TSD”) and other County Departments that participate in the purchase, deployment, and maintenance of hardware, software, and other technology-related resources.

III. REFERENCES

This policy refers to or works in conjunction with the following Columbia County or Technology Services Division policies:

- *Technology Asset Life Cycle Management Policy*
- *Data Security Policy*
- *Technology Services Division Standard Operating Procedure Policy*
- *Technology Standards and Replacement Guide*

IV. DEFINITIONS

License: Permission from a Vendor, usually in exchange for funds guaranteed by a contractual agreement, to use one or more software applications or components thereof.

Maintenance: Services provided to the County from a software vendor / manufacturer / provider (“Vendor”) which provides the County with regular updates, upgrades, and/or the ability to contact the Vendor for support in case of software issues.

Maintenance Contract: A contractual agreement with a Vendor to provide certain software-related services to the County.

Module: A component of a software package that may satisfy a specific business function, and may be licensed/purchased separately from a Vendor to expand the capability of a solution.

Site: A geographic location in which technology assets belonging to the County are housed.

Software (Business): Software that is used by a department or office in order to satisfy business needs which may be specific to that office. For example, an ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) software package is “business software”.

Software (Productivity): Software is that which is necessary in order to perform standard or common business functions such as word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, and so on.

Software (Specialty): Software applications that are not commonly used, but may perform specific, essential functions such as IT server management tools or software used by engineers or personnel in scientific-related positions.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Software Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 752.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Software/Software Asset: The programs and operating systems that are typically installed on a physical component (hardware) within a computer network.

Software Asset Management: The process of tracking and managing software titles, licenses, versions, dependencies, interfaces, and installed endpoints.

Software-As-A-Service: Software that is hosted by a Vendor at their site and is typically available through a web browser.

Technology Life Cycle: A description of how technological components are acquired, used, maintained, replaced, and disposed of within an organization.

Update: Changes in software versions that results in minor functionality changes or “bug fixes”.

Upgrade: A change in software version that typically results in additional features and capabilities, entailing testing, training, database conversion, etc. in order to effect the change.

Vendor: A company that manufactures or otherwise provides software assets to the County in exchange for monetary remuneration or exchange of services.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

This policy exists to ensure that the software life cycle is an orderly, regulated process managed in the best interests of Columbia County by authorized, qualified personnel in certain departments. References to “**Department**” in this policy apply to any department or office of Columbia County with the responsibility for managing the life cycle of equipment or software, identified as TSD Division departments, Fire Rescue, Traffic Engineering, and Water Utility (for SCADA purposes). Other County departments may not participate in the aforementioned activities without the explicit permission of the Administrator’s Office.

VI. TECHNOLOGY LIFE CYCLE TIMELINE

The Technology Life Cycle for any individual software application is subject to the following general timeline:

1. **Acquisition:** Refers to the process by which an asset is procured for the County.
2. **Installation and Configuration:** The process by which an asset is put in place for use and set up for operation by the end user.
3. **Maintenance:** The ongoing process by which an asset is supported / maintained.
4. **Replacement:** The process by which an asset is phased out of operational use and supplanted by other equipment.
5. **Disposal:** The process by which an asset is removed from service to the County.

VII. POLICY

1. Acquisition

- The Information Technology Department will maintain a *Technology Standards and*

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Software Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 752.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Replacement Guide (the “Guide”) that lists approved software applications. If a customer desires software that is not included in the Guide, the TSD should determine the business need and evaluate software in cooperation with the customer.

- TSD must be involved in the procurement process for any business software. In the event that software is a hosted Software-As-A-Service (SAAS) solution, TSD must be afforded the opportunity to submit questions related to backup and recovery, security, and administrative capabilities of the solution.
- All software applications that are to be used on Columbia County devices must have been purchased in accordance with Columbia County Procurement Policies.
- In all cases of software acquisition, the appropriate licensing must be purchased, documented, and maintained.
- Once purchased, software applications will be entered into the Guide as acceptable software and a record will be added to the County’s inventory management system (described in *Software Inventory Tracking*).
- The following conditions apply to specific software categories:
 - *Business Software*
 - If new software is being sought, the TSD should assess customer needs and coordinate with the Procurement Department to determine the appropriate bid/selection process. Staff should develop system requirements as needed in order to guide the bid process and ensure eventual customer satisfaction.
 - If software is being replaced, staff should assess the need for conversion and testing inherent in software replacement.
 - If existing software is being upgraded, it may be necessary to arrange an implementation-level project depending on complexity of the environment. Procurement is not usually party to upgrade projects, but should be consulted in advance to confirm their required level of involvement.
 - *Productivity Software*
 - Purchase of these software packages must have IT approval and the purchase should be in accordance with Procurement policy.
 - *Specialty Software*
 - Purchase of these software packages must have IT approval and the purchase should be in accordance with Procurement policy.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Software Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 752.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

2. Installation and Configuration

- The Departments shall be accountable for ensuring that installation and configuration instructions are captured and maintained in their SOP/Knowledge Base.
- Only software authorized in the *Technology Standards and Replacement Guide* may be installed on County devices.
- The IT Department expressly forbids installation of the following software:
 - Privately-owned software
 - Unapproved Internet downloads
 - Pirated copies of any software titles
 - Any title not listed in the *Information Technology Standards and Replacement Guide*
 - Any software not installed according to the procedures set out in this policy
- Employees desiring installation of authorized software on a device must obtain approval from their direct supervisor or department head prior to submitting to the IT Service Desk. The IT Department reserves the right to reject software installation requests if there is not licensing available for the software or if it has not been approved for use on the County network.
- Departments with personnel who are authorized to install mission-specific software are exempted from contacting IT for software installation.
- If software or licensing is not available, it must be acquired through the accepted Columbia County Procurement requirements prior to installation.
- Software will be installed only on County-owned or supported devices by authorized personnel.
- Software installed on Columbia County systems (including all commercial and shareware products) must be used in compliance with applicable licenses, contracts and agreements.
- The IT Department reserves the right to uninstall any unapproved software from Columbia County owned or supported equipment.

3. Maintenance / Support / Upgrades / Updates

- The IT Department is not obligated to provide support for any software titles not listed in the *Information Technology Standards Guide*.
- The County should maintain contractual agreements with Vendors from whom applications have been procured. Software must be upgraded to maintain Vendor support, and it must be upgraded consistently within the organization in order to maintain compatibility among users, operating systems, and hardware.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Software Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 752.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

4. Replacement

- “Replacement” in the context of software may be a complex process including collection of bids, conversion, and training. Replacement may take place when functionality no longer meets the customer’s objectives, or when a vendor has discontinued a product, etc.
- Software replacement that involves the replacement of one vendor product with another should be conducted according to the same parameters described above in the “Acquisition” section.
- When software is replaced, the transition is typically to be managed according to the parameters of the “End-of-Life / Disposal” section.

5. End-of-Life / Disposal

The County may determine that it is no longer in the best interests of the government to continue using a certain software application. When it is necessary to sever the relationship with a software vendor, the following rules are in effect:

- Staff must advise the customer/end-user of the consequences of disposing of software, so that budgeting for replacement, bid preparation, project management, customization, conversion, and implementation, and so on can be addressed.
- The relationship with the Vendor must be terminated, and the software must be disposed of, according to the contract between the County and the Vendor. In the event that no contract exists, the County Attorney should be consulted for direction.
- Uninstalled Software must be removed from the *Guide* and should be logged in the software inventory as uninstalled or otherwise no longer in use.

VIII. SOFTWARE INVENTORY TRACKING

1. Records Management

Each department will maintain an electronic inventory of the software that they acquire, install, configure, maintain, and dispose of, including the following characteristics:

- Software Inventory Components
 - Software Titles: The inventory should capture information about each software application such as software name, function, manufacturer, version, licenses, database, server names, delivery method (SAAS, Client-Server, etc.), security category (per the *Data Security Policy*) and so on.
 - Software Modules: If software is composed of multiple modules that perform

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: June 18, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Software Asset Life Cycle Management Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 752.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

different functions, information should be tracked about each module and its purpose.

- Software Interfaces: A list of the various interfaces/exports that take data from one platform or database and transport it to another platform.
- The inventory must be able to generate reports (or electronic output in data exchange formats such as TXT, CSV, etc.) of software titles, modules, etc.

2. Auditing

The IT Department reserves the right to monitor software installation and usage on County-owned end-user computing devices, and will conduct audits to ensure compliance with licensing. Unauthorized software may be uninstalled following consultation with the department on the purpose of the software. Software that is known to present a threat to the security and integrity of the County network will be uninstalled immediately.

The inventory should be deliverable in paper or electronic means to auditors, management, elected officials, staff, etc.

IX. ENFORCEMENT

Penalties for violation of this policy will vary depending on the nature and severity of the violation. Software piracy / unauthorized installations may be considered to be contractual violations and/or criminal offenses. Penalties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, reprimand, suspension and/or termination of employment.
- Civil or criminal prosecution under applicable law(s).

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: January 20, 2015 October 18, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Hardware Sanitization</i>
<i>Policy Number 753.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect the intellectual property of Columbia County and the confidentiality of personal information by defining direction and responsibility for the pre-disposal data sanitization of Columbia County's hardware.

II. SCOPE

The policy applies to all hardware owned or leased by Columbia County and capable of storing Columbia County's intellectual property or information related to the privacy of Columbia County's employees, clients, or suppliers. The policy applies to, but is not limited to, all devices that fit the following device classifications:

- Portable and notebook computers running Windows, UNIX, Linux or Mac OS operating systems.
- Workstations running Windows, UNIX, Linux or Mac OS operating systems.

The following devices and storage media are not specifically addressed by the terms of this policy, but must be sanitized accordingly:

- Servers should be backed up and sanitized in accordance with vendor recommendations. If the vendor has not provided recommendations, servers can be sanitized as workstations.
- Mobile devices, such as PDAs and smart phones, must be destroyed by crushing, incineration, shredding or melting prior to disposal.
- Removable storage media such as flash memory devices, optical CD and DVD media, tape and other long-term storage media must be destroyed by incineration, shredding, or melting prior to disposal.

III. DEFINITIONS

Sanitization: Actions taken to render data written on media unrecoverable by both ordinary and extraordinary means.

IV. REFERENCES

This policy refers to or works in conjunction with the following Columbia County or Technology Services Division policies:

- National Institute of Standards and Training (NIST) Special Publication 800-88, *Guidelines for Media Sanitization*

V. RESPONSIBILITY

The Columbia County Information Technology (IT) Department is the sole county agency responsible for sanitization of equipment. The IT Manager or their designee is the primary contact for sanitization issues. The designated personnel will be responsible for determining the tools for

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: July 21, 2009 AMENDED: January 20, 2015 October 18, 2022	TOPIC: <i>Hardware Sanitization</i>
<i>Policy Number 753.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

sanitization and procedures for satisfying the provisions of this policy.

VI. POLICY

SCENARIOS FOR DISPOSAL

Columbia County recognizes two (2) different categories for the disposal of hardware:

- 1) Hardware transferred internally: Hardware may not require sanitization if it is transferred to another user within the same department. Hardware that is either transferred to a different department or to an employee with less authority must be sanitized as *hardware transferred externally*. End users may choose to sanitize personal information from hardware using a sanitization tool provided by the IT department.
- 2) Hardware transferred externally: All hardware transferred externally must be sanitized according to the methods defined by the IT Department. Potential scenarios include but are not limited to:
 - a) Hardware transferred to the private ownership of employees.
 - b) Hardware donated to charitable organizations.
 - c) Hardware returned to a lessor.
 - d) Hardware returned to a vendor for servicing or maintenance.
 - e) Hardware released to an external agency for disposal.

TECHNICAL GUIDANCE ON SANITIZATION

Two different methods may be used to sanitize hardware.

- 1) Physical destruction. Hardware may be sanitized through crushing, shredding, incineration or melting.
- 2) Digital sanitization. Deleting files is insufficient to sanitize hardware. A digital sanitization tool will be used by the IT Department to sanitize equipment. The current tool must be approved by IT Management.

CONTACTS

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact the IT Department Service Desk.

VII. ENFORCEMENT

Any employee who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 21, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Technology Contingency Planning Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 780.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

Columbia County, GA has established this Technology Contingency Planning Policy to ensure that a methodical approach is applied to the process of safeguarding and restoring the vital technology and data managed by the County. This policy is intended to provide a framework for the development, implementation, management, and maintenance of a proactive and ongoing contingency planning program.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Columbia County Departments, Offices, and Agencies that utilize technology resources to fulfill their respective missions. Unless specifically excluded, departments must comply with this Policy as it applies to their organization.

The County must be in compliance with initial plan-preparation requirements of this policy within two years of commission approval.

III. DEFINITIONS

Backup: A copy of files and programs made to facilitate recovery, if necessary.

Business Continuity Plan (BCP): A predetermined set of instructions or procedures that describe how an organization's mission/business functions would be sustained during and after a significant disruption.

Contingency Plan (CP): Management policy and procedures used to guide an enterprise response to a perceived loss of mission capability. For Columbia County's purposes, the CP is considered to be comprised of the COOP, BCP, DRP, ISCP, and additional resources as needed.

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP): An effort within individual organizations to ensure they can continue to perform their essential functions during a wide range of emergencies.

Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP): Management policy and procedures used to guide an enterprise response to a major loss of capability or damage to its facilities. The DRP is needed when the enterprise must recover from a loss of capability over a period of hours or days.

Information Systems Contingency Plan (ISCP): Management policy and procedures, typically applied to single systems, designed to maintain or restore business operations in the event of emergencies, system failures, or disasters, regardless of cause.

Recovery: Actions necessary to restore data files of an information system and computational capability after a system failure.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 21, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Technology Contingency Planning Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 780.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

IV. REFERENCES

This policy refers to or works in conjunction with the following policies as found in the Columbia County Comprehensive Policy Manual (or to be developed in accordance with this policy):

- *Data Backup Policy*
- *Information Security Policy*
- *Security Incident Response Policy*
- *Technology Asset Life Cycle Management Policy*

This policy has been influenced by the following guidelines:

- *NIST Special Publication 800-34 (latest revision), Contingency Planning Guide for Federal Information Systems*

V. RESPONSIBILITY

- **The Technology Services Director (“Director”)** has primary responsibility for the coordination of the technology contingency program, including reporting the status of planning, testing, and auditing activity to County Administration and the Commission. Authority is delegated to managers within Technology Services Division (TSD) Departments in order to facilitate efficient administration of the program.
- **TSD Departmental Managers** are responsible for ensuring sufficient financial, personnel, technical, and other resources are available for contingency planning activities as needed.
- **Technology Services Division (TSD)** personnel are responsible for the formulation of policies and procedures and the ultimate satisfaction of plan.
- **Non-TSD Departments and Offices** such as Water Utility, the Columbia County Sheriff’s Office, Fire Rescue, and Traffic Engineering have personnel that support technical operations within their organizations. These organizations should participate with the TSD as much as practicality and security permits in order to ensure a consistent approach to contingency planning.

VI. GENERAL POLICY PROVISIONS

- Columbia County shall implement the following plans and any associated programs and procedures necessary to recover the use of facilities and systems following a disaster event:
 - Contingency Planning Assessment
 - Continuity of Operations Plan
 - Business Continuity Plan
 - Disaster Recovery Plan
 - Information Systems Contingency Plan

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 21, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Technology Contingency Planning Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 780.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- The plans named above shall be established, managed, and updated according to the provisions of this policy.
- All systems maintained by the County must comply with CP plans, policies and requirements. Exceptions should be considered on a case-by-case basis, accountability should be assigned, the nature of the exception must be documented, and the exception should be reviewed by the Director and approved by the Administrator’s Office.
- Departments of the TSD may work cooperatively with other County departments as required/requested in order to support the Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery plans of those departments.
- Data held and managed locally in departments is excluded from this policy unless departments have entered into specific arrangements with IT for backup and recovery. The TSD and its Departments shall not be held accountable for systems and/or data that is not identified or provided to be included for contingency planning, backup, and recovery consideration.
- In order to facilitate effective CP, it is essential for Columbia County to maintain a robust method of storing system configuration records, inventory information, and data backups.
- Contingency plans & procedures should be developed with the intention of cooperation and compatibility with plans prepared by the Columbia County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) for the County’s overall disaster/event response, as needed.
- The plans mandated within this policy should use *NIST Special Publication 800-34* (and subsequent revisions) as a guide, with local conditions applied where practical.
- At the discretion of the Director and with the approval of the Administrator’s Office, the plans required by this policy can be combined to suit the needs of the County.
- The plans are subject to the following conditions regarding distribution and storage:
 - Copies should be supplied in soft and hard-copy format to staff to whom responsibilities are assigned.
 - Soft-copy plans must be distributed on media that are not dependent on the Columbia County network for availability.
 - Soft-copy plans should be kept on the County intranet and permission should be granted to personnel who are authorized to see them.

VII. CONTINGENCY PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The Contingency Planning Assessment (CPA) is a document that should describe the current state of the County’s planning processes as defined in this policy. It is chiefly the responsibility of the Technology Services Director to maintain this document and be prepared to report to Administration on the status of CP readiness for the County as requested. The CPA should be written as an executive summary-level document that is suitable for review by non-technical personnel, and should include the following contents:

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 21, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Technology Contingency Planning Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 780.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- Status report of the County’s general CP situation, to include:
 - Availability and status of CP resources (DR sites, etc.)
 - Obstacles to DR operations
- Summary-level description of measures taken to physically protect County facilities
- Summary-level description of measures taken to logically protect County equipment/systems and data
- Status of COOP, BCP, DRP, and ISCP
- Testing/Exercise schedules and results
- Recommendations for improvements in all of the areas described above

VIII. CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN

Columbia County should create and maintain a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) which provides overall county-wide guidance in the event that the critical business functions of the government need to be relocated in the event of a disaster/event that affects County facilities. The COOP will ultimately be the responsibility of the Administrator’s Office to activate and support and should include the following components and procedures:

- Activation Process
- Notification and Communication Process
- List of Mission Essential Functions (MEF) and Emergency Support Functions (ESF) for Departments
 - Order of Restoration for MEF/ESF
 - Methods of continuity for MEF/ESF, to include relocation or alternative technology use
 - Key personnel needed to execute the continuity plan for each MEF/ESF
 - Method of Response (include references to ISCP as needed)
 - Method of Recovery (include references to ISCP as needed)
- Plan Deactivation/Reconstitution
- Mitigation

IX. BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

All County Departments should create a BCP that provides guidance for the continuation of MEF/ESF following a disaster/event. The BCP will include the following components:

- Specific information about office locations and functions
- Emergency Support Functions and Mission Essential functions
- Material, technological, and other internal and external dependencies
- Contact Information for staff and key vendors

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 21, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Technology Contingency Planning Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 780.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

- Availability of important records (hard and soft copy)
- Activation Process
- Plan for executing a relocation move (including tasks and roles of employees)
- Any other information that would support a department move to another location on short notice for an extended amount of time.
- Plan Deactivation/Reconstitution
- Mitigation

TSD will assist and support other divisions and departments in the development of their own BCP as it applies to the restoration of hardware and software resources.

X. DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN

The Technology Services Division will develop a DRP that provides guidance to employees for the response to a disaster in which general facilities and access to systems has been affected. The DRP will include, but is not limited to, the following components and procedures:

- Activation Process
- Identification of key resources (personnel and otherwise) and facilities
- Disaster Assessment Tasks
- Notification and Communication Process
- Response and Recovery Tasks
- Steps for Plan Deactivation/Reconstitution
- Steps for Mitigation

XI. INFORMATION SYSTEMS CONTINGENCY PLAN

The Technology Services Division will develop an ISCP that provides guidance for employees to restore individual systems following a disaster/event. The ISCP need not be a separate document named as such - the departmental Standard Operating Procedures and/or Knowledge Base (KB), including inventory records, satisfy the need to document the processes listed below. The ISCP will include the following components and procedures *for each individual system*:

- Detailed system information (servers, databases, etc.)
- Points of Contact (system support personnel, vendors, etc.)
- Activation and Notification Procedures
- Outage Assessment Procedure
- Steps for Recovery of hardware, software, database, network, and other resources
- Steps for Reconstitution (validation and testing) of systems following Recovery

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 21, 2019	TOPIC: <i>Technology Contingency Planning Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 780.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

XII. ADDITIONAL POLICES

In the event that a need arises for Issue-Specific Policies (to address circumstances) or System-Specific Policies (to address individual systems), staff will develop the new contingency policies.

Policies will be implemented through the use of specific procedures that will be developed at the department level and stored within the Standard Operating Procedures for each department.

Policies that are applied enterprise-wide should be submitted for inclusion in the Comprehensive Policy Manual (CPM).

XIII. TESTING AND EXERCISES

The plans described in this policy should be exercised based on the general recommendations below. *Testing* is defined as any activity related to executing the plan in part or in full, to include variations ranging from tabletop exercises to complete execution.

- The Continuity of Operations Plan should be tested bi-annually
- The Business Continuity Plan for each department should be tested bi-annually
- The Disaster Recovery Plan should be tested bi-annually
- The Information Systems Contingency Plan for each system should be reviewed annually

Regardless of the frequency of testing, contact information within the plans and inventory information must be updated on an ongoing basis.

XIV. ENFORCEMENT

Violations of this policy represent a danger to the integrity and security of Columbia County's technological resources and may likely represent a danger to public safety; therefore, any willful violation by an employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 19, 2023	TOPIC: <i>Data Backup Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 781.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish requirements for policies and procedures by which Columbia County’s data backups are managed so that the hardware, software, and data recovery needs of the organization can be met.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all departments, agencies, employees, and offices of Columbia County, GA Government that house data on Columbia County technology resources.

III. DEFINITIONS

Backup: A copy of files and programs made to facilitate recovery, if necessary.

Recovery: The process of conducting actions necessary to restore data files of an information system and computational capability after a system failure.

Restore: The process of placing files in a backup solution onto the server from which they were backed up in order to facilitate a recovery.

IV. REFERENCES

This policy refers to or works in conjunction with the following Columbia County or Technology Services Division policies:

- *Data Security Policy*
- *Information Security Policy*
- *Technology Contingency Planning Policy*

This policy has been influenced by the following guidelines:

- *NIST Special Publication 800-34, Revision 1, Contingency Planning Guide for Federal Information Systems*
- *NIST Special Publication 800-209, Security Guidelines for Storage Infrastructure*

V. RESPONSIBILITY

The **Technology Services Director**, working in partnership with the County Manager’s Office, Division Directors, and Department Heads, will develop policies that direct the backup of data stored within Columbia County technology resources.

The **Information Technology Department (IT)** holds the responsibility for the creation, scheduling, execution, maintenance, restoration, testing, etc. for Columbia County IT backups.

Columbia County Departments and Offices are all responsible for ensuring that managers, supervisors, and employees are aware of their responsibilities and capabilities regarding backups of work-related information, including email and work-related files.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 19, 2023	TOPIC: <i>Data Backup Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 781.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

County **Employees** should be familiar with their responsibilities and capabilities regarding backups of work-related information, including email and work-related files.

IMPORTANT: While the IT Department is responsible for backups as defined within this policy, the proliferation of portable and mobile computing devices such as tablets, laptops, portable hard drives, etc., as well as cloud-hosted platforms that are not managed by IT, means that data exists in locations in which IT cannot facilitate a backup. Data that is managed through these means is *not* within IT's responsibility to back up, and employees are reminded that they are individually responsible for data stored on these devices.

VI. BACKUP POLICY

The **Information Technology Department** will develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) that address the various aspects of the county's backup solution.

The individual person(s) within IT who are responsible for managing backups shall be assigned by the IT Manager.

The remainder of this policy will describe general policy provisions that apply to backups and that shall be addressed by IT with the SOP. The SOP document(s) shall be **Confidential** per the provisions of the county's *Data Security Policy*, as well as the Georgia Open Records Act, and will thus be exempt from any release to the public.

Content of Backups

- The content of data backed up varies depending on systems. Data backups may be composed of many different applications, operating systems, and data types.
- IT will document the *general* categories of data backed up for each system supported, to include, but not limited to, operating system files, software application files, and application data files, and so on.

Schedule and Retention

- The IT Department will be responsible for establishing a schedule for executing backups and a retention schedule for the length of time which a backup will be kept. This information will be kept in the SOP.
- The SOP shall include, at a minimum, provisions for backups of the following devices: File Servers, Infrastructure Servers, Database Servers, E-Mail Servers, Cloud-based Servers (of any type).

Storage

- Backups shall be replicated to a secure remote site for disaster recovery purposes.
- Only personnel authorized by the IT Manager will have access to backup applications and media.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: July 21, 2015 AMENDED: September 19, 2023	TOPIC: <i>Data Backup Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 781.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

Restore

- IT will employ means to effectively restore data from the retention period designated in the SOP.
- Requests for data recovery should be made to the IT Service Desk.

Monitoring

- IT will monitor backup operations and will employ systems that will detect successful and failed backups and provide notifications to staff as necessary.
- In the event of a failed backup, IT shall implement a procedure to correct the error if necessary.

Testing

- IT will test backups on a regular basis, at least semi-annually.

Change Reporting

- Changes in technology will cause backup requirements to change, potentially causing data locations and storage space allocations to change dramatically. Whenever system changes, software upgrades, application migrations, and/or updates are implemented, the IT Department must be notified so that critical data can be protected.

VII. ENFORCEMENT

Any employee who is found to have willfully violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: March 17, 2020 AMENDED:	TOPIC: <i>Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 790.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Columbia County Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Program is to support and augment County operations through improved efficiency with aerial equipment and implement standards that provide for the health, safety and welfare of the public and County staff. This UAS Policy and associated procedures are intended to ensure the safe and responsible operation of the County’s unmanned aircraft, regardless of the nature of the mission. This policy is not intended to be all-inclusive, but a supplement to other UAS guidelines, Federal Aviation Regulations, all other applicable County policies and procedures, as well as aircraft manufacturers’ approved flight manuals, etc. Operational guidelines and procedures will be developed through the UAS Program and the UAS Program Team.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all County departments and offices that utilize the County’s UAS, excluding Columbia County Fire Rescue and the Columbia County Sheriff’s Office. The UAS will only be operated by trained County personnel in accordance with current FAA rules and regulations, while adhering to Columbia County Policies and Procedures.

III. DEFINITIONS

Note: All definitions are taken from Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) guidelines and are intended to comply with FAA policies, rules, and regulations. In the event that these definitions or this policy conflicts with FAA requirements, the FAA requirements shall govern.

FAA: Federal Aviation Administration.

FAR: Federal Aviation Regulations.

(s)UAS / (Small) Unmanned Aircraft System: A small unmanned aircraft (between .55lbs and 55lbs in flight) *and* its associated elements, to include communication links, flight controls, cameras, media collection systems, and any other components that are required for the safe and efficient operation of the small unmanned aircraft in the national airspace system.

UAS Flight Team: The group of individuals responsible for the implementation of any UAS Mission authorized by this policy. This includes at minimum one UAV PIC. This may also include UAV Observers, UAV PMC, and UAS Equipment Operator(s).

UAS Mission: A Flight operation performed by a UAV including planning, pre-flight operations, deployment, operation of the UAV and post-flight operations.

UAV: Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (a.k.a. Drone or “unmanned aircraft”).

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: March 17, 2020 AMENDED:	TOPIC: <i>Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 790.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

UAV (Visual) Observer: Visual Observer – Person acting as safety officer in direct contact with UAV PIC and UAV PMC during UAS mission.

UAV (Remote) PIC: Pilot in Command – UAV Pilot remotely in control of a County UAV and is the final authority over UAV operations during a UAS Mission, responsible for ensuring that all missions are conducted within approved policies, standards, guidelines, and specific mission parameters. A UAV PIC must be in control or able to immediately take manual control of a UAV in flight at all times and must be certified under Columbia County UAS Program to be a PIC for UAS Missions and hold a valid FAA Remote Pilot Certification with a sUAS rating.

UAV (Remote) PMC: Person Manipulating Controls – Person designated through the Columbia County UAS Program to operate a UAV in flight during a UAS Mission. The PMC must have a valid FAA Remote Pilot Certification with a sUAS rating or be under the direct supervision of a PIC who has the ability to immediately take manual control a UAV in flight at all times.

Additional definitions are provided in the Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Program standard operating procedures.

IV. REFERENCES

FARs: Federal Aviation Regulations. For the purpose of conducting civil sUAS operations this is generally 14 CFR Part 107 and Advisory Circular 107-2.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

The Columbia County UAS Program Team consists of the UAS Program Manager as designated by the County Manager, as well as additional personnel appointed to represent other County Departments. It shall be the responsibility of each County Department Head (DH), as well as the UAS Program Manager to ensure compliance with this policy and procedures adopted under the policy.

Specific duties of personnel assigned to a UAS Flight Team will be defined in Standard Operating Procedures for the UAS Program.

VI. POLICY

The Columbia County UAS Program will be an iterative system created with the intent and understanding that as an emerging technology, the equipment, capabilities, regulations, acceptance and uses of the UAS will evolve over time. Columbia County will make the best use of the technology through continuing training, education and experience.

The UAS may be used during multi-agency operations involving County resources or having County responsibility and may be utilized through agreement with other local government agencies. Priority of the UAS will be given to emergency support within Columbia County over normal

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: March 17, 2020 AMENDED:	TOPIC: <i>Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 790.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Information Technology</i>

operations. Only Columbia County UAV PICs or UAV PMC under UAV PIC direct supervision, will operate the Columbia County UAVs regardless of jurisdiction or mission location.

The UAS Program Manager will be responsible for overall management of the UAS, implementation of the program, development of procedures and ensuring internal and external compliance with FAA and/or other regulatory agencies. The UAS Program Manager will work with the Department Heads to educate their employees on the uses and benefits of the technology and to facilitate participation in the UAS Program. It is the responsibility of the Department Head to assign a UAS Project Coordinator to participate in the UAS Program. The UAS Project Coordinators will work closely with each other and the UAS Program Manager to manage and develop the UAS Program. Regular meetings of the UAS Program will be held to assess and develop the program at intervals determined by the UAS Program Manager.

A UAS Mission shall only be performed if deemed safe by the UAS Flight Team, is within the certified limits of the UAV PIC, and is within the limitations of FAA Part 107 or Certificate of Waiver or Authorization. All UAS Missions will be coordinated with other appropriate agencies, Incident Command of an emergency or disaster, or as required by the FAA or other regulatory agency.

All Columbia County owned and/or operated UAV(s) must be registered with the UAS Program Manager and insured by Risk Management prior to operations.

VII. ENFORCEMENT

Violations of this policy represent a danger to the integrity and security of Columbia County resources and may represent a danger to public safety; therefore, any willful violation by an employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.



	FLEET
801.1	Fuelman Policy
802.1	Global Positioning System (GPS) Policy
803.1	Motor Pool Policy
804.1	Fleet Replacement program Policy
805.1	Vehicle-Equipment Repurposing Program Policy

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 19, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Fuelman Fuel Card Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 801.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish minimum guidelines for the use of the Fuelman fuel card. All employees who drive Columbia County owned vehicles are subject to this policy and required to abide by it.

II. SCOPE

It is important that the county safeguard and account for purchases of gasoline and diesel fuel for county owned vehicles.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) The Columbia County Fleet Services Department is responsible for:
 - 1) Assuring that a signed form from each employee receiving a fuel card/PIN is on file. (form is attached)
 - 2) Issuing fuel cards/PINs.
 - 3) Managing the contingency fueling site in Appling.
 - 4) Managing the overall Fuel Man system to assure county vehicles have access to fuel.
- b) Division Directors are responsible for:
 - 1) Assuring that supervisors, managers and employees under their direction reads, understands and follows this policy.
 - 2) Providing instructions to the user employee on how to properly use Fuel Cards/PINs.
 - 3) Monitoring the day to day fueling system within their departments.
 - 4) Authorizing employees for issuance of a Fuel Man PIN.
 - 5) Following progressive disciplinary measures whenever this policy is not followed by their subordinates.
- c) Fuel Man User Employees are responsible for strictly adhering to this policy in regard to Fuel Man Card/PIN usage.

IV. POLICY

The following is policy regarding issuance of a County Vehicle Fuel Card:

- a) Will be issued a five (5) digit Personal identification Number (PIN) to be used Employee with the County's Fuelman Fleet cards.
- b) Employee is authorized to fuel county vehicles only, using the county's Fuelman Fleet cards.
- c) Employee's PIN identifies them by name on a weekly fuel report and they are accountable for all transactions made using their PIN.
- d) Employee will not share their PIN with anyone else.
- e) If employee believes their PIN has been compromised, they should immediately notify their supervisor and/or fleet manager.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 19, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Fuelman Fuel Card Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 801.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

- f) Employee will not use Fuelman Fleet card for their personal vehicle or for non-business purposes. Using Fuelman Fleet card for any purpose other than official business use will be considered theft of county property.
- g) Each time the Fuelman Fleet Card is used, the employee is required to completely fill the vehicle's fuel tank and enter an accurate odometer reading (odometer/hour meters please do not include tenths) The will allow the county to monitor fuel usage and track required maintenance intervals. **FAILURE TO INPUT ACCURATE ODOMETER READINGS CAN RESULT IN REVOCATION OF PRIVELAGES.**
- h) Each Fuelman Fleet Card is assigned to either an individual county vehicle or specific fueling purpose (example: off road equipment fuel card). Each PIN will work with any Fuelman Fleet Card issued to the county.
- i) It is against county policy to swap or share cards between vehicles or to use any card for other than the intended purpose.

V. ENFORCEMENT

Any employee who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 19, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Fuelman Fuel Card Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 801.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>



Columbia County Fleet Services
(706) 541-1924
Fuelman Request Form

Attachment A
Created 3/17/15

Requesting Department: _____

Department Number: _____ **Sub Department:** _____

EMPLOYEE PIN NUMBER REQUEST

Employee Name: _____ **Employee Number:** _____

(Please Print)

Status (Please circle only one): **Change** **New** **Delete**

If change please list reason: _____

COUNTY VEHICLE FUEL CARD REQUEST

Shop Number: _____ **Vehicle Year/Description:** _____

Vehicle Serial #: _____

Fuel Type: **Diesel** **Unleaded** **Unleaded Plus** **Premium**

Status (Please circle only one): **Change** **New** **Lost** **Delete**

If change please list reason: _____

DRIVER FUEL PROCEDURE

By signing below, I understand that I must adhere to the Fleet Service Fuelman Policy, as approved in the Columbia County Comprehensive Policy Manual.

Employee Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

(Required for Pin)

Supervisor's Name (Please Print): _____

Supervisor's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

(Required for Pin or Fuel Card)

FLEET USE ONLY:

Card/Pin Number Received With Request: _____

Date Request Received: _____ Date Locked: _____

Card/Pin Picked Up By: _____ Date: _____

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Global Positioning System (GPS) Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 802.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) devices on County owned vehicles. All employees who drive Columbia County owned vehicles are subject to this policy and required to abide by it.

II. SCOPE

There are currently over 900 County owned vehicles assigned to Columbia County employees for performing non-law enforcement and non-fire service county government tasks and duties on a daily basis. These vehicles are maintained by Fleet Services. Periodically, citizen complaints or other incidents raise concerns about the driving habits of a particular employee. When this occurs, the County Manager, Deputy County Manager or Division Directors may request that a GPS device be placed on the county vehicle.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Columbia County Fleet Services Department will install GPS devices on County vehicles upon request by the County Manager, Deputy County Manager or Division Director. Data provided by the GPS device is accessible to the requesting authority for monitoring as long as they feel it necessary to determine if there is a policy violation.

IV. POLICY

The following is policy regarding placement and usage of GPS devices on County owned vehicles:

1. GPS devices will only be placed on non-emergency Columbia County owned vehicles by request of the County Manager, Deputy County Manager or Division Directors.
2. GPS devices will be installed by Fleet Services.
3. Occasions that may make such requests necessary include, but are not limited to:
 - Reports of Speeding
 - Reports of non-approved out of work zone or county usage
 - Concerns about time spent on official county business
 - Observation of county officials of general poor driving habits
4. GPS devices installed on County owned vehicles will remain in service until the requesting authority asks for it to be removed.
5. This policy is subject to change.

V. ENFORCEMENT

Any employee who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 19, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Motor Pool Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 803.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

I. PURPOSE

Motor Pool vehicles are available for employees to use for approved out of town business travel or one to two day local travel. The purpose of this policy is to provide the requirements for reserving and using a Columbia County Motor Pool vehicle for county business related travel purposes.

II. SCOPE

There are various types and sizes of county vehicles that are maintained in the Columbia County Motor Pool that can be reserved and used by county employees for county related business travel.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

The vehicles in the Columbia County Motor Pool are selected and maintained by the Fleet Services Department and is managed by the Emergency & Operations Division (EOD) office staff, located at 650-B Ronald Reagan Drive, Evans, GA. The EOD office staff “exercises the Motor Pool vehicles twice a week to assure operational readiness when utilized by employees for county related business travel.

IV. POLICY

- a) Employee must have a valid drivers’ license and a current MVR on file with Risk Management in order to utilize a Columbia County Motor Pool vehicle.
- b) Employees with approved travel and authorization to use a Motor Pool vehicle should submit a reservation request to the “Motor Pool” email group at MotorPool@columbiacountyga.gov.
- c) The email request to the Motor Pool email group should include the date(s) the vehicle will be needed, the type and size of vehicle you need and the destination in which you will be traveling.
- d) The Motor Pool staff will confirm that a Motor Pool vehicle is available, as requested.
- e) The Motor Pool staff will email a “Vehicle Sign-Out Form” for the reserved vehicle. *Form A attached.*
- f) The Department Manager and Division Director signatures are required for authorization.
- g) Any non-county employee riders need to complete a “Rider Release Form” prior to travel in the county vehicle. *Form B attached.*

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 19, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Motor Pool Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 803.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

- h) The Motor Pool staff will conduct a walk-around inspection on the vehicle, with the employee, prior to checking out the vehicle.
- i) Fuelman cards are located in each vehicle. Vehicle is to be returned with fuel tank full.
- j) Employees will use their Fuelman PIN number or the departments assigned Fuelman PIN number. If you do not have a Fuelman PIN number, contact Fleet Services and they will assign one to you.
- k) Upon the vehicle's return, a walk-around inspection is conducted on the vehicle with the employee. Any problems incurred on the trip are noted on the form for reporting to Fleet Services.

V. ENFORCEMENT

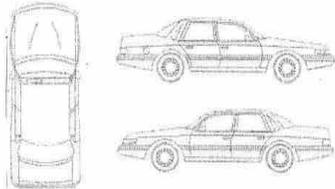
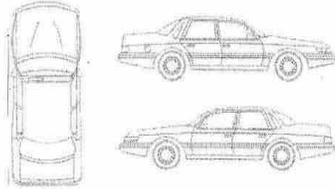
Any employee who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 19, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Motor Pool Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 803.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

Form A

VEHICLE SIGN OUT FORM

DEPARTMENT NAME/NUMBER:	
DRIVER'S NAME(S):	
EMPLOYEE NUMBER: _____	
COPY OF DRIVER'S LICENSE ATTACHED: YES / NO CURRENT MVR ON FILE: YES / NO	
DATE(S) OF USE:	
PURPOSE OF TRAVEL/DESTINATION:	
LIST ANY PASSENGERS: (If passenger is not a county employee a rider release form must be attached)	
Department Manager's Signature _____	Division Director's Signature _____
VEHICLE INFORMATION	
SHOP NUMBER/DESCRIPTION:	
Mileage showing must be recorded and checked off at the time vehicle is picked up and returned. Items listed below must be checked by driver at time of pick up and return.	
PICK UP:	
MILEAGE _____	
WATER _____	
OIL _____	
BRAKES _____	
LIGHTS _____	
INTERIOR _____	
Please list any problems with vehicle at time of sign out:	
I acknowledge receipt of above specified vehicle in safe mechanical condition and agree to return said car in same condition as received, ordinary wear and tear accepted. By signing below I acknowledge that I understand I will be responsible for any damage upon return of said vehicle not noted at time of sign out. <u>VEHICLE MUST BE RETURNED WITH A FULL TANK OF GAS. VEHICLE MUST BE CLEAN AT TIME OF RETURN.</u> If you experience any problems that immobilizes, significantly impairs or comprises the safety of the vehicle while it is in your possession, please contact the Evans Motor Pool at 706-868-3303 or by email, EvansMotorPool@columbiacountyga.gov . The Evans Motor Pool will coordinate a solution for any issues you are experiencing with the motor pool vehicle.	
Driver's Signature & Date:	
DROP OFF:	
MILEAGE _____	
WATER _____	
OIL _____	
BRAKES _____	
LIGHTS _____	
INTERIOR _____	
Please list any problems with vehicle at time of return:	

Driver must receive Fuelman PIN from Fleet Services prior to use of vehicle

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APPROVED: May 19, 2015	TOPIC: <i>Motor Pool Policy</i>
<i>Policy Number 803.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

Form B

RIDER RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

The undersigned (hereinafter referred to as "Participant") acknowledges that he/she is freely and voluntarily participating as a rider in a vehicle owned by Columbia County, Georgia (hereinafter "County") with one or more County employees. This participation as a rider may consist of the Participant's riding in County vehicles during work related assignments, which assignments may include potentially dangerous activities or hazardous situations.

In consideration of the Participant being allowed to participate as a rider, the Participant does release and shall hold harmless Columbia County, Georgia, the Board of Commissioners of Columbia County, Georgia, the commissioners, officers, agents, deputies, employees and representatives of Columbia County, Georgia, from any loss, claim, suit, award or judgment for injury or damage to person or property arising out of or related to the Participant's participation as a rider described above. This release shall cover injuries or damages resulting from all actions or omissions of those released, including such actions or omissions, which are negligent or are negligently performed.

As further consideration for the Participant's being allowed to participate as a rider, the Participant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Columbia County, Georgia, the Board of Commissioners of Columbia County, Georgia, the commissioners, officers, agents, deputies, employees and representatives of Columbia County, Georgia, from any claims or actions whatsoever for damages, compensation or otherwise, including attorney's fees and costs they may incur due to the presence of the Participant as a rider in a County owned vehicle, which presence is defined to include, but is not limited to, the presence of the Participant in or near the vehicle or at any location where the Participant is taken during the course of his/her participation during the coverage period referenced below.

Participant hereby acknowledges that there are inherent risks of injury or damage in participating as a rider in a County owned vehicle. Participant further acknowledges that serious accidents occasionally occur during operation of a vehicle and that drivers and passengers of vehicles occasionally sustain mortal or serious injuries and/or property damage as a consequence thereof. Knowing the risks and dangers of these activities, the Participant freely and voluntarily accepts and assumes all of the risks of injury or damage to person or property arising out of or related to Participant's participation as a rider in a County owned vehicle.

In witness whereof, Participant has read the above, fully understands its provisions, and has signed this Release and Indemnity Agreement this _____ day of _____, _____.
This agreement will remain in force for a period of six months from the date of signature.

Signature of Participant: _____ SSN: _____
(or guardian, if Participation is under the age of 18)
Printed Name: _____ DOB: _____

Supervisor Approval: _____

Agreement Expires on: _____

RideRelease
02/12/01

An Equal Opportunity Employer

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Fleet Replacement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 804.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

I. PURPOSE

The Purpose of the Fleet Replacement Program is to provide a systematic, equitable and fiscally sound process for acquisition, replacement and disposal of the vehicles and equipment items needed by Columbia County government to accomplish their mission.

II. SCOPE

This policy would include all vehicles owned and operated by the Government of Columbia County, Georgia. Enterprise Funds vehicles will be accounted for within the enterprise fund and maintained by Fleet Services.

III. PROGRAM VALUES

- The program must be fiscally sound
- Replacement purchase decisions must be based on compliance with the criteria set forth in the replacement guidelines
- The program will encourage downsizing of vehicles and equipment when practical
- Vehicle and equipment standards must be sufficient to meet operational requirements
- The program will be responsive to changes in department missions and changes in fleet needs that may subsequently result
- The program will strive to utilize alternative fuels when economically feasible

IV. PROGRAM GOALS

- To provide a well maintained and adequate fleet program which:
 - Minimizes work force down-time and enhances productivity for user Funds
 - Maximizes the effective use of public funds
 - Includes a systematic purchasing program which establishes the funding required to provide the fleet items needed for departments to accomplish their mission
- To ensure fair and consistent application of the replacement criteria
- To ensure that the bid and purchasing process is fair and equitable
- To ensure timely and efficient acquisition, set up and delivery of all approved replacement items
- To maintain effective communications between Fleet Services and participating funds

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Fleet Replacement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 804.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Board of Commissioners

- Approves the annual operating and capital budgets which in turn establish the level of program funding
- Approves the award of all purchases
- Approves intergovernmental sales of surplus property

B. County Manager

- Approves surplus and sale of vehicles and equipment
- Approves requests for the repurposing of vehicles and equipment

C. Emergency and Operations Director (Fleet Manager as designee)

- Provides general oversight of the Fleet Services operation
- Approves all upgrades/class increase within the fleet

D. User Departments

- Budget for program contributions on an annual basis
- Provide program input by submitting and identifying fleet needs and priorities as a part of the annual buy program procedure
- Specify technical and performance requirements for vehicle/equipment items

E. Fleet Advisors

- Consists of elected officials, county manager and division directors
- Provides input and recommendations related to program policies and procedures
- Assures compliance with program in accordance with policy by all end users

F. Finance Department

- Assists in budget development
- Coordinates with Fleet staff to monitor the status and availability of program funds

G. Procurement

- Administers the electronic auction program through which salvage vehicles and equipment are sold
- Assists with the bid and award process
- Ensures compliance with current Procurement Policies

H. Fleet Services Department

- Manages the Fleet Replacement Program in a manner consistent with this policy

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Fleet Replacement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 804.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

VI. FLEET INVENTORY/VEHICLE CLASS SYSTEM

The fleet inventory is organized in a class system for the various vehicle and equipment items. The fleet classes are as follows:

- Class 1: Administrative Sedans
- Class 2: Public Safety Pursuit Vehicles
- Class 3: Light Trucks
- Class 4: 3/4 and 1 Ton Trucks
- Class 5: 1 ½ Ton Trucks and Larger
- Class 6: Large Construction Equipment
- Class 7: Light & Medium Sized, Specialized Equipment
- Class 8: Van and SUV
- Class 9: Fire Apparatus

For each class, minimum mileage and/or operating hour criteria are established. The fleet inventory/vehicle class system and annual contributions are reviewed annually and revised as necessary.

VII. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- A. The Fleet Replacement Program receives funds from the following sources:
 - End User Department contributions
 - Auction proceeds
 - Accrued interest
- B. Depreciation/Contribution Calculation:
 - Vehicle Class Lifecycle Expectancy/Depreciation In Years:

CLASS		TARGET
1	Administrative Sedans	5 Years
2	Public Safety Pursuit Vehicles	4 Years
3	Light Trucks	7 Years
4	¾ and 1 Ton Trucks	10 Years
5	1 ½ Ton Trucks and Larger	10 Years
6	Large Construction Equipment	15 Years
7	Light & Medium Sized, Specialized Equipment	10 Years
8	Van and SUV	7 Years
9	Fire Apparatus	20 Years

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Fleet Replacement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 804.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

- Calculations for annual contributions for each item is as follows:
 - Purchase Cost/Life Expectancy in Years (per class) = Annual Contribution
These calculations are reviewed annually.

C. Participating Funds and Fund Management:

- Currently, the General Fund and Insurance Premium Tax Funds are the only funds that contribute annually to the Fleet Replacement Fund.
- Other funds' participation will be addressed annually.
- Vehicles purchased from Enterprise funds will be accounted for within that fund and maintained by Fleet Services.
- Fleet Services and the Finance Department staff monitor the status and availability of the replacement program funds on a regular basis. Specific items tracked include:
 - Contributions and expenditures for end user departments
 - Interest accruals
 - Current and projected fund balance
 - Fund balance reserved for emergency purchases

D. Annual Fleet Report

The purpose of the annual fleet report is to project fleet replacements and funding needs for the coming budget year. The report includes Fleet's recommendations for replacement items based on replacement criteria and anticipated purchase costs of items included in the program. The report will be used as a tool in developing the annual buy program. Replacement recommendations are presented in an attempt to forecast replacement needs three budget years into the future. Collaboration between end user departments' personnel and Fleet Staff will be completed before the report is finalized and presented to the Fleet Advisory Group.

E. Previously Replaced Vehicles

Fleet vehicles and equipment that are replaced and approved for repurposing will not be rated in the annual fleet report for a second replacement cycle. Once repurposed vehicles and equipment are no longer deemed suitable for service, replacement will require the division director to complete a new vehicle request form. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the County Manager.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Fleet Replacement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 804.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

VIII. REPLACEMENT GUIDELINES

A. Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide criteria for the replacement of vehicles and equipment for the Government of Columbia County and to define the procedure for applying the criteria.

B. Criteria

The criteria for the replacement of vehicles and equipment shall be as follows:

Mileage/Hours:

CLASS	TARGET	MINIMUM
1 Administrative Sedans	120,000 mi	100,000 mi
2 Public Safety Pursuit Vehicles	125,000 mi	100,000 mi
3 Light Trucks	140,000 mi	120,000 mi
4 ¾ and 1 Ton Trucks	140,000 mi	120,000 mi
5 1 ½ Ton Trucks and Larger	140,000 mi	120,000 mi
6 Large Construction Equipment	100,000 mi	80,000 mi
6 Large Construction Equipment	10,000 hr	8,000 hr
7 Light & Medium Sized, Specialized Equipment	5,000 hr	4,000 hr
8 Van and SUV	140,000 mi	120,000 mi
9 Fire Apparatus	120,000 mi	100,000 mi

Cost Benefit Evaluation: In addition to the above screening criteria, each item considered for replacement is evaluated based on the following:

- Maintenance condition/history
- Projected corrective maintenance for upcoming 12 month period
- Estimated down-time and associated cost for user departments based on the projected corrective maintenance for the upcoming 12 month period
- Total replacement contributions and estimated salvage value
- Annual utilization based on hours or miles

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Fleet Replacement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 804.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

C. Procedure

The procedure for applying the above criteria is as follows:

- Annual Procurement Program: Each fiscal year, departments are requested to prioritize their fleet replacement needs and to submit their list to Fleet Services along with a completed “New/Replacement Vehicle Request Form(s)”. (*Copy attached*). These lists’ are reviewed and considered in accordance with the annual buy program procedure. Vehicle and equipment items are eligible for replacement when the criteria items are met and when funds are available.
- Mid-Year Needs: Departments may request unforeseen replacement needs by submitting a formal request to the County Manager for consideration and approval. Upon approval the County Manager will direct Fleet to proceed with acquisition. As with the annual buy program, vehicle and equipment items are eligible for replacement when the criteria items are met and when funds are available.
- Vehicle/Equipment Accidents and/or Catastrophic Failures: Items which are a total loss as a result of an accident and/or catastrophic failure may be replaced if the necessary funds are available from one or more of the following sources:
 1. Risk Management
 2. Department’s current year operating budget

D. Exceptions

All exceptions to this policy must be approved by the County Manager on a case-by-case basis.

IX. VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT SELECTION PROCESS

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide criteria for the selection of vehicles and equipment for the Government of Columbia County and to define the process for reviewing needs of the fleet on a regular basis.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Fleet Replacement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 804.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

B. Criteria

The criteria for selecting the appropriate vehicles and equipment shall be as follows:

- All marked public safety pursuit vehicles may be full-size vehicles with the police package as identified in the State Contract
- All unmarked public safety vehicles should be mid-size or smaller and may or may not include the police package
- Non-public safety vehicles (both cars and trucks) will be the most fuel efficient design available
- Four wheel drive options will be limited to those vehicles which must access off road areas on a routine basis

C. Procedure

The process for reviewing the class and type of vehicles and equipment in the Columbia County fleet shall be as follows:

- Fleet Services will utilize the above selection criteria to review each item scheduled for replacement during the current year
- Fleet Services will coordinate with the requesting department on all vehicle and equipment items and review on a case by case basis whether or not downsizing is possible or practical based on the above criteria

X. ANNUAL BUY PROGRAM PROCESS

Fleet provides an Annual Fleet Report to the elected officials, county manager and division directors requesting input for the annual purchase program.

- Includes a list of all items under consideration based on the replacement criteria
- Departments' should prioritize the items on the list; identify those items that do not need replacement; identify items that need replacement but are not on the list; and identify items for downsizing
- Fleet reviews the input by requesting departments' and develops a recommendation for the annual purchase program based on department needs and the Annual Fleet Report recommendations
- Fleet sends its recommendation to the elected officials, county manager and division directors for review, recommendation and approval
- Fleet forwards the annual purchase program recommendation to the County Manager for review, approval and inclusion with the annual budget process
- Fleet works with Procurement and Finance to develop the purchasing schedule

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Fleet Replacement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 804.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

Note: Any need that occurs during the year that was not included in the annual purchase program will be presented to the County Manager for review and approval, as an exception.

XI. SPECIFICATION DEVELOPMENT

Fleet Services and the user departments work jointly on developing the specifications for all new and replacement vehicle/equipment purchases. State contract specifications, vendor catalogs and the user's needs are considered in developing the specifications. All specification packages are reviewed by Procurement to ensure compliance with all policy and ordinance requirements.

XII. PURCHASING PROCESS

The Procurement Policy will be the governing document for acquisition of vehicles and equipment.

XIII. PREPARATION AND DELIVERY

All items purchased through the replacement program are delivered to the Fleet Services Department, County Camp Road for preparation and set up. Upon receipt of a new item, Fleet Services accomplishes the following:

- Verifies that the item conforms with bid specifications and authorizes Finance to make payment to the vendor
- Coordinates with Finance to obtain and assign a fixed asset number
- Orders and installs logos and markings in accordance with O.C.G.A 36-89-1
- Orders and installs vehicle tag
- Enters new item into computer system
- Transfers radios when applicable
- Facilitates transfers of special equipment when applicable
- Orders/provides fuel card

When the above items are completed, and the replaced unit is received by Fleet Services; the user department is notified that the item is ready for pick-up.

XIV. SALVAGE PREPARATION AND DELIVERY

Once a vehicle is designated surplus, it is immediately reviewed for use in the "repurpose" pool. If the item is suitable for use, a new vehicle location code is assigned and a new fuel

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Fleet Replacement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 804.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

card is issued. If the vehicle is not suitable for pool use, it is identified for the auction and the item is stripped of all reusable and applicable specialized equipment (lights, radios, power packs, sirens, etc.). Logos and numbers are also removed. Item is now ready for entry into Vehicle/Equipment liquidation program

A. “Other Fund” Surplus Items

Vehicles replaced/removed from service from “Other Funds” will be evaluated for use in secondary roles within the county fleet. If determined by Fleet Services that the unit is viable or required, an offer (based on age, condition, class type and projected use), will be made to the “Other Fund” to purchase the item from the Fleet Fund and place into the county fleet. This amount will be determined by the Fleet Manager and the “Other Fund’s” Director or his/her designee. Upon completion of the transaction the asset will be removed from the “Other Fund’s” fleet and reassigned, as needed. If need or condition warrant, the item will be liquidated, with proceeds returning to the appropriate “Other Fund.”

B. Vehicle Liquidation Program

Vehicle/equipment items replaced through the vehicle replacement program will be listed and approved for surplus by the County Manager. Upon approval for surplus, these items will be disposed of by the Procurement Department in accordance with county procurement policies. All proceeds which result from the disposal of surplus vehicles and equipment are returned to the Fleet Replacement Program fund with the following exception: All monies obtained from the liquidation of “Other Fund’s” items (items not purchased from the Fleet Fund) will be returned to that fund’s line code/budget, as instructed by the “Other Fund’s” Director. Monies received from the surplus sale of condemned vehicles and equipment from the Sheriff’s Office will be returned to the Sheriff’s Office condemnation fund.

XV. ENFORCEMENT

Any employee who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Fleet Replacement Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 804.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

NEW OR REPLACEMENT VEHICLE REQUEST FORM

1. Department Name: _____
2. Name of Person Making Request: _____
3. Date of Request: _____
4. Type of Vehicle Being Requested: _____
5. Requesting a new or replacement vehicle? NEW _____ REPLACEMENT _____
6. If this is a replacement vehicle, please provide the following information:
 - a. Shop/Asset number of vehicle being replaced: _____
 - b. Annual mileage during last fiscal year: _____ miles
 - c. If answer is less than 5,000 annual miles, please justify need for vehicle:

7. List Funding Source: _____
8. Describe what the vehicle will be used for: _____

9. Projected annual utilization: _____ miles
10. If requesting more than one vehicle, please list priority level 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) : _____
11. Signature of Division Director or Elected Official Required: _____
12. Fleet Recommendation: _____

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle/Equipment Repurposing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 805.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the repurposing and reissuance of county vehicles and equipment that have been replaced with remaining usable service life to agencies/departments within the county fleet.

II. SCOPE

Periodically, vehicles or equipment that are replaced as a part of the Fleet Replacement Fund program are turned in to the Fleet Services Department for liquidation. While these vehicles may no longer be efficient, due to age or condition, in a primary service role within the fleet, they may have sufficient service life remaining to serve in a secondary role within the county fleet system. These units would be available to county departments for reissue/repurpose to assist in changing workloads or missions. It is understood that these vehicles while accounted for in the annual Fleet Report will not be rated for replacement and in the event the unit becomes unserviceable due to cost or efficiency the receiving department will be responsible for budgeting a *NEW* unit during the next budget cycle. These transfers require the approval of the County Manager and Division Director in order to be processed.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Columbia County Fleet Services Department will identify units suitable for repurpose/reissue into the county fleet system. As these units are identified, Fleet Services staff will update/upgrade vehicles within a given department's fleet with repurposed units as necessary or as these vehicles become available. Department management staff will communicate their fleet needs or changing missions to the Fleet Services manager so vehicles can be located to meet their requests.

IV. POLICY

The following is policy regarding repurpose/reissue of county vehicles:

1. Vehicles and equipment are turned in to Fleet Services as part of the Fleet Replacement Fund program.
2. Fleet Services Staff evaluates turn in units for suitability for repurpose/reissue.
3. Department management staff notifies Fleet Services Manager of fleet needs due to changing department responsibilities or missions.
4. Fleet Services Manager will review request against available inventory and make a recommendation to the requesting department.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle/Equipment Repurposing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 805.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>

5. Upon reaching consensus between Fleet Services and receiving department/division a completed and Repurpose/Reissue Request Form will be submitted to the County Manager for final approval. *Form A attached*
6. Upon receipt of signed and approved form to Fleet Services receiving department will take possession of approved unit.

V. ENFORCEMENT

Any employee who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ADDED AND APPROVED: May 19, 2015 AMENDED: September 21, 2021	TOPIC: <i>Vehicle/Equipment Repurposing Program</i>
<i>Policy Number 805.1</i>	POLICY SECTION: <i>Fleet Services</i>



Vehicle/Equipment Repurpose Request Form

Asset Description & Shop#

Department Of Origin

Munis Department Number

Destination Department

Munis Department Number

Request Justification: _____

Destination Dept. Manager

Date

Destination Division Director

Date

Fleet Manager

Date

Internal Services Division Director

Date

County Manager

Date

Note: Upon approval, all costs associated with this unit become the responsibility of the destination department