

## **10.5 SAFETY AND SECURITY**

The County expects that all employees will share the responsibility for safety and security of themselves, fellow employees, the public and guests, and maintain reasonable care when using County property.

Individual Elected Officials/Department Heads and all employees are expected to participate in formulation of and to comply with safety practices relating to their work and the County. Safety practices may include, but are not limited to, the following: wearing proper safety and work apparel, using personal protective equipment, using well-maintained tools and equipment, keeping work and storage areas neat and organized, maintaining familiarity and compliance with safety standards, adhering to REPORTING systems, wearing uniforms and ID badges at all times, closing and locking doors, files, desks, etc. REPORTING any suspicious activities and observing facility access procedures.

- The County seeks to minimize the risks to employees and the public and expects each employee to act responsibly by:
  1. Complying with federal, state and local regulations
  2. Encouraging safety and security practices among peers
  3. Adhering to departmental safety procedures
  4. REPORTING violations of safe practices to the Elected Official/Department Head, and Human Resources as appropriate
  5. REPORTING on-the-job accidents and/or incidents in a timely manner to the Elected Official/Department Head and Human Resources as appropriate
  6. REPORTING crimes and suspicious situations to Elected Officials/Department Heads and Sheriff's Office
  7. Providing testimony, as necessary, in the event that officials require participation during an investigation or a situation involving legal action
  8. Seeking the assistance of the employee assistance provider in dealing with counseling and coping situations
  9. Being aware of potentially violent situations and treating them conscientiously

In addition, the County may voluntarily conduct periodic risk management audits such as review of driving records, safety compliance, and cash control systems. Employees who are found to be negligent may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **A. IDENTIFICATION BADGE**

#### **Purpose**

Austin County is committed to providing a safe and secure workplace for all employees. As part of this goal, the County is instituting an identification badge system for County employees that may be mandatory to enter county buildings during certain conditions.

This policy specifically applies to the County Identification Badge which will be issued to all county employees. The Identification Badge Policy serves the dual purpose of readily identifying County employees and other authorized personnel, while providing measured protection against unauthorized personnel and intruders from entering designated secure work areas. The system is effective only if there is active cooperation and compliance by all employees at all times. Any laxity in compliance and enforcement subjects the entire system to failure. In the best interests of the County and to make identification as easy as possible, one standard will be implemented Countywide. Human Resources will provide Identification Badges for all Departments, with the exception of the Sheriff's Office and EMS, who has their own identification badge for all law enforcement employees.

**1. Elected Officials/Department Heads**

Elected Officials/Department Heads shall ensure that the requirements of this policy are enforced for their department.

**2. Supervisors**

It shall be the direct responsibility of Supervisors and other assigned personnel, who may be designated in writing by their Department Head, to enforce the requirements of this policy.

**3. All Employees**

The County requires appropriate display of employee Identification Badges at all times by all employees on any County work site. An exception is made for law enforcement assignments that require anonymity, and EMS, Road & Bridge and the Sheriff's Office personnel that are identified wearing a county uniform. For the purpose of this Policy, employees include regular full-time, regular part-time and temporary employees.

**B. CONTROL AND ISSUANCE OF  
BADGES Employee Identification Badges**

**1. Description of Badges**

The employee badge consists of a hard plastic card, which on the face reflects the county logo, department name, employee id number, an accurate photograph of the employee, the employee's first and last name.

**2. Replacement Cards**

When a badge is damaged, lost, stolen or misplaced, the employee must immediately report the incident to the Department Head.

The department will in turn notify Human Resources through an official form. The County requires that both the employee and department head sign the official form. Identification badges will only be re-issued if the identification badge is damaged, lost, stolen, misplaced, or the appearance of the employee changes to the degree that the photograph is not a recognizable resemblance of the employee. Human

Resources will immediately destroy any replaced Identification Badges that the department returns.

- a. The cost to replace a card the first time will be \$10.00
- b. Any subsequent replacements will cost \$25.00

### **3. Implementation of Identification Badges**

1. Upon initial implementation of this Policy, all incumbent employees will be issued Identification Badges. Following implementation, new employees will be issued badges during Orientation in Human Resources.
2. Identification Badges will be issued by Human Resources, with the exception of the Sheriff's Office and EMS, who will issue identification badge for all law enforcement and EMS employees.
3. Badges are the property of the County. On a terminating or retiring employee's last workday, the employee's supervisor shall require the employee to surrender the badge, and the supervisor shall return the badge to Human Resources.
4. Each Employee must not have more than one County Identification Badge in his or her possession at any one time.

## **C. REQUIREMENTS AND ENFORCEMENT Employee Identification Badge**

The County expects all employees to fully comply with all provisions of this policy. Elected Officials, Departments Heads and Supervisors must enforce all provisions.

1. Employees must wear their Identification Badge at all times. Employees must display their Identification Badges on the front of the employee in a configuration such that the entire face of the badge is clearly visible to any other person. The employee must either clip the Identification Badge to a piece of outer clothing, or wear the Identification Badge around their neck on a chain or necklace. The County strictly prohibits any employee from defacing or altering their Identification Badge with stickers, decals, markings, or by any other means. For safety, employees performing certain jobs, such as maintaining or operating equipment, or any other potentially hazardous activity should either clip the ID badge to their clothing or put the badge in their pocket.
2. Each employee is responsible for safeguarding his or her own Identification Badge, and must immediately report any lost Identification Badge to their supervisor.
3. Any employee that does not comply with this policy will be subject to disciplinary

action as deemed appropriate by such Department Head.

#### **D. IDENTIFICATION BADGE HOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Do not lend your Identification Badge to anyone
- Do not allow unauthorized individual into any secure area
- Ensure that all external accesspoints are properly secured
- Do not leave badge on dash of vehicle or other locations were exposed to extreme temperatures
- Do not fold, bend, or mutilate your Identification Badge
- Do not use your Identification Badge improperly
- Do not leave your identification badge unattended
- Immediately notify your Elected Official/Department Head if your Identification Badge is no longer in your possession
- Immediately notify your Elected Official/Department Head of any difficulties or problems with any Identification Badge