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2010 MADISON COUNTY GENERAL POLICY

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## 2010 MADISON COUNTY GENERAL POLICY

### Section 1. Agenda & Regular Business Meeting Procedures.

#### A. Meeting Dates.

1. Agenda-Setting Meeting: The Board of Commissioners will meet to go over the agenda and other matters on the Monday preceding the first Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Madison County Board of Commissioners Public Meeting Room in the Madison County Courthouse, 91 Albany Avenue, Danielsville, Georgia.

a. Exceptions: The April meeting will occur on April 21 rather than April 26, and the May meeting will occur on May 27 rather than May 31.

2. Business Meeting: The Board of Commissioners will meet to conduct business on the first Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Madison County Board of Commissioners Public Meeting Room in the Madison County Courthouse, 91 Albany Avenue, Danielsville, Georgia.

a. Exception: The September meeting will occur on September 7 rather than September 6.

3. In the event a meeting is scheduled on a holiday, said meeting will be held on the Tuesday following said holiday, as set forth above.

4. In the event of crowded conditions, the Board of Commissioners meeting may be moved to the Main Courtroom of the Madison County Courthouse.

B. Agenda. The Chairman of the Board of Commissioners ("Chair") will set the agenda for all meetings. Suggested agenda items must be submitted to the Chair or the County Clerk by 5:00 P.M. Monday of the week immediately preceding the next scheduled Agenda-Setting Meeting. The Chair will accept all agenda requests timely submitted by an elected Commissioner. The Chair will consider and may accept agenda requests timely submitted by other elected and appointed officials, and by County Department Heads.

1. Publication. One (1) week prior to each scheduled meeting, a copy of all agenda items will be sent to the newspaper designated as the legal organ of Madison County.

2. Debating Format. Agenda items shall be debated only by members of the Board (including the Chair). A Commissioner wishing to speak must be recognized by the Chair prior to speaking. Comment or discussion from persons other than members of the Board may be allowed by the Chair if he, in his

discretion, determines such comment would be constructive and germane to the discussion.

3. **Non Agenda Items.** The agenda of the Agenda-Setting Meeting shall be established by the Chair, as set forth above. The agenda of the Business Meeting shall be as approved by the Board at the Agenda-Setting Meeting. However, the agendas for both meetings shall contain an agenda item titled "Urgent Matters." This agenda item will provide members and the chairman an opportunity to raise issues which have arisen since publication of the agenda, and which require action prior to the next regular business meeting. The member raising the issue shall describe the matter, including an explanation of why it must be acted upon prior to the next regular business meeting, why it could not have been placed on the published agenda, and shall make a motion, or ask another member to make a motion to add the matter to the agenda. If, and only if, said motion is seconded and unanimously approved by all members in accordance, then the matter may be discussed and acted upon as if it had been included on the published agenda. This agenda item may be used only for genuinely urgent matters that were not foreseeable prior to the deadline for placing matters on the published agenda, and not to circumvent the agenda publication requirements of O.C.G.A § 50-14-1(e)(i). THIS PROCEDURE IS TO BE USED SPARINGLY AND ONLY FOR GENUINELY URGENT MATTERS. ITS USE SHALL NOT BECOME A REGULAR FEATURE OF MEETINGS.
4. **Consent Calendar.** At its Agenda-Setting Meeting, the Board may place matters that are routine or non-controversial under an item titled "Consent Calendar" on the agenda of the Business Meeting. Those matters will be voted upon in gross and without debate at the Business Meeting, unless one or more Commissioners (including the Chair) objects thereto prior to that vote in the Business Meeting, in which case the matter(s) objected to will be deferred to the regular agenda of that same meeting for consideration in the same manner as any other regular agenda item.
5. **Personnel Issues.** When any matter is on the agenda concerning a personnel issue, the Human Resources Manager shall provide or make available to the Chairman and to each Commissioner, at least three days prior to the meeting, copies of any and all pertinent documentation, including but not limited to the employment application of persons being recommended for hire. The agenda shall describe the nature of the issue (hiring, discipline, etc.) and name the affected department of county government.
6. **Citizen Comment.** All meetings shall conclude with a citizen comment period, in which any person may address the Board on the

topic(s) of his choice. Each speaker is allowed a maximum of three minutes to speak. Members of the Board shall not question the speaker nor make comment until the speaker has concluded his presentation. Any comments of a personal, insulting or derogatory nature shall be ruled out of order by the Chair, and the speaker will forfeit any remaining time to speak.

- C. **Method of Conducting Meetings.** Roberts Rules of Order is hereby adopted as the method by which the Board shall conduct its business. Whenever any conflict between Roberts Rules of Order and Board policy exists, the policy of the Board of Commissioners of Madison County, Georgia shall prevail.
- D. **Minutes of County Agencies.** All agencies subject to the Georgia Open Meetings Act (O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-1, et.seq.), which agencies operate under the auspices of the Madison County Board of Commissioners, including but not limited to all authorities and boards whose members are appointed by the Madison County Board of Commissioners, shall forward copies of the summaries and minutes required by O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-1(e)(2) to the County Clerk simultaneously with such summaries and minutes being made available to the public. Upon the receipt of said summaries and minutes the County Clerk shall forward same to the Board of Commissioners.

## **Section 2. Board of Commissioner's Statements of Policies & Procedures.**

- A. **Vice-chairman.** The Board of Commissioners shall vote to elect the Vice-Chairman for a twelve-month period. Commissioner Stanley Thomas is elected as Vice-Chairman for the twelve-month period ending December 31, 2010.
- B. **Equipment.** County equipment shall not be loaned to any person, firm or corporation unless approved by the Board of Commissioners.
- C. **Conduct.** All Board members must abide by the State Code of Ethics.
- D. **Committee Appointments.** The Board of Commissioners has the duty to make appointments to certain boards and committees. In order to fairly represent all citizens of Madison County, no one person shall serve on more than one (1) county appointed board or committee. The Sheriff of Madison County is excluded from this policy. Resignations of committee or board members shall be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, and once so submitted may not be withdrawn without approval of the Board of Commissioners. The office of the Madison County Board of Commissioners shall on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of February each year, publish in the legal organ a listing of all Commissions, Boards, Authorities and Councils with a current member listing – also post

a listing of all vacancies that will occur during that calendar year for each. The publishing shall request and encourage citizens of Madison County to submit their names for consideration to fill any vacancies that will occur.

E. **Acceptance of Deeds.** No deed dedicating real estate to the county for public use shall be deemed to have been accepted unless and until such dedication is approved by the County Attorney and such deed is accepted by the Board of Commissioners, and such acceptance is noted on the official minutes of the Board of Commissioners.

F. **Legal Expenses.**

1. In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 45-9-21, Madison County will undertake to defend civil, criminal, or quasi-criminal actions brought or maintained against members of the Board of Commissioners, or against supervisors, administrators, employees, or other elected or appointed county officers, arising out of the performance of their duties or in any way connected therewith, whether based upon negligence, violation of contract rights, or violation of civil, constitutional, common law, or statutory rights. Defense shall be provided to the extent authorized by O.C.G.A. § 45-9-21, except as provided in section f.3 below, and compliance by the person(s) desiring such defense with all requirements of O.C.G.A. § 45-9-21 shall be a prerequisite to the County's obligation to provide defense.
2. Any and all persons desiring representation under this policy shall submit a request for such representation, in writing, to the County Clerk, and such request shall then be considered by the Board of Commissioners. The Board of Commissioners shall respond to the person(s) making such request, in writing, within twenty days of such submission, indicating whether representation will be provided. If the Board of Commissioners does not respond within twenty days, such request shall be deemed denied.
3. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, representation shall not be provided or expenses of representation reimbursed to any person for political processes, to include, but not limited to, recall elections. However, reasonable expenses of legal representation may be reimbursed for legal proceedings instituted under O.C.G.A. § 21-4-6 by members of the Board of Commissioners or other elected county officers if, and only if, such proceeding, including any appeals, results in a finding of lack of sufficiency. Nothing herein shall be construed as absolving any person from compliance with O.C.G.A. § 21-4-16, concerning the Georgia Ethics in Government Act.

- G. **Notice to Commissioners.** The Chairman shall provide notice to all commissioners, of each meeting, seven days before said meeting, or when notice of said meeting is made available for publication to the public, whichever shall occur earliest. Further, when providing notice to all commissioners, the Chairman shall make available copies of the agenda and all documents or other pertinent materials necessary for review of those matters to come before the Board of Commissioners.
  
- H. **Review of Financial Records.** All financial records of the preceding month, covering all revenues and expenses on all accounts, shall be furnished to the entire Board of Commissioners at the Regular Business Meeting of each month.
  
- I. **Executive Session.** No individual, individuals, or County employee shall be present in any executive session held by the Board of Commissioners, except the county attorney. Any other exception shall be approved by a majority vote of the Board of Commissioners.
  
- J. **Signatures on County Checks.** All county checks and drafts shall be signed by the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners and the County Clerk. In the absence or unavailability of the Chairman, the Vice-Chair of the Board of Commissioners may sign in his/her stead.
  
- K. **Monthly Progress Reports.** At the monthly Business Meeting, the Chair or his designee shall provide a report to the Board listing each current and ongoing public works (including but not limited to roads) construction, maintenance, or improvement project approved by the Board. As to each project listed, the report shall include the following information: the individual or department of government in charge of the project, the estimated project completion date, and any foreseeable reasons the estimated completion date might not be met.

**Section 3. Personnel Policies & Procedures.**

- A. **Holidays.** - Named Holidays for 2010.
  - Good Friday: April 2
  - Memorial Day: Monday, May 31
  - Independence Day: Friday, July 2 (except the Solid Waste Transfer Station, which will take Saturday, July 3)
  - Labor Day: Monday, September 6
  - Veterans Day: Wednesday, November 11
  - Thanksgiving Holidays:
    - Thursday, November 25, and Friday, November 26
  - Christmas Holidays:
    - Thursday, December 23, and Friday, December 24
  - New Year's Day: Friday, December 31, 2010.

For each holiday, employees will receive 50% of their normal holiday pay.

- B. **Personnel Appropriations.** Funds appropriated for personnel positions that are not used due to employee attrition, absenteeism or other causes shall be suspended and shall not be used for other purposes without approval of the Board of Commissioners.
  
- C. **Return to Work Policy.** Madison County participates in the Loss Control and Safety Incentive Program of the ACCG Group Self-Insurance Workers' Compensation Fund, through which workers' compensation coverage is provided to county employees. In accordance with the requirements of that program, department heads and elected officials are directed/encouraged to make efforts to return injured workers to employment as soon as reasonable and practicable. In situations where the employee's treating physician has determined that temporary physical limitations do not permit the employee's return to his previous job, such efforts should include providing "transitional employment" (i.e., temporary duties that are less strenuous than the employee's normal job duties) where reasonable and practicable.
  
- D. **Telephone Usage.** Employees provided with telephones for their primary benefit are responsible for the usage of those, and must receive authorization from their supervisor for any use which results in additional telephone charges, including but not limited to directory assistance. Notwithstanding the foregoing, however, employees may be authorized by their department head to incur reasonable long distance charges in the performance of their official duties without receiving authorization for each individual call. Any charges incurred in violation of this policy may be tracked to the telephone used and charged to the employee for whose primary benefit that telephone is provided.

#### **Section 4. Departmental Responsibilities & Procedures.**

- A. **Attendance and Reporting Requirements.** Each Department Head/Elected Official shall be responsible for the attendance of all persons in his or her Department and each Department Head/Elected Official shall maintain a Daily Report or Time Sheet of the total number of hours worked by each employee of his or her Department. At the end of each pay period each employee and Department Head shall sign the Time Sheet declaring that the times and dates are a correct representation of the days and hours worked. Said Report or Time Sheet shall be submitted to the Personnel Office no later than Monday noon following the last day of the pay period. This report shall be used in preparing the County Payroll. Once the Report or Time Sheet is received by the Personnel Office, the hours worked shall be deemed final. **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH DEPARTMENT HEAD OR ELECTED OFFICIAL TO TURN IN TRUE AND CORRECT TIME SHEETS.**
  
- B. **Absences by Department Heads.** Departments Heads shall notify the office of the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners prior to any

absence by the Department Head for leave time or other purposes such as schools or training. Said notice shall be in writing and shall identify the person in charge of the Department while the Department Head is absent.

- C. **Absences by the Madison County Board of Commissioners Chairman.** The Chairman of the Madison County Board of Commissioners shall notify each member of the Madison County Board of Commissioners in writing five days in advance of any absences of greater than 24 hours and notify the Vice-Chairman of the Madison County Board of Commissioners of any actions that may be necessary during his absence. When five days notice is not possible or practicable, as much notice as is possible and practicable shall be given.
- D. **Attendance at Safety Meetings.** Madison County receives a discount on its Worker's Compensation insurance premium for conducting a Risk Management Program. Attendance by Department Heads at Safety Meetings held under the Risk Management Program is required.
- E. **Vehicle Repairs.** The Sheriff shall have the authority to spend up to \$500.00 for repairs to each vehicle without the approval of the Board of Commissioners. Note: This issue is also covered in the Purchasing Policy.
- F. **Beer & Wine License Renewals.** The County Clerk is directed to mail out, during the first week in October of each year, renewal applications for the upcoming year to all current holders of Beer & Wine Licenses.
- G. **Distribution of Madison County Policy.** The County Clerk is directed to distribute to each department head a printed copy of this policy. The full text of the policy will also be available on the Madison County web site ([www.madisoncountyga.us](http://www.madisoncountyga.us)), under the Human Resources Departmental listing. Each employee shall sign an acknowledgment that he or she has reviewed and understands the policy.
- H. **Leave Time Accrual Dates.** Accumulation and adjustments to leave time are administered and approved by the Human Resources Manager. Accruals shall inure on the first day of the month following the employee's employment anniversary date.
- I. **Health and Life Insurance Benefits.** Employees are eligible for health, life, and dental insurance benefits, if and to the extent such benefits are provided, as of the first day of the month following the employee's 60<sup>th</sup> day of employment, or two months, whichever comes first.
- J. **Education and Training.** Continuing education and training of County employees is encouraged and supported by the Madison County Board of Commissioners. Copies of certifications received upon completion of continuing education or training shall be submitted to the Human

Resources Manager; said certifications of continuing education or training shall be added to the employee's personnel record.

## **Section 5. General Policy Statements.**

- A. **Business Hours.** The Courthouse hours for each office shall be from 8:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M., with each office being open and manned by one (1) employee during lunch hour of 12:00 P.M. and 1:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. The Transfer Station & Recycling Center will be operated Wednesday through Saturday from 7:00 A.M. until 5:50 P.M.
- B. **Jury Revisor's Pay.** The Jury Revisor's pay is set at \$50.00 per day.
- C. **Board of Tax Equalization Pay.** The pay for the members of the Board of Tax Equalization is set at \$50.00 per day.
- D. **Designated Bank Depositories.** The Board of Commissioners may, in its discretion, designate one or more depositories for the funds and accounts of Madison County.
- E. **Planning & Zoning Commission Pay.** The pay for a member of the Planning & Zoning Commission is set at \$150.00 per month. The pay for the Chairman of the Planning & Zoning Commission is set at \$250.00 per month.
- F. **Use of County Vehicles.** County employees who are on call 24 hours a day may take a county vehicle home. Said vehicles are for county use only and may not be used for personal business.
- G. **Zoning Ordinance Training Sessions for the Planning Commission and the Board of Commissioners.** Newly appointed members of the Planning Commission and/or newly elected members of the Board of Commissioners shall be required to attend training sessions to review the Zoning Ordinance and other applicable ordinances or regulations as determined by the county attorney. Training sessions shall be conducted and coordinated by the county attorney.

At the beginning of each calendar year, a training session to review the Zoning Ordinance and other applicable ordinances or regulations shall be attended by all members of the Planning Commission and the Board of Commissioners. Said training session shall be conducted and coordinated by the county attorney.

## **Section 6. Public Appeals Procedures.**

- A. Non-employees who wish to pursue grievances, complaints, or disagreements regarding any County Employee shall complete and sign

the Citizen Complaint Form, in the form attached hereto as Exhibit "A," and submit same to the County Clerk of Madison County.

- a. Complaints must be filed with the County Clerk within 30 days of the incident complained giving rise thereto. The County Clerk's office shall have blank forms available for citizen use.
  - b. The County Clerk shall forward the Complaint Form to the employee's Department Head, or if the Employee is a Department Head, to the Chairman of the Board, who shall investigate the complaint and attempt to satisfy the complainant's concerns.
  - c. If the complainant remains dissatisfied after the process described in (a) above is completed, he/she may appeal to the Board of Commissioners by requesting the County Clerk to place him or her on the agenda of the next regular meeting for which the agenda deadline has not closed. The decision of the Board shall be final.
- B. Persons aggrieved by a decision of the Building Inspector (other than the issuance of a citation, which shall proceed in the manner prescribed for prosecution of citations) may appeal that decision by filing written notice of appeal with the Director of Building Inspections within thirty days of such decision. Such appeal shall be heard by the Board of Appeals and Adjustments. Persons aggrieved by a decision of the Board of Appeals and Adjustments may appeal that decision by filing written notice of appeal with the County Clerk within thirty days of such decision. Such appeal shall be heard by the Board of Commissioners.

## **Section 7. Storm Weather Procedures**

- Step 1.** Road Superintendent reports road conditions to Chairman. If schools are open, then all county employees are expected to report for work.
- Step 2.** If schools are closed, the Chairman decides the status of Government operations; either closed all day or closed part of the day.
- Step 3.** Chairman notifies radio station WNGC.
- Step 4.** Employees are contacted by phone as follows:
- a. The Chairman notifies the County Clerk, Human Resources Manager, Clerk of Court, Probate Judge, Magistrate Judge, Sheriff, EMS Director, E-911 Director, Roads Superintendent, and the Tax Commissioner.
  - b. The County Clerk notifies the Recreation Department Director, the Registrar's Office, IT Director, Finance Director, Security, the Library, District Attorney, and the Senior Center Director..
  - c. The Human Resources Manager notifies the Chief Tax Appraiser, Zoning Administrator, Building Inspections Director, Solid

Waste Director, Maintenance Supervisor, Animal Control, and the Health Dept.

d. Each Elected Official or Department Head will be responsible for notifying his/her staff.

Employees will be compensated for hours worked. Leave time, if available, may be taken for hours lost due to shutdown or partial closure.

## **Section 8. Harrassment Policy**

The Madison County Board of Commissioners is committed to maintaining a work environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. In keeping with this commitment, we will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, that interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment by anyone, including any supervisor, co-worker, vendor, client, or citizen.

### **A. Harassment - Definition**

Harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or disability constitutes discrimination in the terms, conditions and privileges of employment. Harassment is verbal, physical, or visual conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or disability, or that of his/her relatives, friends, or associates and that:

- i. Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.
- ii. Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance.
- iii. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- i. Epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts, that relate to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability.
- ii. Written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on the employer's premises, or circulated in the workplace.

### **B. Harassment - Complaint Procedures**

Employees encountering harassment should tell the offending person that their actions are inappropriate and offensive. The employee shall document all incidents of harassment in order to provide the fullest basis for investigation. In addition, the employee shall notify his or her supervisor of the harassment, as soon as possible, so that steps may be taken to protect the employee from further harassment, and appropriate investigative and disciplinary measures may be initiated.

### **C. Sexual Harassment - Definition**

Sexual harassment deserves special mention. Inappropriate sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical, verbal, or visual conduct based on sex constitutes sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's employment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a 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.

Sexual harassment may include explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, sexual oriented "kidding" or "teasing", "practical jokes", jokes about gender-specific traits, foul or obscene language or gestures, displays or foul or obscene language or gestures, displays of foul or obscene printed or visual material, and physical contact, such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another's body.

### **D. Sexual Harassment - Complaint Procedures**

All employees are responsible for helping to assure we avoid harassment, and have the responsibility for reporting any occurrence of harassment, or sexual harassment. If you feel that you have experienced or witnessed harassment you are to notify, either, your immediate supervisor, the Human Resources Manager, the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, or the County Clerk. Reports are to be made as soon as practicable, and within 24 hours unless extraordinary circumstances do not permit, and preferably in writing. Oral reports, however, will also be taken in the case of unusually sensitive circumstances. The Madison County Board of Commissioners' policy is to investigate all such complaints. To the fullest extent practicable, the Madison County Board of Commissioners will keep complaints and the terms of their resolution confidential. If an investigation confirms that harassment has occurred, the Madison County Board of Commissioners will take corrective action in

accordance with the nature and extent of the offense. The Madison County Board of Commissioners also prohibits retaliation against any employee bringing a claim of sexual harassment.

**E. Harassment and Sexual Harassment - False Accusations Procedure**

The Madison County Board of Commissioners recognizes that false accusations of harassment and sexual harassment can have a serious effect on innocent men and women. Individuals falsely accusing another of harassment or sexual harassment will be disciplined in accordance with the nature and extent of his or her false accusation.

**F. Harassment and Sexual Harassment - Employee Inquiry Procedure**

The Madison County Board of Commissioners encourages any employee to raise questions he or she may have regarding the harassment policy or sexual harassment, with his or her immediate supervisor, a higher-level manager, the Human Resources Manager, the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, or the County Clerk.

**G. Workplace Harassment Issues Quarterly Meetings**

The Madison County Board of Commissioners will hold Workplace Harassment Issues Meetings for all Department Heads once each calendar quarter. Attendance by Department Heads is required.

**Section 9. Technology Use Policy**

Certain Madison County employees may be provided with access to the Internet to assist them in performing their jobs. **The computer system belongs to Madison County, acting by and through its duly elected Board of Commissioners, and may only be used for county business purposes.** The Internet can be a valuable source of information and research. In addition, e-mail can provide an excellent means of communicating with other employees, our customers and citizens, outside vendors, and other businesses. Use of the Internet, however, must be tempered with common sense and good judgment. If you abuse your right to use the Internet, this privilege may be revoked. In addition, you may be subject to disciplinary action, including possible termination, and civil and criminal liability.

**Your use of the Internet is governed by this policy.**

- A. **Disclaimer of liability for use of the Internet.** Madison County is not

responsible for material viewed or downloaded by users from the Internet. The Internet is a worldwide network of computers that contains millions of pages of information. Users are cautioned that many of these pages include offensive, sexually explicit, and inappropriate material. In general, it is difficult to avoid at least some contact with this material while using the Internet. Even innocent search requests may lead to sites with highly offensive content. In addition, you may receive e-mail containing offensive material. Email or pop-ups containing offensive material received on county computers shall be immediately reported to the Department Head or Elected Official who shall maintain a log of such occurrences. Users accessing the Internet do so at their own risk.

- B. **Employee's duty of care.** Employees should endeavor to make each electronic communication truthful and accurate. You should use the same care in drafting e-mail and other electronic documents as you would for any other written communication. Please keep in mind that anything created or stored on the computer system may and likely will, be reviewed by others. Any information stored on your computer constitutes a public record under the State Open Records Act.
- C. **Duty not to waste computer resources.** Employees must not deliberately perform acts that waste computer resources or unfairly monopolize resources to the exclusion of others. These acts include, but are not limited to, sending mass mailings or chain letters, spending excessive amounts of time on the Internet, playing games, engaging in online chat groups, printing multiple copies of documents, or otherwise creating unnecessary network traffic. Because audio, video and picture files require significant storage space, files of this sort may not be downloaded unless they are business related.
- D. **Internet Access Guidelines.** These guidelines set the standards for appropriate behavior of county employees when accessing the Internet using government resources. Remember that the county name goes with you as an electronic signature wherever you go on the Internet. County employees must exercise great care to protect the county reputation and ability to conduct business in all Internet activities. Activities of county Internet users are logged, including visits to inappropriate sites (erotica, hate groups, etc.), and reported to management as necessary.

The ability to "surf the Web" (i.e., select links to unknown sites) carries with it new responsibilities for each user. Security problems with browser software, Netscape or Internet Explorer, are continually reported. These problems are potentially more serious for a large organization, such as Madison County, than for an individual user on his or her home machine. To protect county assets:

1. Never surf the Web on a computer that has been identified as a computer that contains highly sensitive information, such as

medical records or critical financial information.

2. Ensure your browser is kept up-to-date with the most current security patches.
3. Visit only known and trusted sites on the Internet. Monitor the URL (internet address) shown in the box at the top of your browser screen. These addresses typically take the form of http://www.site.com. If you are unsure about the safety of a site, contact your support group.
4. Be aware that selecting some links on web pages or in your e-mail will automatically download "applets" which are small programs that will automatically run on your computer. What the applet appears to be doing on your screen may not be all that is happening. Hostile applets can exploit security holes to gather information from the user's machine, such as user password files and critical network information.
5. Always close your browser when you have finished surfing the web.

'Netiquette' is the practice of good manners in a networked environment and is critical to successful county business practices. Each county Internet user is viewed as a representative of Madison County and must exercise good netiquette. You must use good judgment in assessing what form of communication is appropriate for particular information. If you have questions or concerns, consult your supervisor, or the relevant department for the particular issue.

#### **E. Activities Which May Result in Disciplinary Action**

1. Using the computer system, including but not limited to accessing the Internet, for other than county business purposes.
2. Visiting inappropriate Web sites (erotica, hate groups, etc.).
3. Unauthorized attempts to break into any computer whether it belongs to Madison County or another organization (cracking).
4. Sending or posting threatening messages.
5. Sending or posting racially and/or sexually harassing messages.
6. Sending or posting sexually suggestive or explicit messages.
7. Theft or copy of electronic files without permission.
8. Sending or posting confidential information that is not part of your job requirement.
9. Refusing to cooperate with a reasonable security investigation

Failure to comply with these guidelines may be brought to the attention of management for appropriate action, which may result in loss of Internet privileges or disciplinary action, including termination of employment. Violations of applicable laws or regulations (e.g., Computer Security Act, export control laws, copyright laws) could

result in criminal or civil prosecution.

- F. **No expectation of privacy.** The computers and the computer accounts given to county employees are to assist them in performance of their jobs. Employees do not have an expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive on the computer system. The computer system belongs to the county and may only be used for business purposes.
- G. **No privacy in communications.** Employees should never consider electronic communications to be either private or secure. E-mail may be stored indefinitely on any number of computers, including that of the recipient. Copies of your messages may be forwarded to others either electronically or on paper. In addition, e-mail sent to nonexistent or incorrect usernames may be delivered to persons that you never intended.
- H. **Monitoring of computer usage.** The county has the right, but not the duty, to monitor any and all aspects of its computer system, including, but not limited to, monitoring sites visited by employees on the Internet, monitoring chat groups and newsgroups, reviewing material downloaded or uploaded by users to the Internet, reviewing e-mail sent and received by users, and reviewing documents saved to the computer.
- I. **Blocking of inappropriate content.** The county may use software/hardware to identify inappropriate or sexually explicit Internet sites. Such sites may be blocked from access by county networks. Nonetheless, in the event you encounter inappropriate or sexually explicit material while browsing on the Internet, immediately disconnect from the site, regardless of whether the site was subject to county blocking software and immediately report the incident to your Department Head or Elected Official who shall maintain a log of such occurrences.
- J. **Prohibited activities.** Material that is fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, intimidating, defamatory, or otherwise unlawful or inappropriate may not be sent by e-mail or other forms of electronic communication (bulletin board systems, newsgroups, e-groups, chat groups), downloaded from the Internet, or displayed on or stored on Madison County computers. Employees encountering or receiving this kind of material should immediately report the incident to their supervisors.
- K. **Unauthorized Hardware or Software.** Elected Officials, Department Heads or employees may not install any hardware or software on any county computer without written permission from the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners.
- L. **Games and entertainment software.** Employees may not use the county's Internet connection to download games or other entertainment software, including screen savers, or to play games over the Internet.
- M. **Illegal copying.** Employees may not illegally copy material protected



And the Department phone number as shown in the example below:

<p>Mr. _____,</p> <p>_____.</p> <p><b>John/Jane Doe</b> _____ <b>Officer</b> <b>Madison County, Georgia</b> <b>www.madisoncountyga.us</b> <b>706-795-_____</b></p> <p>“If you are not the intended recipient or the person responsible for delivering the email to the intended recipient, be advised that you have received this e-mail in error and that any use, dissemination, forwarding, printing, or copying of this email is strictly prohibited. Please contact (Department Number) if you receive this e-mail in error.”</p>
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- S. **Attorney-client communications.** E-mail sent from or to the County Attorney or any other attorney representing the county should include this warning header on each page: ATTORNEY CLIENT PRIVILEGED; DO NOT FORWARD WITHOUT PERMISSION.” Communications from attorneys may not be forwarded without the sender’s express permission.
- T. **Use of encryption software.** Employees may not install or use encryption software on any of Madison County’s computers without first obtaining written permission from the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. You must not use passwords or encryption keys that are unknown to your Department Head or Elected Official and the Information Technology Officer.
- U. **Export restrictions.** The federal government has imposed restrictions on export of programs or files containing encryption technology (such as e-mail programs that permit encryption of messages and electronic commerce software that encodes transactions). Software containing encryption technology is not to be placed on the Internet or transmitted in any way outside the United States.
- V. **Other policies applicable.** In their use of the Internet, users must observe and comply with all other County policies and guidelines.
- W. **Data Backups.** Employees are responsible for making daily data backups.
- X. **Cleaning of County Computers.** Employees who use county computers are responsible for keeping a clean and safe computer station.

Computers should be kept cleaned and well maintained.

- Y. **Amendments and revisions.** This policy may be amended or revised from time to time as the need arises. Users will be provided with copies of all amendments and revisions. Violations of this policy will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action under the county Personnel Policy, civil and criminal liability.

## **Section 10. Vehicle Fleet Policy**

### **Overview**

As a driver of a County vehicle, the authorized driver has been given certain privileges. He/she assumes the duty of obeying all motor vehicle laws, maintaining the vehicle properly at all times and, otherwise, following the policies and procedures outlined in the following:

#### **A. Vehicle Fleet Purpose**

**County vehicles are provided to support county activities and are to be used only by qualified and authorized employees.** They are not to be considered a part of an employee's compensation and must not be used as an inducement for employment. In all cases, these vehicles are to be operated in strict compliance with motor vehicle laws of the jurisdiction in which they are driven and with the utmost regard for their care and cost efficient use.

1. County vehicles may not be used for activities of other counties.
2. County vehicles may not be driven to Mexico.
3. County vehicles may not be used for personal business. An incidental stop for personal business at a place along or within close proximity to an employee's route while on county business (for example, stopping for lunch if in transit on county business at lunch time, or, for employees allowed to take county vehicles home with them overnight, stopping at a store on the way to work) will not be considered a violation of this policy; any other uses of county vehicles for personal business is and shall be considered a violation. As further exception, employees within departments of public safety, including but not limited to EMS, who remain on call during lunch and other break times during their shifts shall be permitted to use their county vehicle for trips taken during such breaks. Any other uses of county vehicles for personal business is and shall be considered a violation.

## **B. Driver Licensing**

Drivers and anyone authorized to drive the County's vehicles must have a valid Georgia driver's license for the class of the vehicle being operated and must be able to drive a vehicle. Obtaining a driver's license is a personal expense.

## **C. Driver Qualifications**

Driver qualifications are as follows:

1. Authorized employee of County.
2. Must be at least 21 years of age, unless the driver has successfully completed the Emergency Vehicle Operators Course (EVOC) administered by the Georgia Public Safety Training Center.
3. Have at least one year of experience in the class of vehicle operated.
4. Must meet licensing requirements.
5. Will not qualify to operate a County vehicle if, during the last 36 months, the driver had any of the following experiences:
  - i. Been convicted of a felony.
  - ii. Been convicted of sale, handling or use of drugs.
  - iii. Has automobile insurance canceled, declined or not renewed by an insurance carrier.
  - iv. Been convicted of an alcohol- or drug-related offense while driving.
  - v. Had driver's license suspended or revoked.
  - vi. Been convicted of three or more speeding violations or one or more other serious violations.
  - vii. Been involved in two or more chargeable accidents.

## **D. Review of Motor Vehicle Record**

State Motor Vehicle Records (MVRs) will be used as the source for verifying driver history. MVRs will be obtained and reviewed at least annually. Driving privileges may be withdrawn or suspended and/or the County vehicles removed for any authorized driver not meeting the above requirements. In addition, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken.

## **E. Maintenance**

Authorized drivers are required to properly maintain their County vehicles at all times. Vehicles should not be operated with any defect that would inhibit safe operation during current and foreseeable weather and lighting conditions. Preventive maintenance such as regular oil changes, lubrication and tire pressure and fluid checks determine to a large extent whether you will have a reliable, safe vehicle to drive and support work activities. You should have preventive maintenance completed on your

vehicle as required in the owner's manual. This service should be done at the Madison County Road Department.

**F. Personal Cars Used on County Business**

No employee may use his or her personal vehicle on county business without permission of his or her supervisor or the Department Head. The County does not assume any liability for bodily injuries or property damage the employee may become personally obligated to pay arising out of an accident occurring in connection with operation of his/her own car. The reimbursement to the employee for the operation of his/her car on County business includes the allowance for the expense of automobile insurance. You must have liability insurance as required by Georgia law. The County does not specify and assumes no responsibility for any other coverage employees carry on their own cars since this is a matter of individual status and preference.

**G. Traffic Violations**

Fines for parking or moving violations are the personal responsibility of the assigned operator. The County will not condone nor excuse ignorance of traffic citations that result in court summons being directed to itself as owner of the vehicle.

Each driver is required to report all moving violations to their Department Head by the end of the work day. This requirement applies to violations involving the use of any vehicle (County, personal or other) while on County business. Failure to report violations will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

Please be aware that traffic violations incurred during non-business (personal use) hours will affect your driving status as well and are subject to review.

**H. Accidents Involving County Vehicles**

In the event of an accident:

1. Do not admit negligence or liability.
2. Do not attempt settlement, regardless of how minor.
3. If possible, get the name, address and phone number of the other parties involved and witnesses.
4. Exchange vehicle identification, insurance, County name and policy numbers with the other driver.
5. Take a photograph of the scene of accident if possible.
6. Call the police if injury to others is involved. You may want to call police even if there are no injuries.
7. Complete the accident report in your vehicle.
8. Turn all information over to your Department Head.

**I. Thefts**

In the event of the theft of a County vehicle, notify local police immediately.

#### **J. Driver Responsibilities**

Each driver is responsible for the actual possession, care and use of the County vehicle in their possession. Therefore, a driver's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Operation of the vehicle in a manner consistent with reasonable practices that avoid abuse, theft, neglect or disrespect of the equipment.
2. Obey all traffic laws.
3. The use of seat belts and shoulder harness is mandatory for driver and passengers.
4. Adhering to manufacturer's recommendations regarding service, maintenance and inspection. Vehicles should not be operated with any defect that would prevent safe operation.
5. Attention to and practice of safe driving techniques and adherence to current safety requirements.
6. Prohibiting and guarding against the use of the vehicle by persons other than the specific employee(s) assigned to the vehicle.
7. Reporting the occurrence of moving violations.
8. Accurate, comprehensive and timely reporting of all accidents by an authorized driver and thefts of a County vehicle to the Department Head.

Failure to comply with any of these responsibilities will result in disciplinary action.

#### **K. Preventable Accidents**

A preventable accident is defined as any accident involving a County vehicle – whether being used for County or personal use – or any vehicle while being used on County business that results in property damage and/or personal injury, and in which the driver in question failed to exercise every **reasonable precaution** to prevent the accident.

Classification of preventable accidents:

1. Following too close
2. Driving too fast for conditions
3. Failure to observe clearances
4. Failure to obey signs
5. Improper turns
6. Failure to observe signals from other drivers
7. Failure to reduce speed
8. Improper parking
9. Improper passing

10. Failure to yield
11. Improper backing
12. Failure to obey traffic signals or directions
13. Exceeding the posted speed limit
14. While Intoxicated (DWI) or Driving Under the Influence (DUI) or similar charges.

**L. Drugs and Alcohol.**

No employee shall operate a county vehicle, or a personal vehicle on county business: (1) with any amount of alcohol in his or her system, (2) with any illegal controlled substance in his or her system, or (3) with any legal controlled substance or uncontrolled substance in his or her system which would impair motor function or judgment. No alcoholic beverage nor illegal controlled substance shall be transported, stored, or otherwise found present in any county vehicle. Violation of this rule will be met with the strictest consequences.

**M. Personal Property in County Vehicles.**

County vehicles are subject to search and inspection at any time by any person so authorized by the county, and county employees shall have no expectation of privacy in any personal items placed or transported in a county vehicle.

**Section 11. Travel Policy**

A policy to establish rules and regulations pertaining to travel and related expenses for the Elected Officials, Department Heads, and employees of Madison County Government.

This policy is intended to provide guidance to Department Heads, Elected Officials, or employees whenever expenses are incurred while attending meetings, training sessions, conferences or other government-related functions. This document is also designed as a reminder that as stewards of public monies, we have an obligation to ourselves and to the people we serve to demonstrate the highest ethical and fiscal standards.

Specifically not covered by these policies are the expenses of witnesses appearing in the courts of Madison County.

**A. Authorized Travel and Expenses**

Travel and related expenses shall be authorized when a Department/Head, Elected Official, or employee (approved by the department head or elected official) is engaged in the conduct of official government business and shall include the following:

1. Travel to and from the location of a conference, seminar, school, or training program, which is for education or training purposes directly

related to the operations of the government and its official functions, PROVIDED THAT the program and expenses associated therewith are approved in advance in writing by the County Finance Director. The Department Head shall submit a request for written approval to the County Finance Director on behalf of himself/herself or any employee in his/her department at least 14 days in advance of the time that disbursement of funds for registration, reservations, or any other expense is necessary, and no disbursement shall occur prior to the granting of written approval.

2. Travel to and from any location to conduct operations of the Government.

### **B. Registration**

Registration fees may be paid through Accounts Payable using an Authorization for Payment form or by charging to the County charge card, subject to the requirements of 1(a) above. According to the Purchasing Policy, a Purchase Order is not required for the registration; however, a Purchase Order is preferred when using the County charge card. The registration fee of an employee's spouse will not be an allowable expense. Any part of a registration fee covering meals and/or lodging shall not otherwise be reimbursed in addition to the registration fee.

### **C. Transportation**

Employees should use a County vehicle when available. Gas for county-owned vehicles can be obtained through the County Road department. Out of town gas purchases for County vehicles may be obtained using a County gas card. Madison County will reimburse employees for all mileage incurred on County business in their personal vehicle at the current mileage reimbursement rate as may be determined by quarterly review and set by the Chairman. Requests for reimbursement of said personal vehicle mileage must be made within 30 days of the date the expense was incurred. Employees will not be allowed to purchase gas for their personal vehicles using a County credit card, or from the County Road Department gas pumps. A County Personal Vehicle Log Sheet should be completed when requesting mileage for a personal vehicle.

1. Direct expenses of operating a personal vehicle, such as gasoline, oil, parts, or repairs shall not be an allowable reimbursable County expense.
2. Fares for common carrier transportation may be paid with the County's charge card and arranged by Accounts Payable.

### **D. Lodging**

1. Lodging may be charged to the County's charge card, paid in advance (using an Authorization for Payment), or billed direct to the County. Should lodging need to be charged to a county credit card or paid in advance, it is expected that the employee will arrange to have these expenses handled directly by the County Purchasing Agent.

2. Meals served at a hotel or motel may be billed to the employee's room and expensed to the county provided they meet the set meal rates provided. Phone calls charged to the room that are directly related to county business may also be expensed to the county. One personal 'safe arrival call' is allowed. No other personal phone calls shall be allowed as reimbursable by Madison County.

3. The following lodging-related items would not be allowed as reimbursable by Madison County:

- a. Entertainment expenses.
- b. Charges such as beach or pool rental items, movie rentals, or other "extra" services.

4. Should an employee choose lodging arrangements other than those provided as part of the training or conference, the county will not be responsible for lodging-related reimbursements unless approved in advance. In such cases, a partial reimbursement may be considered if presented in advance (Example: if an employee chooses to stay at a \$100 per night hotel as opposed to staying at an \$80 per night location that is offered as part of the conference package, the employee can request reimbursement for up to \$80 per night. Such requests should have approval of the Department Head/Elected Official.) Should lack of availability with a conference package hotel cause the employee to have to choose other lodging, the County will pay these alternate arrangements. Authorized lodging fee is standard room rate. The appropriate "Sales and Use Tax Certificate of Exemption" and "Hotel/Motel Tax Exemption Request" will support all lodging arrangements. These forms may be found in the Appendix section of this policy.

5. Parking fees shall be allowed as a reimbursable expense.

#### **E. Meals**

1. Expenses for meals will be reimbursed at the set meal rates only when supported by an itemized meal receipt. The charge receipt received when paying for meals by credit card is not acceptable for reimbursement. Tips are limited to a maximum of 15% of the meal expense.

##### **In State Regular Rate**

Meal	Amount
Breakfast	\$6.00
Lunch	\$7.00
Dinner	\$15.00

##### **High Cost Area Rate\***

Meal	Amount
Breakfast	\$7.00
Lunch	\$9.00
Dinner	\$20.00

\*(Limited to: Chatham, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, Glynn, Gwinnett)

2. Employees are expected to partake of pre-paid or complimentary dinners that are provided as part of the conference, training or meeting.
3. The County will not reimburse any expenses for alcoholic beverages.

#### **F. Reimbursements of Expenses**

Payment by the government shall be limited to the actual, allowable, expense incurred for authorized activities provided for in this policy. The allowable expense may be determined by the geographic location and other circumstances and the interpretation of allowable expenses shall be made by the Department Head/Elected Official and the County Finance Director (supported by availability of funds in the Department budget).

#### **G. Use of County Credit Card**

1. When traveling on Authorized County-related business, an employee may reserve a County credit card from the Accounts Payable/Accounting Office. When an employee checks out a County credit card, he/she assumes responsibility for all charges made on the card during the time it is in their possession. Only eligible expenses may be charged. Unauthorized charges should not be charged to the County credit card even if it is the intention to reimburse these expenses. Unauthorized charges or charges failing to meet the criteria set forth in these or other county policies will be the responsibility of the employee. The County reserves the right to deduct any unauthorized charges from the employee's wages.

2. Under no circumstances should an employee who has signed for a card allow another employee to use the card.

3. All receipts and other documentation to adequately justify expenses must be returned with the charge card. The card must be signed-in in the Accounts Payable/Accounting Office immediately upon return of the travel function.

4. An employee using a County credit card should have a County Identification card provided by the Human Resources Manager to attest that he/she is an employee of Madison County.

#### **H. Travel/Training Pay**

Time spent traveling to and from training sites is considered compensatory time. An employee shall be compensated for time spent in class or training and are computed the same as a regular workday. (Title 29, Part 785, Sections 27-41, U. S. Department of Labor, Fair Labor Standards Act)

1. Local Travel - An employee shall be compensated for travel time spent to and from the training destination, whether from home to destination or from work to destination.

2. Long Distance Travel (by auto) An employee shall be compensated for travel time spent to and from your destination, whether from home to destination or from work to destination. (If more than one day is required in travel time, an employee's travel time compensation ends at the place of lodging and begins when he/she commences the travel to home or work.)

3. Long Distance Travel (by Plane/Train/Bus) An employee shall be compensated for travel time spent to and from the airport or depot, whether from home to destination or from work to destination. (If more than one day is required for travel time, an employee shall be compensated when he/she starts travel from the place of lodging to home or work.

#### **I. Determination of Allowable Expense**

Economic conservatism and sound judgment must be exercised by all officials and employees in every expense incurred. In the event of a dispute of an allowable expense, the County Finance Director shall be authorized to make such determination based on this policy, reasonableness, and sound judgment.

Requests for reimbursements of personal vehicle mileage must be received within 30 days of the date the expense was incurred.

# MADISON COUNTY EMPLOYEE EXPENSE REPORT

NAME	REPORT DATE
DEPT	TRAVEL DATE

**Requests for reimbursements of personal vehicle mileage must received within 30 days of the date the expense was incurred.**

DAY DATE	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	TOTAL ITEMS
LODGING								
PARKING								
BREAKFAST								
LUNCH								
DINNER								
MILEAGE								
MISC								
ADVANCE RECEIVED								-
DAILY TOTAL								

TO COMPUTE MILEAGE:

TOTAL MILES	@ . _____ PER MILE	TOTAL MILEAGE
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**NOTES: Attach all receipts for lodging, meals, and miscellaneous expenses.**

**ACCOUNT CODES:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
EMPLOYEE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DEPARTMENT HEAD/ELECTED OFFICIAL

**SIGNATURE PAGE FOR THE 2010 COUNTY POLICY**

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ANTHONY DOVE - CHAIRMAN

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STANLEY THOMAS - COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 1

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JOHN PETHEL, SR - COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 2

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MIKE YOUNGBLOOD - COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 3

---

DEWITT ("PETE") BOND - COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 4

---

BRUCE W. SCOGIN – COMMISSIONER DISTRICT 5

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LINDA COX - COUNTY CLERK