### Deschutes County Finance Department Robert Tintle - Chief Financial Officer

March 2024

## **CASH HANDLING STANDARDS AND PRACTICES**

### A. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Cash Handling Standards is to provide guidelines for the proper management of cash and cash receipts for those employees responsible for oversight, receiving, handling, and safeguarding cash and cash equivalents. These Cash Handling Standards are for the protection not only of County monies, but also those employees charged with cash handling.

Department heads are responsible for designing, implementing and monitoring effective "cash" handling controls. In addition to designing and implementing effective cash handling systems, department heads must periodically review their systems to ensure they are still working as intended. It is critical that department heads promote an effective internal control environment. Effective internal controls minimize the potential for errors or irregularities to occur, and if they do occur, will detect such errors or irregularities in a timely manner during the normal course of business. If issues do occur with cash handling, a properly developed control environment limits and prevents staff from being implicated.

### **B. DEFINITIONS**

Cash includes the following:

- Currency (paper money and coin)
- Checks
- Debit/Credit card payments

Other physical monetary instruments

### C. CASH HANDLING RESPONSIBILITIES

Millions of dollars in cash, check and credit card transactions are processed by the County each year. Funds collected by County staff are "public funds," defined by the Oregon Revised Statutes 295.001(19).

Those involved in the cash handling have custodial responsibility and liability for the proper handling of public funds. It is in every employee's best interest to see proper cash handling policies and procedures integrated into the day-to-day operations of each department.

Employees with cash handling responsibilities must receive department-specific training and instructions on how to perform those duties and be provided with information about Deschutes County Cash Handling Standards before accepting payments or preparing deposits. Departments are also strongly encouraged to provide regular ongoing training relevant to cash handling duties for all staff involved in deposit preparation and transport, and for staff who supervise those cash handling duties.

### 1. Safety Standards

a. Cash counting activity should take place out of public view and in low staff traffic areas, ideally in offices or areas that are monitored by security cameras. Where necessary,

- facilities should have design and office layout characteristics which incorporate the safety of employees handling cash.
- b. County Management should take all steps practical to create a working environment that reduces the likelihood of robbery. In the event of a robbery, three priorities are as follows:
  - i. The preservation of human life and health is the top priority (both County staff and members of the general public).
  - ii. Identify the criminal if possible and notify law enforcement.
  - iii. The recovery (not defense) of County funds should be undertaken by law enforcement or others with sufficient training for this purpose.
- c. County Management should ensure that cash handling staff are aware of exit paths and implications for securing cash in the event of emergency that will not cause delays in evacuation.
- d. County Management should take reasonable steps to minimize the frequency of staff carrying cash off premises.
- e. Individual staff should never accept cash from customers in a one-on-one environment that is not an established cashiering site.
- f. For large cash transfers, armored transport should be arranged.
- g. Departments may request assistance from the Financial Department to implement processes or technologies that balance staff safety, internal controls, and process efficiency.

### 2. Internal Control

- a. Written departmental cash handling procedures are required and will be filed with the Finance Department and Office of the County Internal Auditor. Any modifications in such procedures must be sent to the Finance Department prior to implementation. The procedures must include appropriate steps for safeguarding and reconciliation of cash.
- b. Procedures must provide appropriate segregation of duties such that one employee does not have custody, accounting, and supervisory authority over the transaction. Additionally, the custody of cash will be managed, documented, and prohibit transfers to staff outside the established procedure. These duties will be designed to prevent management (or others) from overriding controls for cash handling.
- c. Job assignments should be changed periodically so that it is more difficult for users to collaborate to exercise complete control of a transaction and subvert it for fraudulent purposes. This should include those with cash handling responsibilities taking regular vacations.
- d. Management or other staff <u>without custody responsibilities</u> will perform timely reconciliations for cash receipts throughout the year comparing the department's recorded revenue in the accounting system to supporting departmental records. Any discrepancies will be examined and resolved in coordination with the Finance Department and/or departmental staff as appropriate.
- e. Incoming mail that has the potential to contain cash payments will be opened by a person other than the employee recording the deposit in the County's accounting system unless compensating controls account for custody of these assets.
- f. Those handling cash will be trained on US currency security features such as watermarks, security threads, and color sifting ink.
- g. All unresolved overages/shortages during cash balancing should be documented and appropriately recorded in the general ledger system. Cash overage or shortages occur

- because of unintentional error. This is different from a loss. Loss of cash funds occurs because of negligence, unlawful action, or natural disaster. All losses should also be documented and communicated to management for employee performance and internal control review as soon as possible.
- h. Concerns about cash handling issues, internal control weakness or unusual activity should be reported to the Human Resources Department, the Finance Department, the Internal Auditor Department, and/or departmental management. Anonymous communications are acceptable.

### 3. Accepting Payments

County employees accepting payments should follow the following requirements:

- a. Receipts for all incoming monies are required.
- b. When cashiering, always complete the customer transaction before moving on to the next customer or starting another task.
- c. Currency should be counted in the presence of the person presenting it for payment. A copy of the receipt should be given to the customer.
- d. Every check or money order must be reviewed for completeness as follows:
  - i. Verify that Account holder's name and address is included on the check. Also, a daytime phone number is preferred.
  - ii. Verify that the check has a bank name listed, and that the routing number, customer's bank account number, and check number are encoded on the bottom edge of the check.
  - iii. Note the date. Do not accept a postdated check (a check with a date in the future), or agree to hold the check for future deposit.
  - iv. Verify the amount is correct and the numerical amount matches the amount written in words. In general, banks will honor the written amount over the numerical amount.
- e. All checks should be restrictively endorsed immediately upon receipt, either with a stamp or manually, as part of that transaction. The endorsement language may vary between departments, but generally must include "For Deposit Only, Deschutes County {Department}." Some restrictive endorsements may occur electronically with remote deposit.
- f. Always include accurate general ledger account coding for every transaction.
- g. Always balance cash to documentation every time custody is transferred, dating, and signing off on the documentation each time for a complete audit trail.
- h. Any time an unresolved cash discrepancy arises during the balancing process, it must be reported in accordance with the County's policy "Bank Accounts and Cash Handling" for cash over and short.
- i. If a bill or check is suspected as being counterfeit, request an alternate form of payment. Contact the Finance Department of Office of the County Internal Auditor for additional information.

### 4. Prohibited activities:

- a. Never leave cash unattended; if an employee leaves, even briefly, cash must be secured.
- b. Never take customer cash (currency, credit cards) out of the customer's view.
- c. Never use cash drawers as petty cash to pay for expenses.
- d. Never cash employee or other checks with money from cash receipts.

- e. Foreign currency or checks are not to be accepted.
- f. Never write down credit card information or record it on a document.
- g. Never deposit cash in a bank account other than the one prescribed by the Finance Department.
- h. Never take cash home for "safe keeping" except in rare circumstances jointly preauthorized by the Finance Department and the department head.

### **5. Making Deposits**

Departments receiving any monies are responsible for safekeeping and timely deposit. Departments should do the following:

- a. Endorse checks with a restrictive endorsement immediately. Some restrictive endorsements may occur electronically with remote deposit.
- b. Deposit all monies within one business day, unless compensating controls have been authorized by the CFO.
- c. Deposits should be made more frequently if the department lacks secure safekeeping for holding funds.
- d. All monies held overnight should be in a secure area.
- e. If a department finds isolated events where it is unable to comply with the next business-day deposit requirement due to unusual circumstances beyond its control, it is encouraged that the department document the reasons for the occurrence and retain the documentation in department files, as this may prove beneficial to the department in the event of an audit.

Credit card payments are completed when a batch settlement is transmitted. All credit card payments must be settled and submitted for deposit daily. A Settlement Report must accompany a completed cash receipts record. The Settlement Report (goes by various names depending on the credit card reader or machine used for processing), is a summary of transactions for a specific date or date range and lists the total number of transactions and the total dollar amount. Most Settlement Reports will subtotal by types of credit cards used, and by charges versus credits/refunds.

Guidelines for completing a bank deposit:

- f. Date the deposit slip.
- g. Note the department or index on the deposit slip.
- h. List coin and currency separately in area provided.
- i. List checks and include support for mathematical adding (adding tape or electronic list of additions to arrive at the total).
- j. Sort all cash in front of checks, faced and in order of denomination.
- k. Endorse all checks.
- I. Include Traveler's checks with checks.

### 6. Change Funds and Petty Cash

- a. Change funds should be reconciled at the time of deposit of the receipts for which they provide change. Change funds will be replenished from the cash receipts at the time of deposit. The replenished funds should agree to the amount authorized.
- b. Change funds should be counted at the beginning and end of shifts and appropriate documentation retained to evidence the custody of cash.

- c. Petty cash funds must be controlled such that access is only available to authorized persons.
- d. At any point in time, the cash on hand and receipts supporting purchases should equal the total authorized petty cash amount.
- e. Petty cash funds will be reconciled to the expenditure receipts at least monthly, and upon a request for replenishing. Requests for funds to replenish the petty cash fund will be entered in the accounting system along with copies of the receipts for all expenditures.

### 7. Reconciliation and Monitoring

- a. Departments should reconcile cash receipts to internal records daily and report deposits to the Finance Department by recording in the County accounting system or other established procedure.
- b. The Finance Department reconciles the depository bank accounts daily with discrepancies resolved as soon as possible.
- c. Departments should reconcile accounts receivable at least monthly and investigate any variances. This includes documenting a process for handling of outstanding billings and the collection efforts made to resolve long-outstanding items.
- d. Billing adjustments, credits, write-offs, and other changes to customer accounts should be subject to supervisory approval or other oversight.

### 8. Merchant Compliance Standards

- a. Departments that accept credit cards, debit cards, or other forms of electronic payment will follow the County's Payment Card Policy. This includes obtaining authorization from the Chief Financial Officer before establishing an agreement with third-party merchant service providers and coordination with Information Technology on the implementation for accepting/ transmitting customer payment data.
- b. No County forms (paper or web-based) will request personally identifiable financial information (PIFI) such as credit card, debit card or e-check information.
- c. When PIFI such as credit card data is taken over the phone, it will be keyed directly into the point-of-sale device and never written down.
- d. Payment card processing equipment will be secured overnight and kept at the counter in a place not easily accessed by the public to avoid tampering and the introduction of "skimming" devices.
- e. Additional payment card compliance requirements are outlined in the Payment Card "Merchant" Policy.

### D. ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – Cash Over and Short Form

Appendix B – Assignment, Transfer, or Dissolution of Cash Drawers and Petty Cash Boxes Form

Appendix C – Checklist for Cash Receipts in County Departments

# Appendix A

### **CASH OVER/SHORT FORM**

(To be attached to deposit documentation or forwarded to the Finance Department)

Date:				
Department/ Office:				
Amount collected and deposited (A):	\$			
Anticipated receipts per Department records (B):	\$			
Difference (A) – (B); Over (Short) amount:	\$			
Explanation for difference:				
Cashier's Name(s):				
Cashier's Signature(s):				
Supervisor's Name:				
Supervisor's Signature:				
{If the difference equals or exceeds \$100, the Department Head must acknowledge}				
Department Head's Name:				
Department Head's Signature:				

# Appendix B

# ASSIGNMENT, TRANSFER, DISSOLUTION OF CASH DRAWERS AND PETTY CASH BOXES FORM

Department and location:	
the case of petty cash, expense receipts.	tain \$, plus any current payments received, or, in If the cash is found to be over or short, then an overage/ spendix A (above) and in compliance with the County's Bank
Use of Cash  ☐ Petty Cash (used for purchases only)  ☐ Cash/ Change Fund (used to produce o	hange when accepting payment)
9	nds, I agree to the following: dling standards and practices described in this document. es County's Bank Accounts and Cash Handling Policy.
New Custodian	
Printed Name:	
Signature:	Date:
Work Email:	Phone:
Resigning Custodian (use if transferr	ing custodian)
Printed Name:	
Signature:	Date:
Work Email:	Phone:
Finance Department Authorization	
Printed Name:	
Signature:	Date:
	Page 7 of 1

# **Checklist for Cash Receipts in County Departments**

# Cash includes the following: Currency (paper money and coin) Checks Debit/credit card slips Money orders Traveler's checks Bank drafts, etc. Tasic line in the second structure of the second struct

		Yes	No	N/A		
A.	General Control Procedures  Department designed and implemented internal controls.					
	<ul> <li>Have you established written accounting procedures for cash collection?         Procedures should be clear, comprehensive, and understood by staff.     </li> <li>Procedures should document the flow of receipts, receipting documents, controls over receipts, and the recording of transactions. Instructions should be comprehensive, generally understood and applied. Appropriate staff should acknowledge receipt and understanding of the procedures.</li> </ul>					
	<ul> <li>Are cash handlers familiar with US currency security features?</li> <li>Security features include:         <ul> <li>Watermark</li> <li>Color-shifting ink</li> <li>Fine-line and microprinting</li> <li>Security thread</li> <li>3D security ribbon</li> </ul> </li> </ul>					
	Do cash custodians regularly take vacations?					
	Are alternate staff members trained in accounting procedures?					
В.	Segregation of Duties  Represents the separation of incompatible duties and/or responsibilities and assures that one person is not able to conceal errors and/or irregularities.  Key duties include:  Collection/Processing – responsible for carrying out transactions.  Authorization – responsible for approving transactions.  Recording – responsible for entering transactions into the system.  Reviewing/Reconciliation – responsible for independent oversight of transactions.					
	<ul> <li>Are key duties separated among individual employees?</li> <li>No one person should handle a cash transaction from beginning to end.         Duties should be sufficiently segregated so no employee has custody, accounting, and supervisory authority over the transaction.     </li> <li>Individuals receiving cash do not prepare entries for non-cash accounting records, such as accounts receivable, the general ledger, or the general journal.</li> <li>In small departments, it is especially important to separate the handling of cash from the reconciliation of revenues.</li> </ul>					

			Yes	No	N/A
	0	Are bank or finance receipts compared to the deposit record by someone			
		other than the person preparing the deposit?			
		<ul> <li>In MUNIS, this would be receipt activity reported to the Finance</li> </ul>			
		department compared to deposit records.			
	0	Can anyone override cash receipt controls?			
		<ul> <li>The MUNIS system settings do not allow overrides.</li> </ul>		Ш	
_					
C.	In	coming Mail			
		Represents customer mail that has the potential to contain cash.	T	ı	ı
	0	Is mail opened and distributed by a person other than the cashier or			
		accounting personnel?			
	0	Are cash receipts witnessed when included in the mail?			
	0	Does someone independent of accounting log/account for the received			
		cash?			
	0	If so, is the log used as a check against the deposit or receipt record?			
	0	Does the person opening the mail immediately endorse negotiable			
		instruments with an appropriate county deposit stamp?			
		<ul> <li>Checks should be made payable to</li> </ul>			
		"Deschutes County department".			
		<ul> <li>All negotiable instruments received should be restrictively endorsed for</li> </ul>			
		the appropriate Deschutes County bank account.			
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D.	D 4				
٥.	V.	eceipting/collection controls			
	IV.	Represents controls over the amount of cash received over the course of the	-		or
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	0 0	Represents controls over the amount of cash received over the course of the misappropriated prior to being receipted is more difficult to trace than cash receipted.  Are receipts created in all cases, even if rejected by the customer?  Are all receipts recorded in MUNIS, cash register, on pre-numbered receipt slip, pre-numbered invoice, or other equivalent means?  All cash received should be evidenced through a controlled receipting process.  Are payment receipt forms pre-numbered and imprinted with the department name?  The MUNIS system settings do this automatically.  Are all negotiable instruments received for payment immediately endorsed with an appropriate county deposit stamp?  Checks should be made payable to "Deschutes County department".  All negotiable instruments received should be restrictively endorsed for the appropriate Deschutes County bank account.  Are voided receipts accounted for and authorized by another person?  MUNIS system settings do this automatically.	-		

		Yes	No	N/A		
E.	Physical safeguards					
	Physical controls in place to reduce risk that cash can be stolen.			т		
	o Is there a designated custodian for cash and is the transfer of cash to					
	other employees documented?					
	<ul> <li>There should be adequate accountability for movement of funds between</li> </ul>					
	people.					
	Tamper-proof deposit bags can also be used.					
	Does anyone other than the designated custodian have unrestricted					
	access to cash?					
	There should be sufficient safeguards to prevent access to cash by anyone  """  """  """  """  """  """  """					
	other than the person who collected it.			-		
	Are appropriate safeguards employed to safeguard cash in County					
	facilities depending on the amount and duration the cash is held?		Ш	Ш		
	Access should be limited.  Provide little in a local dealers of the public and a local dealers of the public and a local dealers.					
	Possibilities include locking file cabinets, locking drawers, safes, etc.      Consideration for surgeillance and attaching an available.					
	Consideration for surveillance – electronic or guards.  Are appeared to proportions with each in a confederation of devictor and devic					
	<ul> <li>Are access and transactions with cash in a safe logged and witnessed?</li> </ul>					
	le armound transport arranged for large amounts of coch?					
	o Is armored transport arranged for large amounts of cash?					
	Lias the department addressed notantial rephasivisis?			-		
	Has the department addressed potential robbery risk?					
F.	Deposit /Reconciliation  Establishing how much cash should be present, counting how much is present and securing cash with County Finance or the County's bank					
	Is cash accounted for and balanced to receipt records daily?					
	<ul> <li>(i.e., Munis settlement, register tapes, card processing reports)</li> </ul>					
	<ul> <li>These may be manual or computerized processes. In cases where there</li> </ul>					
	are department accounting systems, those systems should be reconciled to					
	activity reported to the Finance department through deposits.					
	<ul> <li>Are all cash overages and shortages reported to management and the</li> </ul>					
	Finance Department?					
	<ul> <li>This includes revenue, change funds, and petty cash.</li> </ul>					
	Are the contents of the deposit clearly documented?					
	<ul><li>Totals of any coins, bills, and/or checks.</li></ul>					
	o Does the cashier prepare duplicate deposit tickets so that the bank can					
	validate one copy, and a person other than the cashier can verify the					
	returned bank receipt against the duplicate deposit ticket?					
	Is all cash collected deposited intact?					
	<ul> <li>There should be no retaining, adding, or substituting of cash.</li> </ul>					
	<ul> <li>Are tamper-proof deposit bags used for the deposit?</li> </ul>					
	Are cash receipts deposited within 24 hours?					
	Is receipt activity reviewed for unusual fluctuations?					

		Yes	No	N/A
	Accounting not determined/Suspense accounts:			
	o Does the department delay deposit if the accounting is not determined?			
	<ul> <li>Sometimes transactions are uncertain or have incomplete information.</li> </ul>			
	For example, a records request fee collected before confirmation of the			
	records existence. The County encourages the department to deposit			
	these amounts daily. For departments where this is a routine occurrence,			
	suspense accounts may be created to hold the accounting of the deposit			
	until a proper accounting can be made. Departments shall make efforts			
	to reconcile and clear these entries in a timely fashion.			
	Coordination with other departments:			
	Is deposit coordination considered with other departments?			
	<ul> <li>At those times, they should secure their cash separately in a tamper-proof</li> </ul>	Ш	Ш	
	bank bag, noting the serial number and amounts for later reconciliation			
	to the bank receipts.			
	to the bank receipts.			
G.	Manual Back Up			
٥.	Applicable if computerized systems are not used or temporarily unavailable.			
	Are manual receipt books controlled and safeguarded?			
	Le the common of the city of the complete of the city			
	Is the sequence of receipt numbers monitored?			
	And the second receipt for use a great provide and improving to all with the			
	Are payment receipt forms pre-numbered, imprinted with the			
	department name, and in triplicate?			
	Triplicate forms allow for one copy provided to customer, one to			
	accompany cash, and one with receipt book for control.			
ш	Accounts receivable			
Н.				
	Represents credit established for customers to purchase services on account.			
	Are computerized accounting systems designed to limit authority and			
	require supervisory approvals for adjustments, credits, and write-offs? If	Ш	Ш	
	not, is the activity periodically reviewed?			
	o Are there appropriate reports on accounts receivable and billing activity?		-	_
	<ul> <li>Billing systems should have adequate reporting systems to allow for</li> </ul>		Ш	
	follow-up on outstanding billings.			
	<ul> <li>Are accounts receivable postings compared to receipting logs?</li> </ul>			
		Ш		
	<ul> <li>Are changes to customer accounts overseen?</li> </ul>			
	<ul><li>(i.e., additions, changes, deletions)</li></ul>	Ш	Ш	Ш
I.	Change Funds			
	Represents cash held to provide change for customer receipts.			
	<ul> <li>Are change funds approved and matched to authorizations?</li> </ul>		]	
		Ш	Ш	
	Are change funds counted by the custodian at shift beginning and end?			
	, U // U // U // U // U // U	1 1		
		ш		
	Is cash counted by an independent person?			
	o Is cash counted by an independent person?			

		Yes	No	N/A	
	Are surprise cash counts conducted by an employee outside collection?				
	Is the change fund used for petty cash? Vice versa?				
J.	Petty cash  Represents money available for minor purchases. Cash is replenished periodically based on appropriate receipts and accounting.				
	o Is the authorized petty cash amount maintained?				
	Are petty cash payments supported by receipts?				
	Is access to petty cash restricted to custodians?				
	o Is replenishment done routinely though a reimbursement?				
	<ul> <li>Does petty cash on hand match authorized amount and submitted receipts?</li> </ul>				
	Is there a continuing need for a petty cash fund?				