

## **Public Service Expectations**

As a County employee, you are involved in public service work. This can be both a demanding and a rewarding career choice. Your work is valuable and your responsibilities are many. Prompt, courteous and efficient service is important in all your dealings with the public, because your actions directly affect public perception of the County.

The first and foremost duty of the County is service to the public. Courtesy and a spirit of service are the primary requisites of a staff member. Each employee has a special place of importance in the operation of the County and should accept the responsibility of that position with dignity and a dedication to excellence. Each employee is to exhibit a high degree of professionalism, including, work-place appropriate attire and keeping his/her assigned work area neat and clean.

The teamwork concept under which the County operates means that no single department is more important than another. Each department is interdependent on the others, and all are equal in the overall goal of providing the best possible service to the citizens of the County.

Each employee is a public relations officer for the County. In all contacts with the public, a County employee is perceived to be the County. An employee can make a greater impact in developing and maintaining good public relations for the County than can a professional advertising firm. All members of the public should be acknowledged with a greeting upon entering a particular department and when leaving the department and the County.

All public contacts should be handled in a friendly and courteous manner. Staff should respect personal feelings and endeavor to answer all expressed needs to the citizen's satisfaction. Staff should not engage in confrontational situations with citizens. If a problem is escalating, seek assistance from another department member or supervisor. If necessary, do not hesitate to call in another supervisor if the immediate supervisor is not present. Do not let the situation escalate to the point where it becomes a crisis.

Visiting with friends, acquaintances, or any discussion of personal affairs is discouraged while on duty at a public service desk. Personal calls should not be made or accepted while at a public service desk. Telephones in workroom areas should be used sparingly for this purpose. Long distance calls may only be placed under emergency circumstances and must be approved by the

employee's supervisor unless the employee's job duties include the routine placement of such calls. Employees may be personally liable for the cost of unauthorized calls.

It is the responsibility of all staff members to make all the resources, services, and programs of the County known to potential users.

For purposes of this policy, the County deems "confidential information" to be any information an employee learns about the County as a result of working for the County that is not otherwise publicly available, including personal employee information. Employees are to share confidential information only as required to carry out their job duties and only with those who have a County business reason or a legal right (such as a judicial subpoena or a FOIA request) to have access to such information. A County employee is not allowed to copy confidential information for personal use, but, instead, must use a FOIA request to obtain a copy of confidential information. Employees are forbidden from transferring confidential information to non-County electronic accounts or devices. An employee who fails to maintain confidential information as described in this policy may be terminated subject to reconsideration of the termination decision through the grievance process.

## **Introductory Period**

Special Note: The introductory period is not to be construed as a minimum guarantee of employment. All employees of the County are employed "at will" which means that both the employee and the County have the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice.

New Employees. All new employees, including former employees who have been rehired, will be considered to be in an introductory period for at least the first six (6) months of their employment. The supervisor also has discretion to recommend extending the introductory period for a minimum of an additional ninety (90) days. This "trial" period is actually an extension of the selection process and is designed to provide the new employee with the opportunity to demonstrate that s/he is well-suited for the job and that the job is well-suited for the employee. If the immediate supervisor concludes during the introductory period that the new employee is not well-suited for the position, the employee may be terminated. The introductory period will end when the supervisor evaluates the new employee in writing and recommends the employee's change in status from "introductory" to "regular."