

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

In the Matter of Adopting a Policy on)
Board Direction) ORDER NO. 21-2025

WHEREAS, the County has an interest in maintaining respect and cooperation between and among the Board of County Commissioners and County Department Heads, Elected Officials, managers, employees, contractors and volunteers; and

WHEREAS, individual Commissioners cannot make decisions for the County, however, individual Commissioners frequently have the need for information or assistance from Departments as part of their decision-making process; and

WHEREAS, County Departments would benefit from direction about how to address individual direction from individual Commissioners;

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby ordered that the Columbia County Policy on Board Direction which is attached hereto as Exhibit "1", is hereby adopted.

DATED this ____ day of May, 2025.

Approved as to for

By: _____
Office of County Counsel

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

By: _____
Kellie Jo Smith, Chair

By: _____
Casey Garrett, Commissioner

By: _____
Margaret Magruder, Commissioner

EXHIBIT "1"

COLUMBIA COUNTY POLICY ON BOARD DIRECTION

POLICY STATEMENT: Mutual respect and cooperation between and among the Board of County Commissioners ("Board"), Department Heads, Elected Officials, managers, employees, contractors and volunteers is an integral value of Columbia County. Only when all individuals work together can we create and maintain a work environment that is respectful and productive.

Pursuant to the Oregon Public Meetings Act, ORS 192.610 to 192.690 (the "Act"), a quorum of members of the Board of County Commissioners is required to make decisions for the County. Such decisions must be made in a public meeting consistent with the Act.

As a general law County, Columbia County Commissioners, acting individually, cannot make decisions for the County. Yet, from time to time, Commissioners individually direct Department Heads and other staff to take action or avoid taking action.

This Policy is intended to provide direction to Department Heads, Elected Officials, managers, employees, contractors, and volunteers about how to address individual direction from Commissioners.

POLICY:

1. Individual Commissioners will not direct staff, contractors, employees, or volunteers without first discussing the matter with the Department Head who supervises that individual. The Department Head will be given the opportunity to discuss the issue with staff in lieu of the Commissioner. If the Department Head disagrees with the direction or if the Department Head believes there may be disagreement of other Board members, the Department Head will bring the issue to the full Board for input before taking action.
2. Direction by an individual Commissioner related to any of the following, must be taken to the full Board:
 - a. Direction to take any action inconsistent with a County Ordinance, Order, Resolution or Board decision.
 - b. Direction to take any action inconsistent with a County contract.
 - c. Direction to a contractor/vendor, except for contractors/vendors managed by the Board of Commissioners.
 - d. Direction to take any action inconsistent with any State, Federal or local law, rule, or regulation.
3. Individual Commissioners will not use County letter head for individual communications. Individual Commissioners may use individual letterhead for communications if it is made clear that the position, opinion, etc. set forth in the letter is the position only of the signing Commissioner.