



Washington State  
Association of Counties

# COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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# COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

*As Approved by the Board of Directors*

*June 15, 2010*

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Date Adopted	Action	Description
6/15/2010	Approved	Comprehensive Policy Manual
9/17/2010	Added	Amicus Brief Policy & Form
9/16/2011	Updated	LSC Meeting Travel Allowance
11/13/2012	Added	Whistleblower Policy
1/30/2013	Updated	Personnel – Various Amendments to: Return to work; Travel, Business Expenses and Mileage; Sick Leave; Sick Leave Payment at Termination; Vacation Leave; Vacation Leave Payment at Termination; Holidays; Compensation at Termination; Retirement Plan at Termination
5/8/2013	Updated	Audit, Investment and Finance Committee Charter
9/20/2013	Added	Personnel - Employee Retention
2/15/2014	Updated	Personnel - Leave Sharing for Catastrophic Illness
5/7/2014	Updated	General and Transportation Dues Statewide Boards & Commissions
5/7/2014	Added	Federal Relations & Engagement Policy
9/19/2014	Updated	Personnel – Sick Leave Incentive Conversion Member Travel Allowance Timber Counties Charter
9/19/2014	Added	Personnel – Wellness Leave
11/18/2014	Updated	Personnel – Health and Welfare Plans – added HSA and HRAs.
2/4/2015	Added	Member Service Communications Policy
11/17/2015	Added	Annual Legislative Agenda Approval Process
11/17/2015	Added	Legal Committee Charter



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## I PERSONNEL

*ORIGINAL ADOPTION: January 1, 2004*

*BOARD APPROVED REVISION: November 18, 2014*

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### Part 1 - Purpose and Scope

#### Intent of Policies

These policies are not intended to be a contract, express or implied, or any type of promise or guarantee of specific treatment upon which you may rely, or as a guarantee of employment for any specific duration. These policies provide an overview of rules of conduct applicable to employment with the Association and to describe benefits and other related matters. The rules and expectations concerning employee conduct specifically referenced in these policies are not exclusive, and all employees are expected to adequately perform the duties of their positions, to use common sense and to behave in a courteous, ethical and professional manner consistent with the goals of the Association.

#### Scope of Policies

These policies apply to all Association employees. These policies are general guidelines and the Executive Director may authorize variations as necessary.

#### Policy Changes

As the need arises, the Executive Director or Board of Directors of the Association may modify these policies. The Executive Director may deviate from these policies in individual situations, particularly in an emergency, in order to achieve the primary mission of the Association. Employees may request specific changes to these policies by submitting their suggestions to the Executive Director.

### Part 2 - General Policies

#### Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy

The Association is an equal opportunity employer. The Association will not discriminate against employees, applicants, or other persons having dealings with the Association because of age, sex, marital status, religion, race, creed, color, national origin, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. The Association will, in keeping with the requirements of law, provide reasonable accommodation to applicants and employees who, because of a disability, require accommodation to participate in the application process or to perform the essential functions of his/her job. Employees who believe they need reasonable accommodation should discuss this with their supervisor.

#### Employment Status

All Association employees are employed at-will. The Executive Director is hired and terminated in accordance with Association bylaws. All other Association employees serve at the pleasure of the Executive Director and may be dismissed with or without cause by the Executive Director. No employee of the Association has a guarantee of employment for any length of time or to any specific job assignment.



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### **Anti-Harassment**

The Association will not condone or tolerate any type of harassment of its employees. Harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital status, or disability, 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, or (iii) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities. Employees who feel they have been harassed should report the incident to their immediate supervisor or to any of the supervisors they are comfortable confiding in. The Association will investigate to determine what occurred and do all it can to eliminate the harassment. Employees who harass other employees will be appropriately disciplined. No employee will be retaliated against in any way for complaining of harassment.

### **Sexual Harassment Prohibited**

Sexual harassment is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile, derogatory, or otherwise offensive conduct or statements made because of one's gender, whether or not the conduct or statements are actually sexual in nature.

Sexual harassment which implies that submission to the conduct is a condition of employment or relevant to any employment decision, or has the purpose or effect of interfering with a person's work, or creates an offensive or hostile work environment is strictly prohibited. Examples of conduct or statements that constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to sexual comments, jokes, or innuendo, the display or discussion of sexually graphic material or conduct, matters, and inappropriate touching and gestures.

Employees who feel they have been sexually harassed should report the incident to their immediate supervisor or to any of the supervisors they are comfortable confiding in. The Association will investigate to determine what occurred and do all it can to eliminate the harassment.

### **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

The Association desires to provide a safe and healthful work environment. No employee will operate a motor vehicle, perform the duties of his/her position or attend to Association business while under the influence of, or impaired by, the use of drugs or alcohol.

### **Return to Work**

The Association follows a Workers Compensation return to work program for on the job injuries that provides injured employees the opportunity to return to gainful employment in a capacity that supports their physical capability and aids them to return to their regular position as quickly as possible.



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### Part 3 - Hours of Work

#### Office Hours

The Association office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on the holidays specified in these policies. The Executive Director may adjust office hours as needed to reflect staffing limitations, budget constraints, or other operational considerations.

#### Employee Work Schedules

The Association's standard workweek is Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Executive Director may approve a flexible work schedule upon an employee's request based on the needs of the employee and the Association.

**Exempt Employees**-- A standard workweek is 40 hours. Exempt employees will frequently work more than 40 hours a week including weekends and evenings. Exempt employees are not covered by the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) or Washington Minimum Wage Act overtime provisions and do not receive overtime pay or compensatory time in lieu of overtime pay.

**Non-exempt employees**-- A standard, full-time workday is eight hours, excluding lunch: a standard workweek is 40 hours. Work schedules for individual employees are approved and modified by their supervisor. Hours may be rearranged, adjusted, or staggered as needed to cover office hours and other operational concerns. Requests of employees to work a flexible schedule will be given due consideration by the Executive Director in establishing work schedules.

**Part-time employees**--Part time employees covered by these policies will be exempt or non-exempt and have a work schedule of at least 20 hours a week, with work days/hours scheduled by the Executive Director. Part time employees are entitled to leave offered by the Association on a pro-rated basis.

**Temporary Employees**--Temporary employees are scheduled to work on a temporary, seasonal/intermittent or on-call basis and are not eligible for benefits.

#### Breaks and Meal Periods

Non-exempt employees are entitled to take one (1) fifteen-minute break for every four hours worked. Meal periods may be scheduled to assure adequate coverage of the office. Meal periods are unpaid and usually one hour in length.

#### Overtime

Employees in positions defined as non-exempt under the FLSA are entitled to overtime pay for hours they are required to work in excess of 40 hours in one week. The normal workweek for overtime calculation purposes is defined from Monday at 12:01 a.m. until Sunday at 12:00 a.m. Non-exempt employees must receive approval from their immediate supervisor prior to working overtime. Overtime is paid at one and a half times an employee's regular hourly rate of pay.





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Compensatory time off in lieu of pay for non-exempt employees is permitted provided the employee takes the compensatory time within the same pay period in which it is earned. Compensatory time is calculated in the same manner as overtime pay as described above.

### **Time Reporting**

All non-exempt employees will record time on a designated time sheet. Exempt employees are required to track and report their time solely for internal allocation of work time to various projects and assignments, and to comply with requirements of the Public Disclosure Act and other applicable laws and regulations.

### **Attendance**

Consistent attendance and attention to one's work assignments is required. Failure to meet this expectation without authorization or notification of the need to be absent may lead to termination from employment. Employees will make every effort to keep their calendars up-to-date. It is important for the administrative staff to know who is in the office to provide assistance to our members.

Requests for the use of vacation leave must be submitted to the employee's immediate supervisor and authorized by the supervisor in advance. Requests for time off will be granted contingent upon overall staffing needs.

When an employee is sick or will otherwise be absent from work, he/she will inform the Association office within a half hour of the normal starting time for every day of the illness or absence unless authorized for an extended absence.

### **Teleworking**

Teleworking is allowed when opportunities exist for improved employee performance, reduced commuting miles, or Association savings. Employees are allowed to telework upon the advanced approval of their supervisor. The Association at any time can withdraw teleworking privileges based on the organization's needs.

### **Inclement Weather/Emergencies**

At the discretion of the Executive Director, office operations can be postponed or suspended due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions. If the office is closed by the Executive Director, employees will be encouraged to telework where possible and will be compensated.

## **Part 4 - Compensation**

### **Employee Pay**

Employee pay rates are set by the Executive Director within the limits set by the Board of Directors. The Board may authorize incentive pay and/or leave to recognize performance, market factors, and other factors designed to improve the performance, recruitment and retention of Association staff. The Executive Director shall make decisions regarding incentive pay for individual employees within the total funding authorized.



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### **Employee Pay Periods and Pay Days**

All full-time and part-time employees covered by these policies are paid on a monthly basis on the last working day of each month.

### **Deductions**

There are some deductions which are required by law; other deductions are specifically authorized by the employee. The Association will withhold those deductions required by law and voluntary deductions authorized by the employee, subject to reasonable notice.

### **Travel, Business Expenses and Mileage**

Employees are to use their assigned Association business credit card for expenses when in travel status. Otherwise, employees will be reimbursed for reasonable travel and business expenses actually incurred in connection with the business of the Association.

Employees are encouraged to use the Association's Travel Coordinator to handle travel arrangements for out-of-state travel or when airline travel is required. The Association has available Travel Rewards that should be considered before travel arrangements are finalized in order to recognize cost savings.

Reasonable costs for meals will be reimbursed based on actual receipts. Employees should make a good faith effort to obtain moderately priced and conveniently located lodging while maintaining a safe environment at all times.

Employees are encouraged to use the WSAC pool car or a rental car if business travel is out of the local area and costs are expected to be less than using a personal vehicle. Admin staff should be consulted to determine the rental company to use. If a personal vehicle is used, the prevailing IRS per diem rate for mileage reimbursement will apply.

The Executive Director must approve all out-of-state travel prior to the date of travel.

All employees are required to complete an expense report for any month that they incurred charges on a WSAC business credit card, or are requesting reimbursement for other expenses such as mileage. All required documentation must be submitted in order to receive reimbursement.

## **Part 5 - Benefits**

### **Retirement**

Employees are eligible to participate in the employer provided retirement plan. Specific plan information and plan documents will be made available upon hire. Annual updates and changes will be made available to all employees by the Plan Administrator.

Retirement eligibility, retirement age, etc. is determined by the retirement plan, contact the Plan Administrator for information.



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### **Health and Welfare Plans**

Each year the Association will make provision for medical, dental, life and other insurance benefits for employee, spouse or certified domestic partner, and dependents. Employees will be provided with information about coverage, premiums, co-payments and deductibles. Specific benefit plan rates and coverage information is outlined in the benefit plan summaries. The choice of insurance coverage, eligibility, and enrollment waiting periods are outlined in plan booklets. In addition, the Association may make available a Health Savings Account and/or a Health Reimbursement Arrangement for higher deductible medical plans.

The Association's insurance coverage is available to all permanent employees scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week. Employees classified as permanent Part-Time (scheduled between 20-35 hours per week) are entitled to 50% of the employer paid portion of health benefits.

Coverage for eligible employees and their dependents will be dependent upon the employee's hire date. If the employee's start date is the 1st day of the month, he or she will be eligible for coverage for that month. If the start date is after the 1st of the month, coverage will not begin until the 1st of the following month.

A Voluntary Accident and Voluntary Term Life Plan are available, at the employee's expense, to those eligible employees who wish to purchase these additional benefits.

Termination, Retirement, Leave of Absence – For eligible employees who terminate, retire or are on an approved leave of absence, the Association will pay the premium for the month the employee terminates, retires, or is on leave, provided the employee is on paid status on the first day of the month.

Continuation on the Association medical, dental, insurance programs on a self pay basis may be allowed while on unpaid status according to federal law and WSAC policies governing unpaid leave. Federal law determines continuation on the Association medical and dental and insurance programs after termination.

### **Continuation of Insurance Coverage**

COBRA Rights – Upon an employee's termination from Association employment or upon an unpaid leave of absence, at the employee's option and expense, the employee may be eligible to continue Association health insurance benefits to the extent provided under the federal COBRA regulations. An administrative handling fee over and above the cost of the insurance premium may be charged the employee or his/her dependents that elect to exercise their COBRA continuation rights.

### **Employee Assistance Program**

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is an employee benefit that provides private and confidential counseling assistance at no cost to the employee for a specified number of visits. These services are designed to help employees and their families resolve problems that interfere with their well-being or impair the employee's job performance.

### **Workers' Compensation**

The State Workers' Compensation Program covers all Association employees. All job-related injuries should be reported immediately.



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### **Educational Assistance**

The Association believes that well-trained employees further the goal of providing quality services to counties. Upon approval by the Executive Director, the Association will pay for in-state workshops and other training opportunities that are related to the employee's job. The Executive Director must approve all out-of-state workshops and related travel.

### **Unemployment Compensation**

Association employees are covered by State Unemployment Compensation.

## **Part 6 - Leave**

### **Sick Leave**

Employees will earn sick leave at a rate of eight hours per month. Employees working a part-time schedule will earn sick leave on a pro-rated basis equal to the percentage of time worked. Sick leave can be used as soon as it is accrued. If the employee's start date is the 1<sup>st</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup>, he or she will earn sick leave for the full month; if the start date is after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month the employee will not earn sick leave until the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month. Sick leave credit shall be granted for each month in which a full-time or regular part-time employee is in pay status for 15 or more calendar days. The maximum amount that an employee may accrue is 120 days (960 hours).

When determining when accrued sick leave was earned, the Association shall consistently in each instance and for all purposes use First-In / First-Out (FIFO) accounting.

**Use** –Sick leave is charged at a rate equal to the number of work hours absent from the normally assigned workday. FLSA Exempt employees shall not be charged for less than a full day of absence. Sick leave shall be granted to the extent of accumulated credits but only when an employee is required to be absent from work for one of the following reasons:

- Illness or injury of the employee or for preventative health care.
- Exposure of the employee to contagious disease when attendance at work would jeopardize the health of others.
- The birth or adoption and care of a newborn child.
- To care for the employee's dependent children under the age of 18 who are ill
- Use of a prescription drug which impairs job performance or safety
- Emergency illness in the immediate family requiring the attendance of the employee. Immediate family member includes a spouse, domestic partner, child or parent. The employee may request use of sick leave to care for other relatives; the Executive Director will grant such requests on a case-by-case basis.

An employee who exhausts all of his/her sick leave and requires more time off work due to illness or injury may use accrued vacation time or request a leave of absence.



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Employees may be required to provide certification of illness or a written release to return to work by a qualified physician whenever requested by the Executive Director.

### **Sick Leave Payment at Termination**

Upon separation from employment for reasons other than death or retirement, any unused sick leave is forfeited without payment.

When an employee separates for retirement, he or she shall have the option to:

- Be paid for fifty percent of accumulated sick leave upon separation; or
- Continue on the payroll for additional days equal to one-half of their accumulated sick leave.

When an employee separates due to death, fifty percent of accumulated sick leave shall be paid to the employee's estate.

Payment of accumulated sick leave is based on the employee's rate of pay at the time of retirement or death.

### **Sick Leave Incentive Conversion**

An employee with an excess of 60 days (480 hours) sick leave accrued may convert the excess days to vacation days at the rate of four (4) days sick leave for one (1) day of vacation.

### **Wellness Leave**

WSAC encourages employees to participate in wellness programs that are designed to improve the quality of life for employees. Participation in a wellness program is voluntary and outside the scope of an employee's job duties. Wellness programs encourage employees on an annual basis to complete a health risk assessment, obtain biometric numbers and receive a routine physical examination. Non-exempt employees will be allowed to take four hours of wellness leave per year as a participation incentive for completing these wellness program tasks. A certificate of completion from the employee's wellness program must be presented to obtain the leave hours. Leave taken without a wellness certificate of completion will be charged to sick leave.

### **Bereavement Leave**

Employees are entitled to take up to three days of paid time off for purposes of bereavement upon death of an immediate family member. An immediate family member for bereavement leave includes: mother, father, spouse, domestic partner, child (natural, adopted, step or that of a domestic partner), brother, sister, grandchild, and grandparent. The employee should notify the Executive Director of the need and length of anticipated absence. Absences beyond three days will be charged to vacation leave.

### **Unpaid Leave of Absence**

Employees may request unpaid leave for personal reasons, which may be approved or disapproved at the discretion of the Executive Director. The employee shall submit a written request for the leave of absence specifying the reason, the anticipated length of absence, and the expected date of return.

No sick leave, vacation, or holiday pay will accrue while an employee is on unpaid leave.



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### Vacation Leave

Employees earn vacation according to the following schedule:

Vacation Level	Duration of Level (Cumulative Years)	Days of Vacation Earned	Hours Earned Per Month
VAC I	1	12	8
VAC II	1	13	8.66
VAC III	2	14	9.33
VAC IV	3	15	10.00
VAC V	3	16	10.66
VAC VI	3	17	11.33
VAC VII	3	18	12
VAC VIII	3	19	12.66
VAC IX	3	20	13.33
VAC X	Unlimited (final level)	21	14

The employee's anniversary month of hire is used as the trigger for change in the vacation level. Vacation time begins accumulating the first month of employment. If the employee's start date is the 1<sup>st</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup> he or she will earn vacation time for the full month, if the start date is after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month the employee will not earn vacation time until the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month. Vacation is not accrued during periods of unpaid leave and any such periods in excess of a full month will change the trigger month accordingly. Part-time employees will earn vacation on a pro-rated basis equal to the percentage of time worked in a normal scheduled work week.

Employee vacation schedules are approved at the discretion of the employee's supervisor. Employees are encouraged to provide their supervisor with vacation schedule information as early as possible. Vacation leave may not be taken before it is accrued. An employee may take all or any portion of accrued vacation leave with supervisor approval.

Employees may accumulate and carry vacation leave up to a maximum of 30 days (240 hours). An employee separating from WSAC service who has not taken his/her earned vacation leave shall be paid for earned vacation credit accrued, but not in excess of thirty days, including any incentive vacation days.

When determining when accrued sick leave was earned, the Association shall consistently in each instance and for all purposes use First-In / First-Out (FIFO) accounting.

The Executive Director will determine a new employee's vacation level placement at the time of hire. In addition, the Executive Director may, at his/her discretion, grant vacation days as part of the process of negotiating an agreement to accept employment with the Association.





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### **Vacation Leave Payment at Termination**

Upon separation from employment all unused vacation leave will be compensated. Payment of all unused vacation leave is based on the employee's rate of pay at the time of separation.

**Incentive Days**--In addition to the monthly leave accrual, the Executive Director may grant a full time employee (or for part-time employees an equivalent pro-rated amount) up to five incentive leave days per year. Incentive days must be taken as vacation days by the close of the year. The Executive Director may establish an annual date by which employees with incentive leave must decide whether to take the incentive leave. Under no condition may the incentive days be carried to the next year.

### **Leave Sharing for Catastrophic Illness**

Employees may donate leave to another employee of the Association who is suffering from or has a member of the immediate family suffering from an extraordinary or severe illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition which has caused or is likely to cause the employee to take leave without pay or terminate employment. The receiving employee must meet the criteria described in this policy and must have abided by Association policies regarding the use of sick leave. The employee must have exhausted all accrued sick, vacation, personal holiday and granted leave. The Executive Director must approve the use of leave sharing.

#### **Vacation Leave**

Employees may donate vacation leave if this does not cause their vacation leave balance to fall below 0 hours after the transfer inclusive of approved leave.

#### **Sick Leave**

Employees may donate 2 hours of sick leave for every 1 hour of vacation leave donated.

#### **Personal Holiday/Granted Leave**

An employee may donate all or part of their unexpired personal holiday or granted leave.

#### **Unused Shared Leave**

Any portion of donated vacation and sick leave that is not used shall be returned to the donating employee. Any portion of donated personal and granted leave shall be returned to the donating employee but may only be used by the donor if the leave is in the same calendar year that it was awarded.

#### **Computation of Leave Transferred**

In transferring leave from the donor to the donee, it is the donor's dollar value of the leave that transfers to the donee and is then converted to equivalent hours at the donee's salary rate. Calculate the **dollar value** of donated leave using the donor's total current salary rate times the hours donated. For the donee, divide the **dollar value** received by the donee's total current salary rate to determine the leave hours to record.

#### **Limitation**

An eligible recipient may receive no more than 320 hours of donated leave in a rolling twelve-month period beginning with the date of the first use of donated leave.



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### Holidays

All full-time employees will be entitled to the following holidays:

New Year's Day	January 1
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday of September
Thanksgiving Day	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday of November
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday after Thanksgiving
Christmas Day	December 25 <sup>th</sup>
Four Personal Days	

Each full-time employee will be granted four personal days per year. The personal days must be taken the year it is accrued and cannot be carried forward to the next year. An employee must work at least 3 months during a calendar year to receive the personal days.

Part-time employees will be entitled to holiday pay and personal days on a pro-rated basis equal to the percentage of time worked in a normal scheduled work week.

### Jury Duty

Employees who are summoned for jury duty will be paid their normal rate of pay and benefits during that time. Employees should inform their immediate supervisor of this obligation as soon as they are aware of it.

### Military Duty

An employee who is a member of the Washington National Guard or a federal military unit is entitled to up to 15 working days for military duty each calendar year with regular pay and benefits.

## Part 7 - Employee Performance and Conduct

No employee has a right to expect progressive discipline, or to advance notice of the reasons for disciplinary action by the Association.

### Employee Professional Development

All employees covered by these personnel policies will be evaluated by their supervisor on a regular basis. The ongoing evaluation can be utilized to communicate information about the employee's job duties, performance, goals and training needs.

### Employee Conduct

It is the policy of the Association to let employees know when their actions or inactions have caused a problem for the Association or have violated the personnel or operating policies. Normally the communication will be verbal and intended to share the nature and consequences of the problem in a constructive way.





## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### Part 8 - Employee Responsibilities

#### Outside Employment

An employee who wants to take on an additional job, contractual commitment or self-employment, must first receive approval from the Executive Director.

Outside employment should not: interfere with the hours or efficiency expected in the performance of the Association job; present a real or potential conflict of interest with the Association's interests; take preference over extra duty required by the Association; involve the use of Association resources such as copiers, telephones, supplies, or time.

#### Political Activity

No employee may directly or indirectly use or authorize the use of any Association facilities for purposes of assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion of or opposition to any ballot proposition. Facilities of the Association include, but are not limited to, use of Association stationary, supplies, postage, equipment, office space, or vehicles.

No employee may participate in activities relating to political campaigns at any time that he or she is on Association premises, or engaged in activities related to the business of, or performing work for the Association. This includes the wearing or display of any button, badge, sticker or other item relating to candidates for public office. Any employee wishing to participate in political activity during normal business hours must submit a vacation or leave without pay request. That request must be approved before the employee engages in the activity.

#### Personal Appearance and Dress

Employees who are scheduled to interact with others such as county officials, the public, the legislature, and state agencies are expected to maintain a professional appearance during business hours and other times while conducting Association business by wearing appropriate business attire. Business casual attire is allowed throughout the year when such interaction is not anticipated.

Business casual attire requires the use of discretion and good judgment in selecting clothing for the workplace. Clothing should not include anything which may be considered unprofessional to the work environment.

We recognize that not all positions within the organization require the same attire. Therefore, discretion of appropriate dress will be determined based on the visibility and function of the job.

#### Conflict of Interest

Every WSAC employee must discharge his/her responsibilities and duties to WSAC in good faith and avoid conflicts of interest. This requires using common sense, being diligent and attentive to WSAC's needs, and making thoughtful decisions in the best interest of WSAC.

A conflict of interest may arise when a person has an existing or potential financial interest or other material interest that impairs, or might appear to impair, his/her independence or objectivity in the discharge of



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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responsibilities and duties to WSAC. An employee of WSAC may not use his/her position at WSAC to secure a pecuniary or other material benefit for themselves or their relatives.

### **Smoking**

The Association prohibits smoking in its office and pool cars.

### **Accidents and Reports**

Employees shall report any accident or unusual activity relating to the employee's own personal safety or safety and security of the building and grounds as soon as such incidents are known.

## **Part 9 - Employee Services**

### **Employee Parking**

The Association will provide parking for all of its employees when possible. Employees are expected to use their assigned parking spots and should not park in the visitor or handicapped spot(s).

### **Use of WSAC Cars**

If a WSAC pool car is available for use, employees should promptly report all maintenance problems on the pool cars. Employees must report all accidents or damage to all WSAC cars. It is expected that employees will refuel the pool cars, according to procedure, and leave them in a clean condition when returning them. The employee incurring them will pay all parking or traffic violation fines.

## **Part 10 - Employment Termination**

### **Resignation**

Employees should provide a minimum of two weeks written notice of resignation.

### **Compensation at Termination**

Upon termination of employment with the Association, employees will receive pay for all hours worked up to and through the last day worked, including pay for overtime. The employee will be compensated upon termination for no more than 30 days of unused vacation leave. Refer to Part 6 – Sick Leave Payment at Termination and Vacation Leave Payment at Termination for unused sick and vacation leave balances through the last day worked. Any other accrued leave balances are not compensated at termination.

The employee's final paycheck will be processed on the last working day of the month in which termination occurs.

## **Part 11 - Employee Retention**

### **Purpose**

The Washington State Association of Counties intends to invest in, and retain a highly competent and professional workforce. As an organization, we not only recognize, but value and respect our staff. As such, it is the intent of the WSAC Board of Directors to:



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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- Provide a foundation to ensure -
  - Appropriate and competitive salary compensation; and
  - Competitive health care and retirement benefits; and
  - Annual budget appropriation to support employee retention activities.
- Establish general parameters to guide the Executive Director's actions to retain high performing employees and teams. These parameters are examples of potential strategies and activities to retain high performing employees and teams.

### **Authorization**

Beyond providing appropriate and competitive salary and benefits to WSAC employees the Executive Director shall pursue and implement strategies, actions, and activities to retain a highly competent and professional workforce. This may include, but not be limited to:

#### **Retention Compensation and Benefit Parameters**

- Base salary adjustments consistent with market comparables;
- Regular cost of living adjustments;
- Cash compensation for performance recognition;
- Graduated increased employer contribution to certain benefits based on tenure and retention goals;
- Granted leave for performance recognition;
- Tuition stipend for professional development, education, technical training, and continuing education related to current or future organizational responsibilities;
- Other tangible retention benefits tailored to meet the needs of an individual employee.

#### **Workplace Parameters**

- Create and maintain a vibrant, nourishing, and respectful workplace;
- Assure active communication, shared information, and an engaging workplace;
- Provide recognition and awards for performance and achievement of individual staff, teams, and organization;
- Conduct "stay interviews" with staff annually;
- Support employee and organizational volunteerism and community service;
- Provide workplace training and other group and team building activities;
- Celebrate together with activities and events that recognize staff and foster a collaborative and positive work environment.



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### II MEMBERS

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*ORIGINAL ADOPTION: May 18, 2005*

*BOARD APPROVED REVISION: November 17, 2015*

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#### Part 1 – Member Travel

##### General

WSAC recognizes that within the finite resources available to the Association, travel by WSAC members and staff is critical to Association business and organizational success.

This policy sets forth the general parameters for travel reimbursement of WSAC members by the Association. It is recognized that the Executive Committee may elect to suspend, alter, or review potential travel, including travel authorized within this policy, and approve all submitted expenditures prior to reimbursement. The Executive Committee may approve additional travel as necessary if funds are available.

Unless otherwise noted, WSAC members are responsible to make their own travel arrangements and provide payment for such travel.

If WSAC staff uses Airline or Credit Card Points to secure any travel, lodging, or registration arrangements, the fair market value will be considered as reimbursed travel expenses when calculating the allowable maximum per meeting.

Reimbursement allowances will be reviewed by the WSAC Executive Committee as part of the annual budget process and may be adjusted accordingly. Additionally, the WSAC Executive Committee shall have the authority to establish restrictions on travel reimbursements if WSAC resources are not available.

Members are always encouraged to explore and find ways to reduce the cost of WSAC associated travel such as carpooling, taking less expensive transportation alternatives (transit vs. taxi) and exploring lower cost air flights.

Questions regarding travel should be directed to the appropriate WSAC staff member as determined by the WSAC Executive Director.

##### Airfare

The Association reimburses only for coach or economy class air travel. The member will be responsible for the cost differential for upgrading to a better class. Eligible reimbursement includes up to one piece of luggage and airline meals.

The Association will not pay fees for flight changes unless the Association directed the change.

##### Meals

Reasonable costs for meals will be reimbursed based on actual receipts.



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### **Lodging**

Accommodations should be moderately priced and conveniently located while maintaining a safe environment at all times. When a member makes lodging arrangements, every effort should be made to secure the authorized state per diem rate for all lodging accommodations.

It is appropriate to stay at host hotels associated with conferences. The cost of lodging in high cost areas will be taken into consideration.

### **Ground Transportation and Use of Personal Vehicle**

The prevailing IRS per diem rate for mileage reimbursement will apply for use of personal vehicle.

All rental cars should be in the compact to mid-size class unless there is a specific business purpose for a larger or all-wheel vehicle. Additional eligible transportation costs include:

- Parking
- Rental Car Fuel
- Taxis
- Shuttles
- Transit

### **Non-Reimbursable Travel Expenses**

The Association will not reimburse for the following expenses in connection with travel:

- Baggage fees beyond one piece of luggage
- Excess baggage costs
- In-room hotel movies
- Honor bar costs
- Laundry, unless one is on an extended trip
- Tipping in excess of 20% for meals and ground transportation
- See Officer & Board Travel for specific limitations and exclusions

### **Recordkeeping Requirements**

Travel reimbursement claims shall be reported on an Association Expense Form with receipts attached.

Travel reimbursement claims should be submitted to WSAC within 30 days from time of travel. In no case will WSAC reimburse otherwise eligible member travel expenses not submitted to WSAC by January 31<sup>st</sup> of the calendar year following the year in which the travel occurred. For example, costs incurred in 2010 must be submitted no later than January 31, 2011.

Members shall submit receipts for expenses charged directly to WSAC, e.g., hotels and/or car rentals. WSAC will process payment for reimbursements on the first available check run following authorization.



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## **Officer & Board Travel**

### **WSAC President**

WSAC staff will make travel, lodging and registration arrangements for the WSAC President during their term for the following meetings and conferences:

- National Association of Counties Annual Conference
- National Association of Counties Legislative Conference
- National Association of Counties Western Interstate Conference

WSAC Staff will work with the WSAC President throughout their term in providing assistance in travel arrangements and registrations while performing Association business.

The WSAC President shall have all travel, lodging, and registration fees for WSAC Conferences provided for during their term in office. Registration will be the responsibility of the current president, however all fees will be waived.

### **WSAC Officers, NACo Board Members, NACo WIR Board Members**

It shall be the responsibility of the WSAC Officers, NACo Board Members, and NACo WIR Board Members to make all travel arrangements for NACo Conferences and Meetings. Hotel, conference registration, and travel arrangements for these meetings shall be the obligation of the member. WSAC will reimburse eligible expenses per policy.

### **Other Executive Committee Members**

#### *NACo Related Travel*

WSAC will pay or reimburse the registration, travel, lodging, and meal expenses of the WSAC Officers for attendance at the following National Association of Counties (NACo) Meetings as limited below during their term:

- NACo Legislative Conference
- Annual NACo Conference
- Western Interstate Region (WIR)

<b>WSAC Officer</b>	<b>Authorized Number of NACo Meetings</b>
Vice President	2
Secretary-Treasurer	2
Immediate Past-President	1

Officers will be reimbursed for actual allowable expenses up to a maximum of \$2,500 for attendance at one meeting or \$4,000 for two meetings.

#### *Other Executive Board Travel Related to Association Business*

WSAC will pay or reimburse the President and other members of the Executive Committee for travel expenses which relate directly to the duties of their respective offices.

### **WSAC Board of Directors**

WSAC Board of Directors may request reimbursement for travel, lodging and meal expenses to attend board meetings except for those scheduled in conjunction with WSAC Conferences. The member will be reimbursed for actual expenses up to a maximum of \$250 for each meeting.



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### **Members Serving on NACo Boards**

#### *NACo Board of Directors*

The WSAC member(s) representing Washington State Counties on the NACo Board of Directors will receive reimbursement to cover travel, lodging, meals and registration for two of the four Board meetings held each year. The member will be reimbursed for actual allowable expenses up to a maximum of \$2,500 for attendance at one meeting or \$4,000 for two meetings.

#### *NACo WIR Board of Directors*

The WSAC member(s) representing Washington State Counties on the WIR Board of Directors will receive reimbursement to cover travel, lodging, meals and registration for two of the four Board meetings held each year. The member will be reimbursed for actual allowable expenses up to a maximum of \$2,500 for attendance at one meeting or \$4,000 for two meetings.

### **Legislative Steering Committee**

#### *Members from Counties with Population < 70,000*

Members of the Legislative Steering Committee from counties with less than 70,000 in population may request reimbursement for travel, lodging and meal expenses to attend Legislative Steering Committee meetings except for those scheduled in conjunction with WSAC conferences. The member will be reimbursed for actual expenses up to a maximum of \$250 for each meeting.

### **Other Member Travel Related to Association Business**

WSAC will pay or reimburse other members travel expenses when approved by the Executive Director when the meeting/activity is directly related to Association business and activities.

## **Part 2 – Conflict of Interest**

### ***This policy applies to all Directors entitled to vote in accordance with the Association Bylaws, and to Alternate Directors acting on behalf of a Director.***

The Directors and Officers of the Washington State Association of Counties (“WSAC”) owe a duty of loyalty to the Association, which requires that in serving WSAC they act, not in their personal interests or in the interests of others, but rather solely in the interests of WSAC. Directors and Officers must have an undivided allegiance to WSAC’s mission and may not use their position as Directors or Officers, information they have about the WSAC, or WSAC’s property, in a manner that allows them to secure a pecuniary or other material benefit for themselves or their relatives [for purposes of this Policy, “relative” means spouse or significant other living in the same household (“life partner”), brothers or sisters (by whole or half-blood), life partners of brothers or sisters (by whole or half-blood), ancestors, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and life partners of children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren]. Accordingly, a Director or Officer may not use his/her position at WSAC for personal gain or to benefit another at the expense of WSAC, its mission, or its reputation.

A conflict of interest may arise when a person has an existing or potential financial interest or other material interest that impairs, or might appear to impair, his/her independence or objectivity in the discharge of responsibilities and duties to WSAC. This policy is intended to protect WSAC’s interests when it is contemplating entering into a contract, transaction, or arrangement that might benefit the





## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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private interests of a member of WSAC's Board of Directors or an Officer of WSAC. This policy is also meant to aid Directors and Officers of WSAC in performing the duties imposed upon them by the laws of the State Washington and the United States of America with respect to their management responsibilities and fiduciary obligations to WSAC. WSAC is committed to transparency and openness in its operations.

Every Director and Officer must discharge his/her duties in good faith, with the degree of care that an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances. This requires using common sense, being diligent and attentive to WSAC's needs, and making thoughtful decisions in the best interest of WSAC. A Director or Officer may not take personal advantage of a business opportunity that is offered to WSAC unless the Board of Directors of WSAC first determines not to pursue the opportunity.

Each Director and Officer must protect the confidential information of WSAC and must not use confidential information of WSAC for his/her personal benefit, or use such confidential information or his/her position as a Director or Officer to the detriment of WSAC. Confidential information is information obtained through the Director's or Officer's position that has not become public information.

### **Direct or Indirect Financial or Other Material Interest**

Contracts, transactions or arrangements of WSAC in which a Director or Officer has a direct or indirect financial or other material interest are not prohibited, but are subject to scrutiny. Any such proposed contract, transaction, or arrangement (collectively, "Arrangement") is to be reviewed to determine that it is in the best interests of WSAC.

For purposes of this Policy, a Director or Officer has a direct or indirect financial or other material interest in a proposed or existing Arrangement if he or she, or one of his/her relatives (a) has a substantial financial interest directly in the proposed or existing Arrangement; or (b) has a substantial financial interest in any other organization that (i) is a party to the proposed or existing Arrangement; or (ii) is in any way involved in the proposed or existing Arrangement, including through the provision of services in connection therewith (an "involved organization"); or (c) holds a position as trustee, director, officer, member partner, or employee in any such party or involved organization.

### **Substantial Financial Interest**

A Director's or Officer's financial interest will be considered substantial if it involves (a) an ownership or investment interest representing more than 1% of the outstanding shares of a publicly traded company or 5% of the outstanding shares or comparable interest of a privately owned company with which WSAC has or is negotiating an Arrangement or which is an involved organization with respect to the Arrangement; or (b) an ownership or investment interest, which produces a significant amount of income for or constitutes a significant part of the net worth of the Director or Officer, or a relative of the Director or Officer, in any entity with which WSAC has or is negotiating an Arrangement or which is an involved organization with respect to the Arrangement; or (c) a compensation arrangement of any kind with any entity or individual with which WSAC has or is negotiating an Arrangement or with any involved organization with respect to the Arrangement.





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### **Disclosure of Interest and Participation in Meeting**

Each Director and each Officer of WSAC shall promptly disclose any direct or indirect financial or other material interest that he or she has or reasonably expects to have in any proposed or existing Arrangement with WSAC prior to the start of any negotiations with respect to such matter. A direct or indirect financial interest required to be disclosed under this Policy shall be disclosed in writing to the WSAC President (the "President"). Such disclosure shall include all material facts and supply any reasons why the Arrangement might be or not be in the best interest of WSAC. The President shall refer the issue to the Audit Finance & Investment Committee (the "Committee").

The Director or Officer who discloses a direct or indirect financial or other material interest in a proposed or existing Arrangement may make a presentation and respond to questions by the Committee, but after such presentation, he or she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and vote on, the Arrangement that results in the conflict of interest. As part of any such presentation, the Director or Officer shall provide to the Committee any reasons why the Arrangement might be or not be in the best interests of WSAC. The Committee shall determine whether WSAC can obtain a more advantageous Arrangement with reasonable efforts from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest. The Committee may, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed Arrangement. If a more advantageous contract, transaction, or arrangement is not reasonably attainable under circumstances that would not give rise to a conflict of interest, the Committee shall determine by majority vote of the disinterested members of the Committee whether the Arrangement is in WSAC's best interests and whether it is fair and reasonable to WSAC and shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the Arrangement in conformity with such determination.

### **Minutes of Meeting**

The names of the Directors and Officers who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a direct or indirect financial or other material interest in a proposed or existing Arrangement with WSAC, the nature of the interest, and the extent of the Director's or Officer's participation in the relevant Committee meeting on matters related to the financial or other material interest shall be recorded in the minutes for that meeting. The minutes also shall include a record of any determination as to whether the Arrangement was in the best interest of and fair and reasonable to WSAC, notwithstanding the interest, and the specific reasons supporting the determination, including any alternatives to the proposed or existing Arrangement, the names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the proposed or existing Arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection therewith.

### **Co-Investment Interest**

Each Director and each Officer of WSAC also shall disclose whether he or she, or one of his/her relatives, has personal funds invested with an investment manager providing, or expected to provide, investment management services to WSAC or in a professionally managed investment fund in which WSAC is invested or is considering investing (a "co-investment interest"). For the purposes of this Conflicts of Interest Policy, a "professionally managed investment fund" shall not include mutual funds or other similar investment vehicles generally available to the investing public on essentially the same terms. Such co-investment interest shall be disclosed in writing to President. Such disclosure shall include all



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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material facts, including, but not limited to, fee arrangements and any preferential treatment received by the Director or Officer, or one of his/her relatives, and not available to other investors necessary to determine whether such co-investment interest may provide a benefit to the Director or Officer, or one of his/her relatives. If the President determines that the co-investment interest may provide some advantage to the Director or Officer, or one of his/her relatives, the President shall refer the issue to the Committee. The Director or Officer who discloses a co-investment interest may make a presentation and respond to questions from the Committee but shall not be present during the discussion of, and vote on, how to address the co-investment interest. The Committee shall determine what, if any, corrective action is required with respect to the co-investment interest, including, but not limited to, terminating the investment relationship or seeking an adjustment in fee structure.

### **Failure to Disclose**

If the Committee has reasonable cause to believe that a Director or Officer has failed to disclose a direct or indirect financial or other material interest or co-investment interest subject to this Policy, it shall inform the Director or Officer of the basis for such belief and afford the Director or Officer an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose. If, after hearing the response of such individual and making such further investigation as may be warranted in the circumstances, the Committee determines that the Director or Officer has in fact failed to disclose a direct or indirect financial or other material interest or co-investment interest subject to this Policy, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

### **Employees Covered by Policy**

This Policy shall apply to the Executive Director.

### **Policy Supplements Applicable Laws**

This Policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state or federal laws or regulations governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit corporations.

## **Part 3 – Voting**

### **Authorization**

WSAC Bylaws:

- 2.7 Voting Rights
- 4.1 National Association of Counties – Board of Directors
- 4.2 National Association of Counties – Board of Directors Western Interstate Region
- 5.2 Election and Term of Office
- 5.5 Vacancies
- 5.6 Candidates for Office

### **Purpose**

The following procedures are established to conduct the annual, regular, and special election procedures for the following positions:

- WSAC President
- WSAC Vice President



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WSAC Secretary Treasurer  
 Regional Representatives  
 National Association of Counties Board of Directors  
 National Association of Counties Western Interstate Region Board of Directors

To support the elections and balloting procedures, WSAC shall acquire, maintain, and assure access to an online electronic election and balloting system.

### Annual and Regular Elections Balloting Timelines

Annual Date	Task/Event	Notes
At least 60 days prior to Annual Meeting	Candidate filing period begins	WSAC Executive Director or designee emails all Active Members advising of open positions and qualifications
	President appoints Elections Oversight Committee comprised of WSAC Past Presidents not on the ballot and other Active Member(s) as deemed necessary	
45 days prior to Annual Meeting	Candidates shall submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informational Materials</li> <li>• Ballot statements</li> <li>• Photos due</li> </ul>	
	Staff compiles and verifies election distribution list and assigns unique voting passcode to each Active Member.	
One month prior to Annual Meeting	Ballot(s) are prepared in online tool by WSAC staff	
Three weeks prior to Annual Meeting	WSAC Elections Oversight Committee reviews election materials, procedures, and process	
Two weeks prior to Annual Meeting	Election(s) opens	WSAC Executive Director or designee emails all Active Members their unique voting passcode
November	Annual Meeting	Computer voting station is available at for on-site voting; results are automatically tabulated and presented to WSAC Elections Oversight Committee for announcement to membership
	Elected officer(s) and representatives are announced to members at the Annual Conference, on WSAC website, WSAC newsletter, and press release	



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Vacancies that occur at least 60 days prior to the WSAC Annual Meeting, a special election shall be conducted via the following positions:

### Special Elections Balloting Timeline

Timeframe	Task/Event	Notes
Upon notification of the opening WSAC will post a Two Week Filing Period	Candidate filing period begins	WSAC Executive Director or designee emails all Active Members advising of open positions and qualifications
	President appoints Elections Oversight Committee Comprised of WSAC Past Presidents not on the Ballot and other Active Member(s) as deemed necessary	
WSAC prepares Election materials	Candidates shall submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informational Materials</li> <li>• Ballot statements</li> <li>• Photos due</li> </ul>	
	Staff compiles and verifies election distribution list and assigns unique voting passcode to each Active Member.	
	Ballot(s) are prepared in online tool by WSAC staff	
	WSAC Elections Oversight Committee reviews meeting materials	
	Election(s) open for 1 week	WSAC Executive Director or designee emails all Active Members their unique voting passcode
		Computer voting station available at WSAC ; results are automatically tabulated and presented to WSAC Elections Oversight Committee for announcement
	Elected officer(s)and representatives are announced to WSAC members and posted in a press release, on WSAC website, and in WSAC newsletter	



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### Part 4 – Dues

#### General & Transportation Dues

Calculation of dues is based on revenue projections and the Consumer Price Index. The forecasted CPI rate from OFM's "Washington Economic Forecast" will be used to calculate the change in total dues revenue for any given year. Dues are calculated using a two-tier system:

1. Basic Dues Assessed to Each County

Unless otherwise modified by the WSAC Board of Directors during the budget approval process and ratified by the membership at the WSAC annual conference the basic dues rate is set at \$2,500 per year for General and \$1,400 per year for Transportation.

2. Population

The remaining dues will be allocated to each county based on OFM's published projected county population for the budget year. King County population calculation is capped at 25%. 75% is allocated to the remaining counties based on the population projection.

### Part 5 – Standing Committees, Task Forces and Caucuses

#### **Audit, Investment and Finance Committee Charter**

##### **Purpose**

The primary function of the Audit, Investment and Finance Committee is to assist the Board of Directors and WSAC staff in fulfilling their fiduciary, financial and compliance oversight responsibilities. The Committee's primary duties and responsibilities are to:

- Serve as an independent and objective party to monitor the Association's financial and compliance reporting process and internal controls.
- Provide an open avenue of communication among the independent auditor, management and the Board of Directors.

Assure the safety, liquidity and yield of WSACs reserves and investments.

##### **Membership**

The Board of Directors shall appoint the Audit, Investment and Finance Committee from those names presented by the President. The committee shall consist of at least five active members of the Association. Additionally, the WSAC Vice President and the Secretary/Treasurer are mandatory members with two year terms. The remaining members serve a three year term.



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### Meetings

The Committee shall meet at least two times annually or more frequently as circumstances dictate, and where appropriate, should coincide with key dates in the Association's financial reporting cycle. There should be at least one meeting every two years where the external auditors attend without WSAC Staff present. Other Directors and members are permitted to attend any meeting, but Association management shall attend if only invited by the Committee. A quorum shall be a majority of the committee.

### Activities

- Select and approve the independent auditor(s), fees and scope of work for an annual or biennial Association financial audit to be performed based on staff's evaluation thereof. The engagement letter defining scope of services is forwarded to the President of the Board for signature.
- Instruct the independent auditor(s) that the Board of Directors is the auditor's client.
- Hold separate executive meetings with management and the independent auditor(s) to discuss the results of annual audits and related comments including:
  - The independent auditor's audit report, financials, and accompanying footnotes.
  - Any changes required in the planned scope of the audit plan.
  - Significant findings during the year, including the status of the audit recommendations from the prior years.
  - Any difficulties encountered in the course of audit work including any restriction on the scope of activities or access to required information.
  - Compliance audit findings.
- Review and approve fees for any non-audit services provided by the external auditor(s), and ensure that the provision of non-audit services does not impair the external auditor(s) independence or objectivity.
- Review, implement and prepare recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding investment and cash reserve policies.

### Reporting Procedures

- The Committee shall provide the minutes of meetings to all members of the Board at the next regular board meeting.
- As part of the annual or biennial audit results, the Committee shall inform the Board of Directors of any significant matters while carrying out their oversight responsibilities.
- Report either annual or biennial audit results to the Board of Directors.



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### **Columbia River Basin County Commissioners' Policy Advisory Group**

#### **Working Title**

Columbia River PAG

#### **Authorization**

##### *3.17.1 Standing or Temporary Committees, Task Forces and Caucuses*

The Board, by resolution duly adopted by a majority of the directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present, may designate and appoint one or more standing or temporary committees, task forces, or caucuses. The authorizing resolution of the Board shall stipulate the purpose, term, duties and scope of authorities of the committee, task force, or caucus.

The authorizing resolution of the Board should stipulate the purpose, duties and scope of authorities for each committee, task force and caucus. Each committee, task force, or caucus may have a liaison to the Legislative Steering Committee or the Board of Directors as determined by the authorizing resolution.

#### **Purpose**

Establish a forum for County Commissioners within the Columbia River Basin to interact, discuss, engage and partner with Washington State Department of Ecology in the implementation of the Columbia River Water Management Program.

RCW 90.90 provides the framework for implementing the Columbia River Basin Water Management Program and directs Ecology to aggressively pursue development of water supplies to benefit both instream and out-of-stream uses through storage, conservation and voluntary regional water management agreements. *Specifically, RCW 90.40.40 stipulates that: "(1) To support the development of new water supplies in the Columbia river and to protect instream flow, the department of ecology shall work with all interested parties, including interested county legislative authorities and watershed planning groups, adjacent to the Columbia river, and affected tribal governments, to develop a Columbia river water supply inventory and a long-term water supply and demand forecast."*

WSAC also endeavors for designated watershed planning units to include, Water Resource Inventory Areas (RCW 90.82) and Ground Water Management Units (RCW 90.44) adjacent to the Columbia River to interact, discuss, engage, and partner with the Washington State Department of Ecology in the implementation of the Columbia River Water Management Program.

#### **Participants**

Each member of a Legislative Body from a County that is included in the Eastern Region of the Washington State Association of Counties, and above *The Bonneville Dam* may participate. Additionally, it is expected that the Washington State Department of Ecology will provide consistent attendance and leadership from the Office of the Columbia River with support from other divisions as necessary.

#### **Specific Objectives and Responsibilities of the Group**

- Help Ecology identify policy issues with implementing the Columbia River Basin Water Management Program.





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- Provide Ecology with a series of perspectives from local government officials elected to govern counties in the Columbia River Basin.
- Assist Ecology in establishing criteria for ranking and selecting storage and conservation project and provide policy input into projects being forwarded from the Conservation and Storage Advisory Group.
- Assure that the interests of Watershed Planning Groups and Ground Water Management Units are fully represented in a meaningful and integrated manner.
- Provide guidance and advice to County Representatives representing the Columbia River Counties on a variety of committees including the Conservation and Storage Project Advisory Group, the Columbia River Policy Advisory Group and providing advice to DOE on project screening, criteria development, evaluation and project recommendations.

### **Governance and Decision Making**

- All Parties have equal representation and equal participation.
- The chair person shall be appointed by the WSAC President.
- Consensus outcomes are not required; where the group cannot reach consensus, the full range of options and perspectives will be carried forward as input to Ecology. If the Group determines to seek consensus on certain points, consensus is defined as an outcome everyone on the group can live with and support.
- While it is the intent for the Group to reach consensus and speak as one unified voice, the body desires to stipulate a voting procedure. Should a need for a vote occur, each county that meets the standard for participation shall have one vote, and shall cast vote as a whole. Vote is not divisible.
- Commissioners may designate, in writing, an alternate to represent their views. Alternates may vote for their respective county if so authorized, in writing, by the legislative authority.
- Members present comprise a quorum.
- Summary discussion points, recommendations and action items from the meetings will be documented.

### **Who Sets the Agenda and Provides Organizational Support**

The Chair, in conjunction with the Department of Ecology as supported by WSAC staff, will establish meeting agendas and work plan. Ecology shall provide the contractual resources to WSAC who in turn will provide for appropriate staff. All requests to add items to the agenda must be made in writing and in advance to the chair who will coordinate with WSAC and Department of Ecology staff.

### **Expectations of Participants**

- Participants shall make every effort to attend meetings. If an alternate is needed, the alternate will be briefed prior to meetings so as able to fully participate.
- Participants will represent their own personal views and expertise, and the perspectives of their county and/or watershed; this means participants are responsible for coordinating with their constituencies to bring perspectives forward.





## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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- Collaborative problem solving depends on mutual respect and careful listening among participants and active participation by all. Meetings will be conducted in a respectful atmosphere, where all parties seek to foster trust and understanding.
- Participants will strive for honest and direct communication and a focus on interests and needs, rather than positions. Participants will allow for open discussion, and the right to disagree, and will look for opportunities to find common interest, agreements and solutions.
- Participants will focus on clarifying their own view and interests; they will refrain from characterizing the views of other participants, especially in conversations to outside stakeholders and the press.
- Outside resources, experts in specific subject matters, and others may participate with the agreed upon permission of the participants.

### **Meeting Frequency**

It is the expectation that this group shall meet approximately once per month.

### **Washington State Association of Counties' Coastal Caucus**

#### **Working Title**

Coastal Counties Caucus

#### **Authorization**

##### *3.17.1 Standing or Temporary Committees, Task Forces and Caucuses*

The Board, by resolution duly adopted by a majority of the directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present, may designate and appoint one or more standing or temporary committees, task forces, or caucuses. The authorizing resolution of the Board shall stipulate the purpose, term, duties and scope of authorities of the committee, task force, or caucus.

The authorizing resolution of the Board should stipulate the purpose, duties and scope of authorities for each committee, task force and caucus. Each committee, task force, or caucus may have a liaison to the Legislative Steering Committee or the Board of Directors as determined by the authorizing resolution.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Coastal Counties Caucus is to:

1. Create a forum for County Commissioners, County Council Members, County Executives and county staff within the 14 Coastal Counties to interact, discuss, engage and recommend WSAC positions on issues relating to the waters of Puget Sound, Hood Canal and the Pacific Ocean.
2. Establish a partnership with Puget Sound Partnership in the development, implementation and evaluation of the Action Agenda to restore and protect Puget Sound by 2020.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### **Participants**

Each member of a Legislative Body, the County Executives and their designees from one of the fourteen Coastal Counties that includes:

Clallam, Jefferson, Mason, Thurston, Pierce, King, Snohomish, Skagit, Whatcom, Kitsap, Island, San Juan, Grays Harbor and Pacific.

Additionally, it is expected that the Puget Sound Partnership and the Washington State Department of Ecology will provide consistent attendance and leadership on issues of common interest.

### **Specific Objectives and Responsibilities of the Group**

- Assist the Puget Sound Partnership in the development, implementation and evaluation of the Puget Sound Action Agenda and provide policy input to the Leadership Council and Ecosystem Coordination Board.
- Encourage state agencies, the legislature and the governor to build new capacity and opportunities for the Pacific Coast similar to the Puget Sound.
- Provide state agencies, including the Department of Ecology, the Puget Sound Partnership and other state and federal agencies with perspectives from local government officials elected to govern Coastal Counties.
- Assure that the interests of watershed planning groups/organizations and Marine Resource Committees are fully represented in a meaningful and integrated manner.
- Support and inform County Representatives on the Puget Sound Partnership Ecosystem Coordination Board.

### **Governance and Decision Making**

- All Parties have equal representation and equal participation.
- The chair person shall be appointed by the WSAC President.
- Consensus outcomes are desired; consensus is defined as an outcome everyone on the group can live with and support. Absent consensus, decisions shall be made via a 2/3 majority of those members present to take a vote. Absent consensus or a majority the group shall be empowered to forward and discuss the full range of options and perspectives discussed by the Caucus.
- Summary discussion points, recommendations and action items from the meetings will be documented.

### **Organizational Support**

WSAC, utilizing financial support from the Puget Sound Partnership, shall provide staff and organizational support for this group. Puget Sound Partnership and other state agencies shall provide additional resources and support as available. WSAC will provide additional support and staff as time and resources are available. Meeting agendas will be developed in Coordination with WSAC staff, state agency contacts, and the Coastal Counties' Chair.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### **Expectations of Participants**

- Collaborative problem solving depends on mutual respect and careful listening among participants and active participation by all. Meetings will be conducted in a respectful atmosphere, where all parties foster trust and understanding.
- Participants shall make every effort to attend meetings. If an alternate is needed, the alternate will be briefed prior to meetings so as to be able to fully participate.
- Participants will represent their own personal views and expertise, and the perspectives of their county and/or watershed; this means participants are responsible for coordinating with their constituencies to bring perspectives forward.
- Participants will strive for honest and direct communication and a focus on interests and needs, rather than positions. Participants will allow for open discussion, and the right to disagree, and will look for opportunities to find common interest, agreements and solutions.
- Participants will focus on clarifying their own view and interests; they will refrain from characterizing the views of other participants, especially in conversations to outside stakeholders and the press.
- Outside resources, experts in specific subject matters, and others may participate with the agreed upon permission of the participants.

### **Meeting Frequency**

It is the expectation that this group shall meet approximately once per month.

### **Timber Counties Charter**

#### **Working Title**

Timber Counties Committee

#### **Authorization**

##### *3.17.1 Standing or Temporary Committees, Task Forces and Caucuses*

The Board, by resolution duly adopted by a majority of the directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present, may designate and appoint one or more standing or temporary committees, task forces, or caucuses. The authorizing resolution of the Board shall stipulate the purpose, term, duties and scope of authorities of the committee, task force, or caucus.

The authorizing resolution of the Board should stipulate the purpose, duties and scope of authorities for each committee, task force and caucus. Each committee, task force, or caucus may have a liaison to the Legislative Steering Committee or the Board of Directors as determined by the authorizing resolution.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Timber Counties Committee is to create a forum for County Commissioners, County Council Members, County Executives and county staff within the 29 Timber Counties to interact, discuss, engage and recommend WSAC positions on issues relating to:

- Federal land management, BLM and US Forest Service,
- Department of Natural Resources management of Federal Trust lands and “State Forest Lands” held in trust for Washington Counties,
- Forest Practices Board regulation and their impacts on counties,
- County relations with DNR/USFS Wildfire control/management
- Maintaining open communications and interaction with DNR, the Forest Practices Board, The Board of Natural Resources, the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, as well as the stakeholders associated with these entities.
- Providing input to the NACO Public Lands Steering Committee on all issues relevant to Washington’s counties.

### **Participants**

Each member of a Legislative Body, the County Executives and their designees from one of the 29 Timber Counties that includes:

Asotin, Chelan, Clallam, Clark, Columbia, Cowlitz, Ferry, Garfield, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lewis, Mason, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, Stevens, Thurston, Wahkiakum, Whatcom, Whatcom, Yakima.

### **Specific Objectives and Responsibilities of the Group**

- When required, the counties with “State Forest Lands” shall elect to a four year term, a County Commissioner/ Councilperson as their representative to the Board of Natural Resources.
- The elected representative is expected to maintain communications with the committee and to represent the beneficiary counties in Board of Natural Resources deliberations.
- When required, the committee shall nominate a group of candidates (3-5) for the Governor’s consideration when appointing a county representative to the Forest Practices Board.
- The appointed representative is expected to maintain communications with the committee and provide the Forest Practices Board with perspectives from local government officials elected to govern Timber Counties.
- Provide support to national efforts to maintain or increase the payments to counties under the “Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act” (SRS) and the Federal “Payment in Lieu of Taxes” (PILT).
- Assure that the of interests of local government officials elected to govern timber counties have a voice and the ability to participate in the land management planning efforts of National Forests in Washington State.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### **Governance and Decision Making**

- All Parties have equal representation and equal participation, provided that decisions related to the management of “State Forest Lands” shall be limited to counties containing such lands.
- The chair person shall be appointed by the WSAC President.
- Consensus outcomes are desired; consensus is defined as an outcome everyone on the group can live with and support. Absent consensus, decisions shall be made via a 2/3 majority of those members present to take a vote, provided that the election of the county representative to the Board of Natural shall be conducted in accordance with RCW \_\_\_\_\_. Absent consensus or a majority the group shall be empowered to forward and discuss the full range of options and perspectives discussed by the Caucus.
- Summary discussion points, recommendations and action items from the meetings will be documented.

### **Organizational Support**

WSAC, utilizing financial support from the Department of Natural Resources and an annual assessment from each timber county based on their proportional share of receipts from the SRS, shall provide staff and organizational support for this group. WSAC will provide additional support and staff as time and resources are available. Meeting agendas will be developed in coordination with the WSAC Timber Program Manager, state agency contacts, and the Timber Counties’ Chair.

### **Expectations of Participants**

- Collaborative problem solving depends on mutual respect and careful listening among participants and active participation by all. Meetings will be conducted in a respectful atmosphere, where all parties foster trust and understanding.
- Participants shall make every effort to attend meetings. If an alternate is needed, the alternate will be briefed prior to meetings so as to be able to fully participate.
- Participants will represent their own personal views and expertise, and the perspectives of their county and/or watershed; this means participants are responsible for coordinating with their constituencies to bring perspectives forward.
- Participants will strive for honest and direct communication and a focus on interests and needs, rather than positions. Participants will allow for open discussion, and the right to disagree, and will look for opportunities to find common interest, agreements and solutions.
- Participants will focus on clarifying their own view and interests; they will refrain from characterizing the views of other participants, especially in conversations to outside stakeholders and the press.
- Outside resources, experts in specific subject matters, and others may participate with the agreed upon permission of the participants.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### **Meeting Frequency**

It is the expectation that this group shall meet in conjunction with WSAC statewide conferences and additionally as needed. Additional meetings may be requested by committee members through the Timber Program Manager and shall be approved by the Committee Chair.

### **Legal Committee Charter**

#### **Working Title**

WSAC Legal Committee

#### **Authorization**

##### *3.17.1 Standing or Temporary Committees, Task Forces and Caucuses*

The Board, by resolution duly adopted by a majority of the directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present, may designate and appoint one or more standing or temporary committees, task forces, or caucuses. The authorizing resolution of the Board shall stipulate the purpose, term, duties and scope of authorities of the committee, task force, or caucus.

The authorizing resolution of the Board should stipulate the purpose, duties and scope of authorities for each committee, task force and caucus. Each committee, task force, or caucus may have a liaison to the Legislative Steering Committee (LSC) or the Board of Directors (Board) as determined by the authorizing resolution.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of the WSAC Legal Committee is to guide WSAC's policy in dealing with litigation and legislation that have statewide significance for counties. The Committee will be a forum for WSAC members, representatives of the Washington State Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (WAPA), county and WSAC staff, and outside counsel (when appropriate) to interact, discuss, engage and recommend WSAC positions and actions on issues relating to:

- Legislation or court cases that increase county liability;
- Requests for legal opinions from the Washington Attorney General, and;
- WSAC's participation in litigation on matters of statewide significance, including submittal of Amicus Curiae briefs.

It is not the purpose of the Committee to oversee legal matters relating to WSAC itself.

#### **Participants**

Members of the Committee will be appointed annually by the WSAC President who must take into consideration the overall balance of the committee with regard to county size, urban and rural composition, etc. The Committee must include:

- The WSAC President and Vice-President;
- Four members from the Board, two from eastern Washington, and two from western Washington. At least two of the members must be members of the WSAC Legislative Steering Committee;



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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- Four ex-officio members representing WAPA, two from eastern Washington, and two from western Washington; and
- An ex-officio member from the Washington Counties Risk Pool staff.

The Committee may invite the ex-officio participation of other attorneys or county staff as is deemed appropriate.

### **Specific Objectives and Responsibilities of the Group**

- Provide recommendations to the LSC and WSAC policy staff on legislation that has the potential to increase county liability;
- Provide recommendations to the Board on requests for legal opinions from the Washington Attorney General;
- Provide recommendations to the Board and Executive Committee on WSAC's submittal of Amicus Curiae briefs, and;
- Provide recommendations to the Board on WSAC's participation in litigation on matters of statewide significance, including a policy on when and how WSAC should participate in such matters.

### **Governance and Decision Making**

- The WSAC President shall serve as the chair of the Committee.
- Decisions shall be made via a 2/3 majority of those members present to take a vote. Absent a majority, the group shall be empowered to forward and discuss the full range of options and perspectives discussed by the Committee.
- Summary discussion points, recommendations and action items from the meetings will be documented by WSAC staff.

### **Organizational Support**

WSAC shall provide staff and organizational support for the Committee. Meeting agendas will be developed by staff under direction of the Chair.

### **Expectations of Participants**

To the best of their ability, members are expected to represent the best interest of counties from across the state. The work of the Committee will be conducted in a civil manner, and members are also expected to present opposing views in a respectful manner.

### **Meeting Frequency**

The Committee will meet when needed as determined by the Chair and WSAC staff. Additional meetings may be requested by committee members through WSAC staff and shall be approved by the Chair.





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### **Part 6 – Legislative Hosted Events**

WSAC shall reimburse Active Members eligible meal and beverage expenses incurred when hosting legislators to discuss WSAC and County legislative issues. These reimbursements are subject to the availability of funds, and members should verify the availability of funds prior to hosting and seeking reimbursement. All requests for reimbursement must be submitted on WSACs *Legislative Hosted Event Reimbursement Form*.

### **Part 7 – National Association of Counties County Leadership Institute**

The National Association of Counties (NACo) sponsors an annual “County Leadership Institute” designed to “enhance the capacity of county officials to identify and implement solutions that engage a broad network of interests that cross boundaries that traditionally separate different sectors and jurisdictions.”

Each year, WSAC shall solicit nominations from members to represent WSAC and that meet the following criteria:

- Have served at least one term and have been reelected to office;
- Be active in WSAC including in a leadership capacity, e.g., Board Member, LSC Member, etc.;
- Willing to continue serve in a leadership position;
- Able to report to the WSAC membership following completion of the program;
- Be an elected county official in a NACo member county; and
- NACo preference is given to those serving at least one term and no more than eight years in office.

WSAC Executive Board shall select one nominee and an alternate based on those members that express interest and meet the policy criteria.

WSAC will cover the registration cost of \$1,500 which includes four nights lodging, receptions, lunches and public transportation. Other program costs are supported by Institute sponsors.

The selected participant is responsible for travel to and from Washington D.C, some meals, ground transportation to/from airport, and incidentals.

### **Part 8 – Boards & Commissions**

Active WSAC Members are encouraged to self-nominate themselves to serve as WSAC’s representative on one or more of the many statewide boards, commissions, committees, task forces, and work groups for which positions are available through statute or by request of the authorizing body.





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The nomination process is:

- Positions that are vacant or that will become vacant prior to the following scheduled WSAC Board of Directors' meeting shall be announced no later than 3 weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting via the Association's communication system and/or email to the Active Members and applicable affiliate members.
- Active Members must apply through the Association's online statement of interest form.
- The deadline for submitting online statement of interest forms for vacant positions will be 10 days prior to the next regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting or, for Tier 2 positions as described below, as requested by the authorizing body.

The selection process is decided by the type of position listed below:

*Tier 1: Appointment or Nomination by full WSAC Board of Directors*

- Nominations for all Gubernatorial Appointments (except for those created under statute with extreme deadlines).
- Agency, Committee and Task Force appointments and nominations whose deadlines fall within regularly scheduled WSAC Board meeting windows.

*Tier 2: Appointment or Nomination by WSAC Executive Committee*

- Nominations for only those Gubernatorial Appointments with extreme deadlines recently created by statute.
- Agency, Committee and Task Force appointments and nominations when notification of the seat and the ensuing deadline both occur between WSAC Board meetings.

Every attempt will be made to bring as many decisions to the full WSAC Board as possible.

### **Board Appointment/Nomination Process**

For Boards or Commissions where the WSAC Board of Directors are responsible for nominating individuals, the following process will be used:

Board of Directors' may approve that all nominees be forwarded to the appointing authority for further review via voice vote.

For Boards or Commissions where the WSAC Board of Directors have appointing authority, the following process will be used:

For positions receiving two statements of interest, the Board of Directors shall conduct a hand vote to determine which candidate is the nominee/appointee. For positions receiving more than two statements of interest and where it is necessary to reduce the number of nominees, the board shall conduct an exhaustive ballot voting system until it is determined which candidate(s) are the nominee/appointee.



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The exhaustive ballot voting system provides that each board member cast a single vote for his or her selected nominee. If no candidate is supported by an overall majority of votes then the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and a further round of voting occurs. This process is repeated for as many rounds as necessary until one nominee has a majority of the Board of Directors present to vote. If more than one nominee needs to be selected, the Board shall continue to vote until a second nominee has a majority, and so on.

### **Notification of Board Appointment/Nomination**

WSAC staff is responsible for notifying applicants of the Board's decision(s) no later than 7 days after the board's vote.

A letter detailing the Board's action will be provided to the managing agency, authority, or director no later than 7 days after the board's vote.

Those nominated to the Governor for appointment by the WSAC Board of Directors must complete an online statement of interest with the Governor's Office. WSAC Staff will provide a link to this form via email no later than 7 days after the board's vote.

### **Upon Appointment**

Appointees of WSAC will represent the interests and positions of the Association and act in the best interest of all counties.

Those appointed to represent the Washington State Association of Counties may be asked to report back to the WSAC Board verbally or in writing, upon request, about activities and decisions of the Board or Commission on which they serve.

## **Part 9 – Amicus Brief Policy and Process**

### **General**

It is the intent of the WSAC Board of Directors to assure a systematic process to determine WSAC's *amicus curiae* participation in appellate judicial matters. WSAC shall follow the following process to make such determination. It is recognized that in some instances, WSAC has a significant interest in shaping the issues and arguments presented to the court. Recognizing that counties authorities and powers are defined by the state constitution, statutes, and regulations, WSAC should use the *amicus curiae* process to present its unique point of view;

1. The request to participate in an amicus brief must come from an elected county executive or from the majority of a county legislative authority;
2. Requests must be accompanied by a completed WSAC Amicus Curiae Brief Request Form, which is available on the WSAC website;
3. WSAC generally limits its involvement to Supreme Court cases. WSAC reserves the option to begin its involvement at the Court of Appeals, but will generally limit those instances to cases that relate to county structure or organic powers;



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4. WSAC will generally limit its involvement to land-use cases, cases that have substantial fiscal impacts, and those that relate to county structure or organic powers;
5. WSAC will utilize a committee comprised of policy, political, and legal expertise, to review cases and provide recommendations prior to committing to an amicus brief;
6. Authorization to participate in an amicus brief rests with the WSAC Board of Directors. However, when timing does not permit engagement of the full Board of Directors, the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors may authorize participating in an amicus brief;
7. WSAC does not provide direct financial support for court cases. Rather, WSAC involvement depends upon the availability of resources, including in-house general counsel, Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, elected prosecuting attorneys or appointed deputy prosecuting attorneys from individual county office(s), or special deputies, appointed by a prosecuting attorney from an individual county.



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### WSAC Amicus Curiae Brief Request Form

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- 1) Case name and court of appeals/supreme court number
- 2) Case history and current status
- 3) Briefing schedule, if available; otherwise probable filing deadlines
- 4) Give a concise and brief statement of the issue or issues on which amicus argument is desired
- 5) Give a brief statement as to whether and how the decision will broadly affect Washington counties
- 6) State in particular how the results sought would be of benefit to the counties
- 7) Explain how a WSAC brief would add a new or different perspective to the issue or issues
- 8) Give a brief summary of particular cases of interest, of which the applicant is aware, with citations
- 9) Is there any county that is a party on the other side of the case and/or that would oppose or would be expected to oppose WSAC's participation as amicus? If yes, please list, and state the known or anticipated bases for opposition  
  
Note: failure to fully answer question 9 (and all applicable parts thereof) shall preclude WSAC's consideration of this request.
- 10) What resources will you make available or are you aware of to assist in the preparation of the amicus brief?
- 11) Name of requester, representing



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### Part 10 – Federal Relations & Engagement Policy

The Washington State Association of Counties desires to initiate a plan of action to actively engage and participate in federal issue policy development and advocacy while striving to build positive working relationships with federal elected and appointed officials.

Within available resources, WSAC will:

1. Establish a process and set of operating procedures to develop an annual federal legislative agenda; and
2. Provide a framework for federal policy development and timely response.

#### **Partnership with the National Association of Counties**

WSAC intends to assure there is a mutual agreement and understanding with WSAC members on the distinct role that NACo and WSAC provide on federal issues/relations and assure roles are harmonized and not duplicative. To this end WSAC shall:

1. Strengthen the relationship and partnership with NACo.
2. Establish and maintain a memorandum of understanding between WSAC and NACo stipulating responsibilities and resource deployment.
3. Develop professional connections and relationships between respective NACo and WSAC policy staff.

#### **Federal Issues and Relations Committee Composition**

A Federal Issues and Relations Committee is herein established. By October 1st of each year, the President shall recommend a Federal Issues and Relations Committee roster for confirmation by the Board of Directors at a regular meeting.

Federal Issues and Relations Committee membership composition shall be guided by the following criteria:

1. Federal Issues and Relations Committee shall be chaired by WSAC's elected "Automatic Position" to the NACo Board of Directors.
2. All WSAC members that serve on the NACo Board of Directors and WIR Board of Directors shall be members of the Federal Issues and Relations Committee.
3. Only "Active Members" of the Washington State Association of Counties may be considered for membership on the Federal Issues and Relations Committee.
4. At least one WSAC member from each NACo Steering Committee should serve on the Federal Issues and Relations Committee.
5. At least one WSAC member from each county that participates on NACo Steering Committee should serve on the Federal Issues and Relations Committee.
6. At least one WSAC member from each of the congressional districts.
7. Active Members desiring to serve on the Federal Issues and Relations Committee may self nominate to be considered for appointment.



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8. Other “Active Members” that are engaged in regional federal agency issues and relations shall be eligible to serve on the Federal Issues and Relations Committee.
9. Preference shall be provided to “Active Members” with tenured experience as a county appointed or elected official.
10. Consider the appointment of ex-officio committee members that are engaged in federal issues and are a member of a WSAC affiliate or partner organization.

### **Federal Issues and Relations Committee Member Responsibilities**

The Federal Issues and Relations Committee members are responsible for the following activities:

1. Prepare and recommended a proposed federal legislative agenda for consideration of the membership at the Annual Meeting.
2. Use existing WSAC Policy Statements to guide its overall work.
3. In preparing a recommended federal legislative agenda, Federal Issues and Relations Committee members shall consider and review:
  - a. NACo Annual Legislative Agenda
  - b. Any individual Washington State counties’ adopted federal legislative agenda or positions.
4. Review all proposed NACo Resolutions from WSAC members seeking WSAC endorsement and support.
5. Limit their activities to the development, review, support, or opposition to NACo Resolutions, proposed federal legislation, agency actions or other federal issues and proposals that have direct implication and nexus to operations of county government in Washington State.
6. Consider only federal issues that are directly relevant to county government including those areas of interest of a recognized sub group of WSAC, i.e. Timber Counties, Columbia River, Coastal Counties, affiliate group.
7. Create a procedure to inform Washington state Congressional delegation and their respective staff on issues associated with County Government.

### **Operating Guidelines and Responsibilities**

1. Only approve positions and policies associated with federal issues when 2/3 of those members of the Federal Issues and Relations Committee present approve of the position or policy.
2. Consistent with WSAC bylaws and policies, the Federal Issues and Relations Committee may adopt operating procedures and policies to further guide policy development, committee and sub-committee structure, and principles for member engagement and participation in policy development and advocacy.



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### **Part 11 – Annual Legislative Agenda Approval Process**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the WSAC membership has the opportunity to review and approve the Legislative Steering Committee's recommendation for the WSAC annual legislative agenda, as is required in Section 3.18 of the WSAC Bylaws.

After the Legislative Steering Committee has adopted a recommendation for the annual WSAC legislative agenda, WSAC staff shall:

- Distribute the recommended annual WSAC legislative agenda to the entire WSAC membership for review; and
- Organize an forum for WSAC members to present and discuss the annual WSAC legislative agenda; and
- Conduct an election to determine whether the WSAC membership approves of the recommendation.

WSAC staff may not conduct the election sooner than 14 business days after the distribution of the recommendation. The election may be conducted electronically or through a meeting of the members.

In the event the election is conducted through a meeting of the members, the Quorum (2.12) and Manner of Acting (2.13) provisions of the WSAC Bylaws shall govern. In the event the election is conducted electronically, a simple majority of the votes cast shall be necessary to approve the recommended legislative agenda.

In the event that the WSAC membership does not approve of the recommendation, the Legislative Steering Committee may propose a new recommendation to the WSAC membership.





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### III CASH & INVESTMENTS

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ORIGINAL ADOPTION: *June 17, 2008*

BOARD APPROVED REVISION: *June 15, 2010*

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#### Part 1 – Cash Management

##### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Association's Cash Management Policy is to:

- Provide liquidity to fund the Association's ongoing operating needs;
- Act as a repository for the accumulation of cash reserves;
- Provide funds for fiscal stability during economic down cycles;
- Store funds earmarked for the Association's strategic needs;
- Assure resources are available in case of catastrophic loss or other need for immediate access to resources

##### **Investment Objectives**

WSAC investment objectives are designed to assure safety, liquidity and yield. The portfolio objectives listed in order of importance, are as follows:

- Preserve principal;
- Maintain sufficient liquidity to meet forecasted cash needs;
- Maintain an overall liquidity ratio of 50% of total reserves;
- Maintain a diversified portfolio in order to minimize credit or investment risk; and
- Maximize yield subject to the above criteria.

##### **Authorized Investments**

- US Treasury Securities-US Treasury notes, bills and bonds with remaining maturities not to exceed 720 days.
- Bank Obligations-Any certificate of deposit, time deposit, bankers' acceptance, bank note or letter of credit issued by a US Bank. Issuing banks must be FDIC insured.
- Funds- Any open end money market fund regulated by the US government under Investment Company Act rule 2a-7. Any investment fund regulated advised by a Registered Investment Advisor under SEC rule 3c7. Such fund investment guidelines must state that "the fund will seek to maintain a \$1 per share net asset value." The company's investment in any one fund may not exceed 35% of the assets of the fund into which it is invested.
- United States Government Obligations- Any obligation issued or backed (federal agencies) by the United States Government. No more than 25% may be invested on obligations of any one federal agency.
- Funds that meet the criteria established for the Washington State Treasury and Trust Funds as managed by the State Treasurer.

##### **Investment Committee**

The WSAC Audit, Investment and Finance Committee, Executive Director, and/or designee shall meet as necessary to review asset allocation, investment selection, portfolio performance and overall adherence to the investment policy guidelines. The WSAC Board of Directors possesses the fiduciary responsibility to direct and monitor the investment strategy and management. The Audit, Investment



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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and Finance Committee is authorized to delegate certain responsibilities to professional experts in various fields. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Investment Management Consultant. The consultant may assist the Investment Committee in: establishing investment policy, objectives, and guidelines; selecting investment managers; reviewing such managers over time; measuring and evaluating investment performance; and other tasks as deemed appropriate.
2. Investment Manager. The investment manager has discretion to purchase, sell, or hold the specific securities to meet the investment objectives.
3. Additional specialists such as attorneys, auditors, and others may be used by the Investment Committee to assist in meeting its responsibilities and obligations prudently.

The Investment Management Consultant and the Investment Manager shall not be employed by the same company or have any common financial interests that are not readily apparent and disclosed to the WSAC Audit, Investment and Finance Committee, Executive Director, and/or designee..

The Audit, Investment and Finance Committee shall not reserve any control over investment decisions, with the exception of specific limitations described in these statements. Managers are responsible and accountable to achieve the objectives herein stated. While it is not believed that the limitations will hamper investment managers, each manager should request modifications which they deem appropriate.

### **Part 2 – 401k Savings Plan Investment Policy Statement**

#### **Introduction**

Washington State Association of Counties (“WSAC”) sponsors a 401k Savings Plan (the “Plan”) for the benefit of its employees. The Plan is intended to provide eligible employees with long-term accumulation of retirement savings through a combination of employee and employer contributions to individual participant accounts.

The Plan is intended to satisfy the requirements of Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the “Code”) and contains a cash or deferred arrangement that is intended to satisfy the requirements of Code Section 401(k). The Plan is intended to comply with the requirements of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (“ERISA”) including, without limitation, ERISA’s requirements relating to the behavior of plan fiduciaries and the requirements of ERISA Section 404(c).

Plan participants have different investment objectives, time horizons, and risk tolerances. To meet these varying investment needs, participants and beneficiaries will be able to direct their account balances among a range of investment options, which span the risk/return spectrum. To the extent consistent with ERISA Section 404(c) and the applicable provisions of the Pension Protection Act of 2006, Plan participants and beneficiaries alone bear the risk of investment results from the investment options and allocations that they select.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### **Purpose**

This Investment Policy Statement (“IPS”) is intended to assist the Plan’s fiduciaries in making decisions about the Plan’s investments. The IPS outlines the underlying philosophies and processes for the selection, monitoring, and evaluation of investment options and investment managers utilized in the Plan. Specifically, the IPS:

- Defines the roles of those responsible for the Plan’s investments;
- Describes the criteria and procedures for selecting and monitoring investment managers/options; and
- Describes the manner in which investment options and investment managers that fail to satisfy established objectives will be managed.

The IPS will be reviewed at least annually and, if appropriate, can be amended to reflect changes in markets, Plan participants’ objectives, or other factors relevant to the Plan.

### **Investment Objectives**

The Plan’s investment options will be selected so as to:

- Provide a qualified default investment alternative, which will be a targeted retirement date investment designed to provide varying degrees of long term appreciation and capital preservation through a mix of equity and fixed-income exposure based on the participant’s age and target retirement date and which will otherwise meet the requirements of a “qualified default investment alternative,” pursuant to regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- Provide those participants who wish to direct their own investments with a diverse set of investment options in various asset classes so as to encourage and facilitate participant diversification while also offering a program that is understandable to participants;
- Provide a long-term, competitive rate of return for similar investment options; and
- Control administrative and management costs.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

**Trustee** – The trustee of the Plan is responsible for holding and investing Plan assets in accordance with the terms of the Trust Agreement.

**Recordkeeper** – The recordkeeper is responsible for maintaining and updating individual account balances-including information regarding plan contributions, withdrawals, and distributions-and otherwise acting on the directions of the Employee Benefits Committee (EBC) or its authorized delegates.

**Investment Committee** – The Investment Committee is responsible for managing all matters relating to the investment of the Plan’s assets. Currently, the members of the Investment Committee are consistent with the WSAC Audit, Investment and Finance Committee or its authorized delegates.

The primary responsibilities of the Investment Committee are to:



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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- Make sufficient asset classes with different and distinct risk/return profiles available under the Plan so that each Plan participant has the opportunity to prudently diversify his/her account given his/her investment circumstances;
- Prudently select investment options;
- Establish and maintain the Investment Policy Statement;
- Control and account for all investment, recordkeeping, and administrative expenses associated with the Plan;
- Monitor investment options as to fund levels, returns, manager performance to established benchmarks, and manager tenure;
- Remove/terminate options/managers not performing at acceptable levels; and
- Avoid prohibited transactions and conflicts of interest.

### **Investment Manager/Option Selection**

The Investment Committee will apply the following due diligence criteria in selecting each individual investment option that will be made available under the terms of the plan:

- Each investment manager shall be a regulated bank, an insurance company, a registered mutual fund company, or a registered investment manager/advisor.
- The investment manager/option must be highly correlated to the asset class of the investment option.
- The investment manager's/option's performance for the targeted retirement date investments shall be evaluated against a custom benchmark representing the asset classes contained in the glide path for each of the investments for one-, three-, and five-year cumulative periods.
- The investment manager's/option's performance shall be evaluated against the peer group's median manager's return for one-, three-, and five-year cumulative periods.
- The investment manager's/option's risk-adjusted net performance (Alpha and/or Sharpe Ratio) shall be evaluated against the peer group's median manager's risk adjusted performance.
- The investment manager/option under consideration shall have an inception date that is greater than three years.
- The investment manager/option shall have at least \$75 million under management.
- The investment manager's/option's fees shall be in the top two quartiles (least expensive) of their peer group.
- There shall be no perceived organizational problems-the same portfolio management team should be in place for at least two years.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Investment Committee may select an investment manager/option that does not meet one or more of the criteria defined above if the Investment Committee concludes that the investment manager/option is in the best interests of Plan participants.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### **Investment Monitoring and Reporting**

The Plan is intended to provide an appropriate range of investment options that span the risk/return spectrum. Further, the Plan's investment managers/options will allow Plan participants to construct portfolios consistent with their unique individual circumstances, goals, time horizons, and tolerance for risk.

The Investment Committee will monitor the performance of each investment manager/option on a periodic basis. Not less frequently than annually, the Investment Committee will meet to review whether each investment manager/option continues to conform to the criteria outlined in the previous section. Specifically, the Investment Committee will review the investment manager/option to confirm that the manager/option continues to adhere to the Plan's investment guidelines and to determine whether there have been any material changes in the investment manager's/option's organization or investment philosophy.

Further, the Investment Committee generally has determined that it is in the best interest of the Plan's participants that performance objectives be established for each investment manager/option. To the extent one exists, these performance objectives will be based upon the appropriate market index (e.g., the Russell or Lipper 1000 Value for large-cap value domestic equity manager) and the relevant peer group (e.g., the large-cap value investment universe for a large-cap value investment) for each investment manager/option, and, in the case of the targeted retirement date investment options, a custom benchmark comprised of the weighted market indices based on each such targeted date investment's corresponding point on the glide path.

The Investment Committee may place an investment manager/option on a "Watch List" and conduct a thorough review and analysis of the investment if and when any of the following occurs:

- An investment option's net performance falls below the median of their peer groups one-, three-, and five-year cumulative returns;
- A manager's three-year risk-adjusted return (Alpha and/or Sharpe) falls below that of the peer group's median risk-adjusted return;
- There is a change in the professionals managing the portfolio;
- There is a significant decrease in the investment manager's/option's assets;
- There is an indication that the investment manager/option is deviating from his/her stated style and/or strategy;
- An extraordinary event occurs that may interfere with the investment manager's/option's ability to fulfill their role in the future; or
- There is instability of the organization managing the investment manager/option.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the ultimate decision to retain or terminate an investment manager/option cannot be made by a formula. It is the Investment Committee's confidence in the investment manager's/option's ability to accomplish its stated objectives and the extent to which such objectives are consistent with the investment goals and philosophy of the Plan that will determine whether an investment manager/option will be retained.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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In addition to reviewing the performance of the Plan's investment managers/options, the Investment Committee will periodically review all costs associated with the management of the Plan's investment program, including:

- Expense ratios of each investment option against the appropriate peer group; and
- Costs to administer the Plan, including recordkeeping, account settlement (participant balance with that of investment), allocation of assets and earnings, and (when applicable) the proper use of 12b-1 fees to offset these fees.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### IV RECORDS & MEETING MANAGEMENT

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ORIGINAL ADOPTION: June 15, 2010

BOARD APPROVED REVISION: N/A

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#### Part 1 – Records Retention

The Washington State Association of Counties will consult with the Washington State Secretary of State in adopting and implementing a retention schedule.

#### Part 2 – Open Public Meetings Act Policy

The Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) is required by court order to comply with the Open Public Meetings Act, RCW 42.30 (hereinafter the “Act”). In order to ensure compliance with the Act, WSAC will utilize these guidelines.

##### ***The Open Public Meetings Act***

The Act provides that: “All meetings of the governing body of a public agency shall be open and public and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meeting of the governing body of a public agency...” RCW 42.30.030.

A “meeting” is defined as any meeting at which action is taken, and “action” is defined broadly to mean the “transaction of the official business” of the organization including “deliberations, discussions, considerations, reviews, evaluations, and final actions.” RCW 42.30.020

The Act defines “governing body” to include both a “multimember board” as well as “other policy or rule-making body...when the committee acts on behalf of the governing body...” RCW 42.30.020(2).

##### ***WSAC Guidelines***

WSAC will ensure that all meetings of the WSAC Board of Directors are open to any member of the public who wishes to attend. The calendar of the regular meetings of the WSAC Board of Directors will be posted on the WSAC website. The WSAC Board of Directors will not provide opportunity for public comment.

WSAC will also ensure that any meeting of the WSAC Legislative Steering Committee, Executive Committee, Timber Counties Committee, affiliate member, or other committee or subgroup of the WSAC Board of Directors will be open to the public when:

- 1) The committee or subgroup is authorized to act on behalf of the WSAC Board of Directors, and;
- 2) The committee or subgroup is undertaking an “action”.

The calendar of the regular meetings of all affiliates, committees, and subgroups will be posted on the WSAC website.





## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### Part 3 – Open Public Records Act

The Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) is required by court order to comply with the Open Public Records Act, RCW 42.56 (hereinafter the “Act”). In order to ensure compliance with the Act, WSAC will utilize these interim procedures.

#### ***The Open Public Records Act***

According to the state of Washington, a public record is “. . . information relating to the conduct of government or the performance of any governmental or proprietary function prepared, owned, used, or retained by any state or local agency regardless of physical form or characteristics.” [RCW 42.56.010(2)]

Public records can be handwritten or typewritten documents, electronic files, emails, web content, faxes, and other electronic formats (audio/photo/video).

#### ***WSAC Procedure***

1. All public records requests regardless of incoming format (email, phone, web form, etc.) are routed to the WSAC Public Records Officer (PRO - Michelle Nelson) and/or to the WSAC web form at <http://www.wacounties.org/wsac/publicrequest.asp>. Staff should not reply to requesters otherwise. If Michelle will be out of the office more than two days, forward the request to the WSAC Finance and Administration Director (Karlyn Shannon).
2. Upon receipt, PRO assigns the request a Public Records tracking number and sends acknowledgement to requester via tracked email and/or via registered mail citing that:
  - a. Within five (5) business days of receiving the request, WSAC will respond in one of the following ways:
    - i. Provide the record
    - ii. Provide an estimate of time needed to fulfill the response
    - iii. Deny the request, with an explanation of the denial
    - iv. Ask for clarification of the request for records
3. PRO coordinates collection of data/documents, working with appropriate staff as needed to fulfill the request.
4. Within the five day window, the PRO replies to requester with one or more of the options listed under (2) above.
5. If the request requires an individual to visit the office to view data, PRO will coordinate with Justin Kerrihard or other appropriate staff on the date, time and set up and correspond with the requester to schedule.
6. If the request requires large amounts of photocopying the requester will be notified of an estimated cost for copies. The fee is 15 cents per single sheet. The total is due in full prior to delivery of a complete request or, if the request is broken into installments, a deposit of 10% of the total must be paid prior to the delivery of the first installment.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### V PARTNERS

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ORIGINAL ADOPTION: *June 29, 1984*

BOARD APPROVED REVISION: *June 15, 2010*

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#### Part 1 - Affiliate Partners

The Bylaws of the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) provide that an association composed of administrative agencies in county government may become formally affiliated with the Washington State Association of Counties. Policies relating to affiliation are required by the bylaws.

##### **Affiliation Goals**

Affiliation between the Washington State Association of Counties and any other association of administrative agencies within county government shall be a formal relationship to aid in the development of policy and the exchange of information on matters of mutual interest between departments of county government and the legislative and executive leadership of all counties. Affiliation should serve the accomplishment of joint goals of better informed county officials and improved effectiveness in legislative matters.

##### **Application for Affiliation**

Associations composed of county administrative agency heads may apply for affiliation in they are appointed by the county legislative authority or a successor to a county legislative authority pursuant to a county charter. Such associations shall have a close, significant relationship with their appointing authorities for the development of policies or the administration of essential public services.

Associations lacking such relationship, as determined by the Washington State Association of Counties' Board of Directors, may apply to an existing WSAC affiliate to become an associate of such affiliate under such conditions as the affiliate may impose.

No association may apply for affiliation unless one-third of the counties have similar personnel participating in the association.

The Board of Directors shall review all affiliation applications and shall determine whether such application shall be presented to the Association for ratification.

##### **Responsibilities of Affiliate Associations**

###### ***Policies***

Policy positions of the Washington State Association of Counties shall control; policy positions of affiliates shall be consistent with those of the Washington State Association of Counties.

Affiliate associations may develop policy positions as recommendations to the Washington State Association of Counties which shall be referred to the Association. Such recommended policy positions, once approved, shall become the joint policy of the Washington State Association of Counties and the affiliate association and may be so characterized. If the Washington State Association of Counties fails to act upon any recommended policy positions of an affiliate association, the affiliate



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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association is free to pursue that issue in its own name only. All such affiliate positions shall be formally transmitted to the Washington State Association of Counties.

If the Washington State Association of Counties determines to preempt an entire policy area, the affiliate associations may only prepare recommendations to the Washington State Association of Counties and shall not act independently.

Legislative positions of affiliate associations shall be subject to the same process of review and approval as any Washington State Association of Counties legislative position.

Each affiliate association shall be granted one ex-officio member on the Washington State Association of Counties' Legislative Steering Committee. The affiliate association may select the ex-officio member as they choose; if no choice is made the affiliate association president shall serve. As an ex-officio member of the Legislative Steering Committee, affiliate association members shall have all rights as other members except to make motions or to vote on issues before committee.

### ***Meetings***

Affiliate associations shall have an autonomous existence. Affiliate association members may attend all meetings of the Washington State Association of Counties or its districts, but shall participate in the annual Washington State Association of Counties statewide meetings as required below.

### ***Bylaws***

Affiliate associations shall develop bylaws which, at a minimum, shall include a description of the association's membership, a dues structure for association expenses, the offices of the association and the means of selection. Affiliate association bylaws and amendments to such bylaws shall be approved by the Washington State Association of Counties' Board of Directors.

### ***Publications***

Affiliate associations may produce articles for Washington State Association of Counties publications or separate publications for which the Washington State Association of Counties will provide reproduction and mailing services, as approved by the Board of Directors or the Executive Director.

### ***WSAC Conferences***

Affiliate associations are encouraged to register for WSAC conferences and hold affiliate meetings in conjunction with the Association's events. Affiliate associations will receive meeting space and other event benefits at no charge if a majority of their members attending the affiliate meeting registers for the WSAC conference. If the affiliate association members do not register for the WSAC conference, a room fee and other hard costs may be charged to the affiliate association. Affiliate association leadership shall coordinate with WSAC staff to develop shared programming of interest to members of both the affiliate and WSAC. As a portion of the Washington State Association of Counties' business meeting at the annual conference, each affiliate shall present a substantive report on issues of concern to the affiliate association. The report shall be reproduced, in summary form, and provided to all Washington State Association of Counties members and affiliate association members. Affiliate associations may not schedule programming or social events at the same time as WSAC's vendor fair.



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### **Research**

Affiliate associations may be requested to participate in research projects of the Washington State Association of Counties.

### **Affiliation Termination**

The affiliation relationship between the Washington State Association of Counties and an association of county administrative agencies may be terminated by submitting to the Washington State Association of Counties' Board of Directors an approved resolution of the affiliate association seeking termination. In addition, the Washington State Association of Counties' Board of Directors may initiate termination of an affiliation. The Board of Directors action relating to any affiliation termination shall be sent to each member of the affected affiliate. No termination shall occur unless approved by the membership of the Washington State Association of Counties.

## **Part 2 – Organizational/Business Partners**

### ***Formerly known as the Associate Member Policy***

The Bylaws of the Washington State Association of Counties provide that the Board of Directors shall approve an organizational/business partner membership policy (ARTICLE 2 MEMBERSHIP, Section 2.2, **Qualifications for Membership**).

The Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) has a provision within its bylaws to offer an opportunity to public and private firms and individuals with a public service interest to become a special category of “organizational/business partner” members. Business partner members are **non-voting** members and do not participate in WSAC's legislative policy development, serve on the Board of Directors or committees, nor do they participate in any business meeting. Membership is not automatic. The Association's Board of Directors may deny membership. The Association's Board of Directors also reserves the right to limit business partners' participation at certain meetings.

The Association encourages those who have an interest in public service to counties to become a business partner. Some business partners may find publications and research materials invaluable, some may be interested in keeping up to date on county legislative issues, while other may want to take advantage of reduced fees for conferences and vendor fairs. Benefits of WSAC business partner membership include:

### **WSAC Events**

- Lower registration fees for WSAC events including the Association's annual conference and professional development courses.
- Opportunities to serve on panels and as resources for our meetings.
- Opportunities to exhibit during WSAC's annual conference with 1) lower registration fees 2) priority booth placement and 3) additional sign recognition as a Business Partner Member.
- Preferential sponsor opportunities for Association conferences.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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- Opportunities to host receptions and special functions in collaboration with certain Association meetings.

### **WSAC Communications and Resources**

- Early notice of all conferences, workshops and other meetings of interest for which Business Partner Members can participate.
- Subscription to Association newsletter.
- Access to a County Officials member directory.
- Select Association reports.

### **Promotion**

- Firm or organization names will be listed:
  - On the WSAC website.
  - In the annual conference program.
  - Rotating opportunities to be featured as a Business Partner on the Association website and in an Association newsletter.
- Reduced advertising fees for Association newsletter and other products as available.

### **Organizational/Business Partner Membership Dues**

- Dues shall be for a 12 month period from the time of application upon approval.
- For not-for-profit and public agencies the annual dues shall be \$250.
- For private firms with 15 or fewer employees or individuals the annual dues shall be \$350.
- For private, international or national firms with more than 15 employees, who may have a Washington based office with fewer employees, the annual dues shall be \$600.



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### VI CONFERENCES

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*ORIGINAL ADOPTION: July 9, 1986*

*BOARD APPROVED REVISION: June 15, 2010*

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#### ***Formerly known as the Convention Policy***

##### **Registration**

Active members in all membership categories of the Association may register for Association conferences at the member rate. Non-active members; other county elected officials or staff; state and federal public elected officials and employees; sponsors and vendors; and other non-county, association or private employees must register at the non-member rate.

**WSAC Officers:** WSAC Officers are encouraged to register and attend all Association conferences. The WSAC President shall have all travel, lodging, and registration fees for WSAC Conferences provided for during their term in office. Registration will be the responsibility of the current president, however all fees will be waived.

**Members and Non-Members:** All who attend will register for the entire event or by the day, if available. To maintain the financial integrity of the Association's conferences, partial registration or registration for individual meals or social events is not available.

**Members' Spouses, Partners and Dependents:** All spouses, partners, guests and dependents will be allowed to buy tickets for meals for which they plan to attend without registering for the conference.

**Sponsors:** Sponsors, unless registration is provided as a benefit of a sponsorship package, will register for the conference if they plan to attend more than the sponsored meal or reception. Additional meal tickets may be available to sponsors for purchase depending on the sponsorship packet.

**Vendors:** Vendors will pay a separate exhibitor registration fee to participate in the exhibitor fair, unless space is provided under a sponsorship or marketing agreement. Private, governmental, and service vendors may be charged at different rates. Vendors must register for the conference if they plan to attend more of the event than the exhibitor fair. Vendors will need to register all persons attending the conference from that firm or agency. Vendors may not purchase additional meal tickets. Vendors are prohibited from soliciting conference registrants outside of the exhibitor hall.

**WSAC Contractors:** Contractors who have responsibility for coordinating or presenting a part of the conference program, or who have been asked by the Association to attend the conference to assist with other responsibilities, need not register for the event. Hotel room and other charges may be billed back to the contractor's program at the discretion of the Executive Director.

No hospitality host associated with the Association's conferences will operate any hospitality suite at any time in conflict with the conference program, per approval of Association event staff. No hospitality suites will be permitted open during exhibitor fair hours. Failure to comply with this restriction will cause the host to be banned from the next annual convention of the association.





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**Early Bird Registration:** The member or non-member registration fee charged shall be determined, in part, by when the registration fee is paid. All registrations paid on or before the date set two weeks prior to the first full day of the conference shall be a lesser amount, as set by the officers or the Executive Committee. All registrations paid after the specified end of the Early Bird window dates shall be of a greater amount as set by the officers or the Executive Committee. Purchase orders and any other form of delayed payment which is actually paid after the conference shall pay the greater amount.

**Refunds:** All persons who register for an Association conference shall be entitled to a full refund of the registration amount, less an administrative fee, if the refund request is made more than seven days prior to the opening of the meeting. Substitutions are an option for those registrants who are unable to attend. No refunds are given six or fewer days before, or any time after, Association conferences as catering commitments are placed and irrevocable.

### **Invitation**

These policies apply only to persons who are invited to attend an Association conference for the sole purpose of their being present.

**Full Free Registration and Room:** Association staff and officers may develop a list of federal and state officials, National Association of Counties' officers, national or statewide personalities, top tier conference sponsors, select conference presenters and speakers, or dignitaries of any other description to be invited to the convention as guests of the Association. Generally, no full free Registration and Room will be provided to congressional, legislative, or agency staff. The list will require approval of the WSAC Executive Committee.

Persons receiving such an invitation shall pay no registration, shall purchase no meal tickets for spouses or dependents, and may receive a voucher following the convention to bill the association for incidental costs relating their attendance such as meals and accommodations while in transit. Travel costs, including mileage reimbursement and airfare, is only reimbursed for conference speakers and presenters and is not included for these guests.

This class of guests will be extremely limited.

**Free Registration and Meals:** Association staff may compile a list of persons who will not be required to pay for their registration and scheduled meals at the convention. This class of guests will be required to pay all other costs relating to their attendance at the convention, including travel and room charges. This list shall not require Executive Committee approval, but shall be shared with the Executive Committee prior to the conference.

This class of guests shall include most legislators and legislative staff who might be invited, state agency heads not included in the class above, NACo staff, and select conference sponsors and presenters.

**Free Meals:** The staff may invite persons who might wish to attend a single function of the convention or a series of concurrent sessions and provide them with free meal tickets and not require them to register. This class of guest may include spouses of panelists and speakers, some legislative staff and





## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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agency employees, or persons from the private sector who have an ongoing relationship with county government.

Costs relating to these guests shall be paid from the convention budget.

### **Open Public Meetings Act**

Association conferences will adhere to the Washington State Open Public Meetings Act in determining if individual sessions or meetings held as part of the conference agenda are subject to the law.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### VII WHISTLEBLOWER

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*ORIGINAL ADOPTION: November 13, 2012*

*BOARD APPROVED REVISION: N/A*

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#### **Purpose**

The Washington State Association of Counties requires board members, committee members, employees and other representatives to observe high standards of business and personal ethics, practice honesty and integrity, and comply with all applicable laws and regulations in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities.

#### **Definitions**

“Wrongful Conduct” is defined in this Whistleblower Policy as a serious violation of WSAC policy; a violation of applicable state and federal law; or the use of WSAC property, resources, or authority for personal gain or other non organization-related purpose except as provided under WSAC policy. This definition of Wrongful Conduct is not intended to be an exclusive listing of the illegal or improper activity encompassed by the Whistleblower Policy. Rather, the Whistleblower Policy is intended to serve as a means of reporting all serious improprieties that potentially impact the integrity and effective operation of WSAC.

“Compliance Officer” is defined as WSAC’s internal Legal Counsel, working with the President of WSAC. The Compliance Officer is responsible for investigating and resolving all complaints and allegations concerning Wrongful Conduct.

#### **Reporting Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of all board members, committee members, employees and other representatives to report Wrongful Conduct in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

WSAC encourages its board members, committee members and employees to share their Wrongful Conduct questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints regarding WSAC and its operations with someone who can address them properly. In most cases, a board member or committee member should present their concerns to the WSAC President. In most cases, the Executive Director is generally in the best position to address an employee’s area of concern. However, if any person is not comfortable speaking with the WSAC President or Executive Director or if any person is not satisfied with the WSAC President’s or the Executive Director’s response, the person is encouraged to speak with anyone on the Board with whom the person is comfortable in approaching, or to directly contact WSAC General Legal Counsel.

#### **No Retaliation**

No board member, committee member or employee who in good faith reports Wrongful Conduct will suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequence. An employee who retaliates against anyone who has reported Wrongful Conduct in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable persons to raise serious concerns within WSAC prior to seeking resolution outside WSAC.

#### **Acting in Good Faith**

Anyone filing a complaint or concern of Wrongful Conduct must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates Wrongful Conduct. Any



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

### **Confidentiality**

Reports of Wrongful Conduct or suspected Wrongful Conduct may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of Wrongful Conduct or suspected Wrongful Conduct will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

### **Handling of Reported Wrongful Conduct**

The Compliance Officer, or the person responsible for carrying out the Compliance Officer's role with respect to a report of Wrongful Conduct or suspected Wrongful Conduct, will acknowledge receipt of the report within five business days, unless such report was submitted anonymously. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

### **Accounting and Auditing Matters**

The WSAC Audit and Finance Committee shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls or auditing. The Compliance Officer shall immediately notify the Audit and Finance Committee of any such complaint and work with the Committee until the matter is resolved.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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### VIII MEMBER SERVICES COMMUNICATION POLICY

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*ORIGINAL ADOPTION: February 4, 2015*

*BOARD APPROVED REVISION: N/A*

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#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish member service communications expectations for the staff and contractors of the Washington State Association of Counties in the following four areas:

- Telephone
- Voicemail
- Electronic Mail
- Written Correspondence

#### **General Policy Parameters**

WSAC endeavors to be a remarkable organization. A keystone to this aspiration is to assure WSAC members, WSAC affiliate members, and our key partners and customers are communicated with and responded to in a prompt, timely, respectful and accurate manner.

WSAC is committed to assuring its staff delivers the highest quality of service to WSAC members, WSAC Affiliate members, fellow staff members and our key partners and customers. This policy establishes the aspirations, guidelines and standards for our staff and contractors.

WSAC staff and contractors are periodically engaged in work activities and events, i.e., conference planning, audit review, legislative session, that restricts their ability to provide prompt, timely, and responsive communication. During these times, WSAC staff and contractors, will work to respond to WSAC members within a reasonable timeframe.

Outstanding member service is assuring WSAC members, WSAC affiliate members, and our key partners and customers are satisfied and that questions, concerns, and issues are thoroughly answered and/or resolved, while communicating and adhering to WSAC policies and procedures.

It is critical to our organizational success that WSAC staff and contractors use language that our WSAC members, WSAC affiliate members, and our key partners and customers understand. Whether communicating internally within our organization or externally, we need to use messages and language that is understood, relevant and concise.

WSAC Executive Director is charged with monitoring performance associated with this policy and provide direction and training, as appropriate, to improve service.

This policy does not address in any way the manner in which to respond to confidential, legal, or public records requests. In each of those cases, WSAC Board of Directors has adopted separate policy or shall be reviewed on a case by case basis by WSAC General Counsel or outside legal counsel.

WSAC Members, Affiliates and Key Partners should receive the following service –

- Whenever possible, provide response within the timeframe sought.



## COMPREHENSIVE POLICY MANUAL

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- Be responded to within one business day acknowledging their communication and providing a timeframe for further response if required.
- Be treated with unfailing courtesy, respect, honesty and professionalism.
- Staff and contractors that know and understand their job so they are prepared to provide answers or know where to research for an answer if they do not have an immediate response.
- Staff and contractors that take the extra step when providing assistance.
- To be greeted in a friendly, open manner.
- Receive timely, complete, accurate, clear, concise, and understandable information.
- A genuine demonstration of interest regarding their question, interest, and need.
- Staff and contractors that actively listens to their request/questions. WSAC Staff will ask for clarification if necessary, and provide complete, knowledgeable, accurate information regarding their inquiry.
- Staff and contractors that make extraordinary effort to provide information, as appropriate, and provide referrals to other outside agencies/organizations when appropriate.
- Have problems and issues addressed promptly and resolved to the best of our ability.
- Be able to readily access the staff and contractors via phone, email, texting or in person.

### **Telephone**

WSAC shall assure each staff and contractor has access to current communication technology for office and cellular phones. Each WSAC staff and contractor shall assure that their direct office phone and cellular phone numbers are readily accessible via WSAC website, business cards and other published documents and directories. WSAC staff and contractors shall be guided by the following telephone policy parameters:

- Calls will be answered in a prompt, professional and courteous manner.
- To the degree to which technology permits, answering the telephone is every employee's responsibility.
- Callers who attempt to call a direct office line should generally be able to reach a live person during normal business hours if the person they are calling is unavailable.
- When answering a call WSAC staff and contractors shall:
  - Take time to discern and understand the nature of request before transferring a call;
  - Ask the caller questions to find out his or her concerns. Do not needlessly transfer the person because you did not listen to his/her question or problem;
  - If you have determined you are not the person they should talk to inform caller to whom they are being transferred; and



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- Ask the caller if they would like the direct telephone number of the person to whom they being transferred.

When answering the general WSAC telephone line:

- *"Washington State Association Counties, this is Jane Doe , may I help You?"*
- *"Good Morning. Washington State Association of Counties, Jane Doe speaking. May I help you?"*
- *"Hello. Washington State Association of Counties. May I help you?"*
- *"Good Morning. Washington State Association of Counties. May I help you?"*
- *"Good Morning, Washington State Association of Counties"*

When answering direct individual office line or cell phone line:

- *"Hello. This is Jane Doe. May I help you?"*
- *"This is Jane Doe, may I help you?"*

### **Voicemail**

Voicemail is an outstanding tool when used appropriately and can be a very effective and efficient manner to communicate and deliver information. WSAC staff and contractors shall be guided by the following voicemail policy parameters:

- Voicemail greetings should be kept current. It is each staff member's responsibility to check their messages and to change their greeting to reflect their schedule.
- Each employee's voice mailbox, attached to both their office and cell phone, should be checked frequently for messages and never fill up.
- As a general rule, callers should receive acknowledgement of their voicemail messages when staff returns to their desk, but no later than 24 hours on regular business days.
- It is recognized that WSAC staff and contractors are periodically engaged in work activities and events, i.e., conference planning, audit review, legislative session, that restricts their ability to provide prompt, timely, and responsive communication. During these times, WSAC staff and contractors will work to respond to WSAC members within a reasonable timeframe.
- If the caller's message requires a lengthy follow-up needing more time to reply, it is suggested to either place a short phone call, email, or text to the caller to inform them that you have received the message and will call back to talk more fully later.
- Anytime a WSAC staff member or contractor is not accessing their voicemail (because of either work or leave) within 24 hours, they shall use a personalized extended absence greeting to provide the caller the following information:
  - The period of time you are away from the office/desk, with a clear statement of when you will return to reply;
  - If there is an alternate phone number that you can be reached at – if possible;



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- If there is another contact to assist in case of the need for immediate assistance while you are away;
  - If you are, or are not checking voice mail during your absence;
  - Instructions to press “0” if the caller needs immediate assistance.
- Staff and contractors shall assure their Outlook calendar is up to date and that you let other staff members know when you will be out of the office, especially for extended periods of time. This will prevent staff members from unnecessarily transferring a caller to your voice mail.

### **Electronic Mail (e-mail)**

#### *DOES NOT INCLUDE PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS*

The use of electronic mail (email) is fundamental to successful organizational operations and is one of the most useful tools to disseminate information and communicate with WSAC members, affiliates, partner organizations and peers.

Communication via WSAC e-mail system shall be conducted in a professional and appropriate manner in addition to being cognizant and respectful of the public records environment. Nothing shall be put in an e-mail message that would be viewed as offensive or inappropriate for the business environment. All information contained in an e-mail message has the potential to be considered public information.

WSAC staff and contractors shall be guided by the following electronic mail policy parameters:

- Frequently check their electronic mailboxes for messages.
- Always read their e-mail messages very carefully and respond in a timely manner as provided for herein. If an immediate answer and/or it may require a lengthier follow-up than normal, acknowledge receipt of the e-mail message, but note that more time is needed to research and respond.
- Emails that request information or require response should be returned in a timely manner. As a general rule, emails should be returned within 24 hours.
- Forward emails as appropriate. If the e-mail message requires a response from someone else, acknowledge that you have received the e-mail message and note that you are going to forward it to the appropriate person who should handle the request. Include the person's name and e-mail address in your e-mail response.
- Always include a closing sentence in your e-mail message, giving them options to contact you if he or she needs additional assistance.
- WSAC email shall not be used for:
  - Private commercial purposes;
  - Excessive personal use as defined by interfering with the proper performance of that person's duties;





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- Harassment or bullying;
- Intentional propagation of viruses;
- Disrupting or damaging other systems by carrying out acts of a malicious or disruptive manner.
- It is expected and acknowledged that WSAC email will be used for both formal and informal communication to WSAC members, affiliates, partners and others.
- Formal email communications shall be formatted and written in a professional manner. The content of such an email should be the same standard as a letter and/or memorandum and:
  - Attention shall be paid to provide complete, clear, and concise information with the option to use e-mail or call if there are additional questions;
  - A salutation and a complimentary closing should always be used when writing or responding to such email inquiries.
  - Always check for spelling, punctuation, and formatting errors prior to sending the e-mail message.
  - Care should also be taken to ensure that all responses provide the appropriate information to the recipient by checking for consistency and accuracy.
- Try and minimize the size of emails.
- Be careful when sending emails containing personal or confidential information. Check the recipient's name, especially if there is more than one person with the same name.
- In general, avoid sending sensitive information in an email
- Try to minimize the use of graphics, different fonts, formats stored within a document when sending it as an attachment to an email.
- Do not open attachments from unknown sources.
- You should endeavor to ensure that personal email cannot be interpreted as official WSAC correspondence.
- Be careful when using humor or sarcasm within a message as this can be easily misinterpreted.
- As a professional courtesy, the addressing personnel will "Reply to All" when responding to all emails.
- When "group" emails are being sent from WSAC staff or contractors, it is professional courtesy to send these to "bcc" group lists while acknowledging within the body or greeting of the email what group the email was sent to. i.e., Clerks of the Boards/Councils, County Engineers, etc
- Anytime a WSAC staff member or contractor is away from their desk (for work or leave) and are unable or not checking email within 24 hours, they shall use an automatic out-of-office reply that provides the following information:



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- The period of time you are away from the office/desk, with a clear statement of when you will return to reply;
- If there is an alternate manner you may be contacted – if possible;
- If there is another WSAC contact to assist you in case of the need for immediate assistance while you are away with contact names and their email addresses and phone numbers of the persons they may contact during your absence;
- If you are, or are not checking email, or infrequently checking, your email during your absence;
- WSAC emails that are directed at external contacts shall contain a signature block including the following:
  - Name
  - Title
  - Washington State Association of Counties
  - WSAC Affiliate if applicable
  - Mailing address
  - Direct Office Phone Number
  - Cellular Phone Number
  - WSAC and/ where applicable Affiliate Web Address

Staff Name

Title


Washington State Association of Counties

WSAC Affiliate if applicable

206 Tenth Ave SE | Olympia, WA 98501-1311

D. [XXX-XXX-XXX](#) | C. [XXX-XXX-XXXX](#)

"To help improve counties' capacity to serve their citizens."

Join the conversation:   

[ejohnson@wacounties.org](mailto:ejohnson@wacounties.org)

[www.wacounties.org](http://www.wacounties.org)

WSAC Affiliate Web Address as appropriate

*This e-mail may be considered subject to the Public Records Act and as such may be disclosed by WSAC to a third-party requestor*

- Signature box or salutations shall not include any quotes, messages, personal sayings, etc.



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### ***Written Correspondence - Includes Letters and Memoranda***

*DOES NOT INCLUDE PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS*

While less, and less frequent, there are still times when a formal written response via letter or memoranda is appropriate, necessary and effective manner to communicate. When such occurs, the following policy parameters are in place:

- A written letter provides a timely response to their request or an interim communication explaining the delay. A timely response for letters is within five business days.
- Information regarding their inquiries is complete and accurate.
- Communication in the form of a letter or memorandum shall be written in a professional and courteous manner.
- The written response to internal or external correspondence shall be clear, concise, and informative.
- Letters and memoranda should be written in a professional format consistent with WSAC Stylus Guide.
- Letter should include the following:
  - Date
  - Recipient's complete name and address
  - Salutation
  - The response in the body of the letter
  - The complimentary closing
  - Typed signature
  - Writer and typist (PB:vl) if applicable
  - "enclosure" or "attachment" notation
  - "copy - cc:" notation (if applicable)
  - The final paragraph of the letter should include a person's name and telephone number to call if additional information is needed or if the recipient has more questions.
- Memoranda should include the following:
  - Date,
  - Recipient's name
  - Sender's name
  - Subject in the heading
  - Response in the body of the memorandum.



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- Letters and memoranda should be proofread carefully, not only for spelling and punctuation, but also for consistency and accuracy.
- Letters and Memoranda on letterhead.

Each letter and Memoranda should include a contact phone number and e-mail address, if appropriate.