



Aiken County Government

Office Protocols

Aiken County Government Center

Policies & Procedures

Adopted by Aiken County Council on January 7, 2014

ALL POLICIES CONTAINED IN THIS MANUAL ARE TO BE FOLLOWED. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF DEPARTMENT HEADS/ELECTED OFFICIALS TO ENFORCE POLICY. FAILURE TO FOLLOW OR ENFORCE GOVERNMENT CENTER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES WILL RESULT IN FURTHER ACTION UP TO AND INCLUDING DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

Common Areas

Intent:

Common areas include lobbies, corridors and other spaces that are open and used by everyone. It is easy for these areas to be neglected since they do not belong to any individual or department. We all share the responsibility of maintaining the professional appearance of these areas.

PROTOCOL:

- Use department areas and conference rooms for meeting and group discussions instead of hallways and corridors.
- Keep common areas clear of clutter, boxes and trash.
- Leave items such as plants and artwork in their designated location.

Tobacco Use

Intent:

To provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for Aiken County staff and the public

- Smoking and tobacco products are prohibited in or on the property of the Aiken County Government Center. Specifically, smoking, the use of smokeless tobacco products, and the use of unregulated nicotine products (e.g. “e-cigarettes”) will be strictly prohibited in indoor and outdoor spaces, including parking lots. This policy prohibits all tobacco products such as smoking, chewing, and dipping products and restricts cigars, cigarettes, shisha pipes, pipes, water pipes (hookahs), electronic cigarettes, and all forms of smokeless tobacco such as chew, snus, snuff, sticks, strips and orbs.
- Improper disposal of tobacco products is considered a littering offense and may be subject to fines.

Conference Rooms

Intent:

Conference rooms are provided to support the conferencing and/or collaboration needs of our teams. Conference rooms have varying layouts to reflect the various needs of employees.

PROTOCOL:

- Common area conference rooms must be reserved in advance using the method approved by the County Administrator.

- Conference rooms will be set up in different formats. Please seek a room that is already set up to meet your needs.
- Generally, no eating is allowed in Conference rooms. Exceptions must be approved by the County Administrator.
- Reservations must be honored. Planned start and completion times must be maintained.
- If you find that you do not need the room that you have reserved, cancel the reservation using the approved method.
- A closed door indicates “Do Not Disturb” unless there is an emergency. An open door indicates interruptions may be permitted.
- The room must be cleaned and the furniture returned to its original layout when use of the room is complete.
- Alert maintenance at 642-1599 for any repairs needed in the conference rooms.

General Housekeeping

Intent:

To maintain clean work areas for all groups that will be using them and to have our entire organization presentable at all times

PROTOCOL:

- Leave room/area in a clean condition for all users.
- The County Administrator or his designee will inspect departments to ensure compliance on a quarterly basis.

Lighting

Intent:

To conserve energy

PROTOCOL:

- Turn off task lighting at your workstation at the end of the day/use.
- Turn off general lighting at the end of the day.

Open Office Areas

Intent:

Open office areas were designed to make it easier for us to work together. In these areas we must remember to respect our co-workers by being aware of their need for privacy and by keeping work areas clean and uncluttered.

PROTOCOL

- Avoid reading documents on others’ desk or computer monitors, and do not take materials from others’ offices or file drawers unless authorized to do so.
- Be considerate when you approach someone at his/her desk. Ask if they can be interrupted at the moment, or if you should come back later.
- Avoid eavesdropping on others’ telephone conversations, and use conference rooms or other designated areas when you need to make a private call.
- Keep desktop telephone ringers at a low volume and answer calls promptly.

- Forward all calls directly to voicemail when you are away from your desk.
- Use your headset or handset rather than the speakerphone for phone calls and checking voicemail.
- Turn off the sound alarm on mobile devices while in the office.
- Use visual notifications rather than chimes, alarms and other sound effects on computers.
- Walk around your workstation rather than shouting over the top of it or leaning over the panels.
- Use the main aisles or corridors, rather than cutting through other workstations.
- Ask the occupant before you borrow a chair from a workstation, and be sure to return it when you are finished.
- Utilize your storage and work surface for your work items first, personal items second. Be sure that your personal items do not extend into a co-workers' space or into common spaces.
- Keep the tops of all file or storage cabinets free of any miscellaneous objects.

Do Not Disturb/Open Work Areas

Intent:

To provide a way to achieve privacy in open plan work spaces

PROTOCOL:

- Every employee has the authority to request privacy in his/her workstation.
- The privacy request will be designated by the placement of the "Do Not Disturb" sign in a readily visible location at the individual's workstation.
- The privacy sign must indicate when the individual will be available, and not exceed two hours.
- Fellow employees are asked to respect the privacy sign and refrain from interrupting the individual at his/her workstation unless the situation is deemed an emergency or has a time constraint that falls within the privacy period.

Restrooms

Intent:

To maintain a clean environment for all users

PROTOCOL:

- Place trash in appropriate container(s).
- Remove all personal items.
- Leave room in clean condition for the next user.

Break Rooms

Intent:

To provide a central location for employee lunch breaks or other breaks as needed throughout the day

PROTOCOL:

- Dispose of any garbage and recycling before you leave the breakroom.
- Return furniture to its original position before you leave. Do not remove tables or chairs from the break room.
- Label all food items you store in the breakroom with your name and the date.
- Remove all perishable items from the refrigerator each Friday.

- Anything not labeled and dated will be discarded on Friday afternoon.
- Take all empty containers home promptly. There will be no storage provided in the break room.
- Do not leave dirty dishes in the sink. Dishes left in the sink will be discarded.
- Wipe down counters after use.
- Empty all drink cups and containers in sink prior to placing in trash receptacles.

Personal Space/Departmental Space

Intent:

To have a professional work environment throughout the facility

PROTOCOL:

- Aiken County will provide refrigerators in designated break rooms. No personal refrigerators are allowed.
- Holiday decorations will be provided by the County. No outside decorations are allowed in the building.
- Music in the work place can be a disturbance to others. In private offices, employees may listen to music in a manner that does not disturb others. The use of music devices outside of private offices may be allowed at the discretion of the department head. When music is played outside of private offices the use of “in ear” headphones (e.g. no headphones covering the ears) is required.
- In an effort to keep carpets free of spills, Aiken County employees are required to keep all beverages sealed or lidded. Coffee cups must have a lid and sodas should remain sealed when not in use.
- Aiken County will provide adequate space for lunch breaks. Employees will not be allowed to eat at their desk or any other office space.
- No personal space heaters in offices.
- Extension cords will be provided by Buildings & Grounds. No outside extension cords are allowed.
- Offices must be kept free of clutter to prevent fire hazards.
- Department head and Buildings & Grounds supervisor must approve all holes placed in walls to hang pictures.
- No tape is allowed on walls.
- Aiken County will provide potted plants in the office. No outside potted plants are allowed in the building.
- No pets are allowed in the building with the exception of service animals.
- Keep work areas (copy/fax/printer) clean by picking up your materials promptly. Materials left more than one day may be discarded.
- All paint colors must be approved by the Administrator’s Office.
- Any “artwork” to be located anywhere inside the new County building must be approved by the Administrator’s Office.
- Personal items such as photos or awards should be limited to 2 items.
- Only diplomas and certificates of practice (limited to 3) are allowed to be hung on walls. These items must be installed by Buildings & Grounds.

Solicitation

Intent:

To maintain a professional work environment.

PROTOCOL:

- Solicitation of items must be approved in advance by the Public Information Officer. The County will provide a bulletin board located in a central location for this purpose. Discussion and exchange of items should occur outside of working hours (during breaks or after hours). The Solicitation policy includes employees.

Cellular Phones

Intent:

To avoid unnecessary distractions during work hours.

PROTOCOL:

- Cellular phones should be on silent mode when in the office.
- Personal use of cellular phones should be limited and all personal calls should be taken in a private area so as to not distract co-workers during these calls.
- Cell phones must not be used in public areas of the building.

Maintenance

Intent:

To provide a process for both routine and emergency maintenance activities to be handled in a controlled, trackable, and proactive manner

PROTOCOL:

- Emergency maintenance should be reported directly to Buildings & Grounds immediately by calling 642-1599.
- Routine maintenance should be reported through the method identified by the County Administrator's office.

Storage Rooms

Intent:

To provide designated storage areas.

PROTOCOL:

- All storage areas located within a Department area are under the control of the Department head.
- Storage areas are expected to be kept clean and organized.
- Personal belongings should not be kept in storage rooms for longer than 2 days.