

Wahkiakum County Treasurer's Office

Cash Handling Policy

Effective Date: 11/1/2025

Approved By: Wahkiakum County Treasurer

Reviewed: Annually

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform procedures and internal controls for the handling, receipting, and safeguarding of cash, checks, and other negotiable instruments within Wahkiakum County offices. This ensures compliance with RCW 36.29 and promotes public trust through accountability and transparency.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all County departments, offices, and employees who receive, handle, record, or deposit cash or checks on behalf of Wahkiakum County.

3. Authority and Legal Reference

This policy is adopted in accordance with:

- RCW 36.29.010 — County Treasurer as custodian of funds
- RCW 43.09.200 — Local government accounting requirements
- Washington State Auditor's Office (SAO) best practices for cash handling and internal controls.

4. Definitions

For purposes of this policy:

- 'Cash' includes currency, coins, checks, money orders, and credit/debit card payments.
- 'Deposit' means transferring funds to the County Treasurer's Office or designated bank account.
- 'Dual control' means two authorized employees jointly verifying and securing funds.

5. General Cash Handling Principles

1. All cash receipts must be recorded and deposited intact — no funds may be withheld for expenditures or change-making.
2. Employees handling cash must be trained and assigned individual cash drawers or tills.
3. Personal checks may not be cashed from County funds.
4. All collections are subject to audit by the State Auditor's Office.

6. Collection Procedures

1. Cash and checks received must be recorded immediately upon receipt.
2. Pre-numbered receipts shall be issued for all collections unless a computerized receipting system is used.
3. Each department is responsible for providing a template instructing where the funds should be placed to the treasurer's office prior to receiving.

7. Deposits

1. All funds collected must be deposited with the Treasurer's Office daily, or as required by RCW 36.29.010.
2. Deposits shall include a detailed report showing receipt numbers, payment methods, and totals.
3. Departments with low transaction volumes may deposit less frequently with Treasurer approval, but at least weekly. Per RCW 43.09.240 The treasurer may in his or her discretion grant an exception where such daily transfers would not be administratively practical or feasible as long as the treasurer has received a written request from the department, district, or agency, and where the department, district, or agency certifies that the money is held with proper safekeeping and that the entity carries out proper theft protection to reduce risk of loss of funds.

8. Cash Storage and Security

1. Cash must be kept in locked drawers, safes, or secure cash boxes until deposited.
2. Access to cash storage areas must be limited to authorized personnel.
3. Dual control must be used when counting or transporting funds.
4. Night deposits should be used if funds cannot be secured overnight.

9. Reconciliation and Reporting

1. Each department shall reconcile cash receipts daily to the financial system or deposit records.
2. Monthly reconciliations between department records and Treasurer's reports must be performed and reviewed by management.
3. Discrepancies must be reported immediately to the Treasurer or the County Auditor's Office.

10. Overages and Shortages

1. Cash overages or shortages must be reported to the department supervisor immediately.
2. All discrepancies shall be documented and investigated.
3. Repeated shortages may result in disciplinary action.

11. Internal Controls and Separation of Duties

1. No employee should have control over all phases of a transaction (receiving, recording, and reconciling).
2. Supervisors must periodically review and verify cash handling activities.
3. Surprise cash counts may be conducted by the Treasurer's Office or Auditor

12. Returned Checks

1. Returned checks (NSF or closed account) must be recorded and monitored.
2. A \$25 fee shall be assessed for returned checks in accordance with County fee policy.
3. The responsible department will notify the payer and coordinate collection or reversal with the Treasurer.

13. Training and Compliance

All employees handling cash must complete training on cash handling procedures, internal controls, and fraud prevention. Non-compliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action.

14. Policy Review and Updates

This policy shall be reviewed annually by the County Treasurer's Office and updated as necessary to ensure continued compliance with state laws and best practices.

Adoption

Wahkiakum County Treasurer's Office



Tammy Peterson, Wahkiakum County Treasurer

Date: 10/21/25