



I. POLICY

A. Purpose

Washoe County is committed to fostering a healthy, positive, and productive work environment where all individuals are treated with respect, dignity, and civility. This policy recognizes that Washoe County's most valuable asset are its officers and employees and reflects Washoe County's commitment to recognizing that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

This policy sets forth Washoe County's expectations of its employees, officials and persons representing Washoe County in their interactions with the public and each other and reflects the core values set out in the Washoe County's Statement of Values.

As figureheads and representatives of Washoe County, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) agree to exemplify the values and conduct set forth in this policy.

Persons appointed by the BCC to boards shall exemplify the values and shall adhere to the conduct set forth in this policy and may be removed for failure to do so.

While on duty, employees and other representatives of Washoe County are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with the Statement of Values and this Code of Conduct. Off duty conduct that, at a significant level, negatively affects County operations or brings discredit to the organization may violate this Code of Conduct. Violation of this Code of Conduct may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including discharge.¹

B. Washoe County Statement of Values

The Board of County Commission has adopted the following Statement of Values:

Integrity: We are dedicated to uncompromising honesty in our dealings with the public and each other in conformance with our Code of Conduct.

Effective Communication: We believe in simple, accurate, and clear communication. We encourage the open exchange of ideas and information.

Quality Public Service: The County exists to serve the public. We put the needs and expectations of citizens at the center of everything we do and take pride in delivering services of the highest quality.

¹ This policy is not meant to be an exhaustive statement of the County or its employees' rights and duties under applicable law. The County reserves the right to administer this policy and interpret, change or rescind the policy in whole or in part, with or without notice or consideration. In addition, changes to applicable state and federal laws or regulations may require the County to modify or supplement the policy.



C. Code of Conduct

1. Honesty

- A. Employees and other representatives of Washoe County shall strive to be accurate, sincere, and straightforward, to seek out the truth, and to avoid misrepresentation.
- B. Employees and other representatives of Washoe County shall be honest in their dealings with the public and each other. Honesty is the cornerstone upon which public trust is built.

2. Respect

- A. Employees and other representatives of Washoe County shall acknowledge the fundamental dignity and worth of others and their opinions.
- B. Employees and other representatives of Washoe County shall attempt to resolve conflicts at the lowest level in a respectful and straightforward manner.
- C. Respect creates an environment in which ideas can be exchanged, concerns can be appropriately voiced, problems can be solved, and employees' contributions to the organization are recognized, and requires employees and other representatives of Washoe County at all levels to interact in a professional and dignified manner.

3. Duty to Serve the Public

- A. Employees and other representatives of Washoe County shall commit themselves to high professional, ethical, and moral standards in their dealings with the public and their fellow co-workers.
- B. Duty to public service embraces the unique responsibility to respond in emergencies, to work as a team and with a spirit of cooperation within the organization and our community.
- C. Duty to public service requires that Washoe County employees and other representatives of Washoe County be accountable to each other, the County organization, and the public for their conduct at work and for their off duty conduct which negatively affects Washoe County.



- D. Employees and other representatives of Washoe County will not speak on behalf of Washoe County or give the perception that they represent Washoe County through any communication platform, unless authorized to do so.

4. Tolerance

- A. Employees shall accept and value differences and refrain from negative judgment based solely on those differences.
- B. Washoe County, as an organization and a community, is strengthened by a diversity of experiences, backgrounds, preferences, perspectives, and talents.
- C. The ability to embrace diversity promotes and enhances our progress.

5. Fairness

Employees and other representatives of Washoe County shall endeavor to listen, understand, and perform their duties without prejudice or favoritism.

6. Courtesy

Employees and other representatives of Washoe County shall be courteous, polite and considerate in dealing with each other and the public.

7. Professionalism

Employees and other representatives of Washoe County shall behave in a professional manner with each other and the public, demonstrating Washoe County values and an adherence to the Code of Conduct in all interactions.

8. Promoting a Positive Work Environment – No Bullying

- A. Washoe County prohibits bullying. Employees shall not bully or intimidate others. Bullying can be defined as repeatedly mistreating another individual, causing emotional distress and/or physical harm.
- B. Examples of bullying may include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Using language toward another individual which can be considered rude, disrespectful, disparaging, belittling, insulting or offensive.
 - Behavior which can be perceived as threatening or intimidating.



- Work related harassment such as excessive and unwarranted micromanaging, imposing unrealistic deadlines, or a proven uneven distribution of workload.
- Spreading gossip or rumors about an individual or persuading others to turn against the individual.
- Intentionally excluding an individual from a relevant work-related activity or intentionally impeding an employee from successfully performing their job duties.

II. ADMINISTRATION OF POLICY

A. Responsibility

Every department head, manager and supervisor are responsible for the administration of this policy.²

B. Enforcement Process

Washoe County is committed to promoting this Code of Conduct. You may file a complaint with your supervisor, the department head or Human Resources. An investigation will be conducted about the content of your complaint and appropriate action taken.

This is an internal policy that applies to officials and employees and is not intended to be used or relied upon by members of the public.

²As approved by the Board of County Commissioners on March 19, 2024, this code establishes a biennial training requirement for employees on bullying.