

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

The Whatcom County Council and The Whatcom County Executive and The Whatcom County
Administrative Services Department

Subject: Adoption of Whatcom County Administrative and Personnel Policies by the Whatcom County Council

I. PURPOSE

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) establishes a mutual agreement between the Whatcom County Council (“Council”), the Whatcom County Executive (“Executive”), and the Whatcom County Administrative Services Department (“Human Resources, Finance, Information Technology, Facilities”) regarding the Council’s full adoption and implementation of Whatcom County’s existing administrative and personnel policies as the Council’s own internal policies, unless otherwise superseded by law, ordinance, or explicit Council action.

The parties acknowledge that the Whatcom County Council is a separate and independent branch of County government, vested with legislative authority under the Whatcom County Charter. The purpose of this MOU is to ensure clarity, consistency, and uniformity in administrative and personnel practices while maintaining the Council’s independence and authority.

II. SCOPE

This MOU applies to all Council employees, including Council staff, analysts, clerks, and any other personnel hired, supervised, or managed by the Clerk of the Council and/or the Whatcom County Council.

The administrative and personnel policies referenced in this MOU include,:

- Whatcom County Administrative Policies
- Whatcom County Personnel Policies (Employee Handbook)
- Administrative Services procedures, guidelines, and directives
- Applicable County-wide training, workplace conduct, and compliance requirements

III. AGREEMENT

A. Adoption of Policies

The Council hereby adopts all existing Whatcom County administrative and personnel policies as its own internal governing policies for Council operations and staff.

The Council acknowledges the benefits of consistent County-wide standards while retaining the inherent authority of an independent legislative branch.

The Council further agrees to follow all updates, revisions, and supplements to these policies as issued by Human Resources, unless the Council formally adopts an alternative policy by motion, ordinance, or resolution.

B. Administration and Oversight

Administrative Services will provide the Council with guidance, interpretation, and technical assistance necessary to implement and apply County administrative and personnel policies.

The Executive and Administrative Services will continue to manage and provide County-wide services such as, but not limited to:

- **Human Resources** – Recruitment, Benefits, Employee & Labor Relations, Training & Development, Legal Compliance
- **Finance** - Budgeting, Financial Planning, Payroll, Accounts Payable/Receivables, Procurement
- **Information Technology** – Network, Hardware & Software Management, Help Desk Support, Cybersecurity & Data Protection, Public Records, Technology Planning & Implementation
- **Facilities** – Building Maintenance & Repairs, Space Planning & Office Services, Security & Access Control, Safety Compliance and Emergency Preparedness, Vendor & Service Contract Management, Capital Projects

The Council retains full authority, as an independent branch of government, consistent with County policies and applicable laws. The Clerk of the Council, in their capacity as the Administrative Department Director, retains all duties, powers, and decision-making authority outlined in WCC 2.02.155.

C. Collaboration and Communication

The parties agree to maintain open and regular communication regarding updates to policies, personnel matters, and any issues requiring administrative interpretation.

IV. LIMITATIONS

Nothing in this MOU alters the independent constitutional and charter authority of the Council or the Executive.

Nothing in this MOU diminishes the Council's status as an independent branch of County government or transfers any legislative, supervisory, or administrative authority vested in the Council by the Whatcom County Charter.

This MOU does not limit the Council’s ability to adopt independent or supplementary policies when necessary to support legislative branch operations.

Adoption of County-wide policies does not create or imply a transfer of supervisory authority from the Council to the Executive or Human Resources.

V. TERM AND REVIEW

This MOU becomes effective upon signature of all parties.

The agreement remains in effect until amended or terminated by mutual written consent.

The parties will review this MOU at least once every four years, or sooner upon request.

VI. SIGNATURES

For the Whatcom County Council:

Kaylee Galloway
Whatcom County Council, Chair
Date: _____

For the Whatcom County Executive and Whatcom County Administrative Services:

Satpal Sidhu
Whatcom County Executive
Date: _____

Approved as to form

Kimberly Thulin (by email/6.1.2026/ch)