
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
TAMPA, FLORIDA 33601**

BOARD POLICY: 01.19.00.00

SUBJECT: Public Awareness, Awards and Marketing Activities

DATE: August 6, 2014

SUPERSEDES: July 15, 2009; October 18, 2004; August 2, 2006

PURPOSE

This policy declares as a public purpose and authorizes various promotional, training, recruitment, and public awareness activities to recognize, commemorate, enhance, promote and market Hillsborough County government, and its services and programs. This declaration includes authorization for the expenditure to conduct such activities.

POLICY

The Board of County Commissioners (Board) recognizes the need to publicize, promote and market the County government, and its services and programs. It also recognizes the importance of properly commemorating special events and achievements of the public and County employees. Further, the Board recognizes the need for training activities for County employees, as well as the need to have the capacity to recruit new management employees. Additionally, the County should be active and visible in community events and activities. Therefore, the Board approves as public purpose the expenditure of funds for the activities described herein.

When the Board or any County department, agency or business unit under the County Administrator intends to conduct activities related to this policy, they shall first consult with their designated public relations representative in the Communications & Digital Media Services Department (CDMS). To proceed with the request, the party shall describe the proposed activity using a [Public Awareness Request](#) form and/or other appropriate request form(s) on the County's intranet, County Online Information Network (COIN). CDMS is responsible for granting or denying approval and/or for facilitating the administrative approval or denial of requests to conduct activities related to this policy. For activities that are CDMS' responsibility to grant or deny approval, CDMS is exempt from submitting approval forms, and is specifically authorized to expend funds and conduct activities related to this policy. Activities related to this policy must be conducted in accordance with standard purchasing procedures, and shall be budgeted and accounted for in a manner determined by the Business & Support Services Department and the Clerk of the Circuit Court's Department of County Finance.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to authorize activity that primarily serves a private purpose, which would violate the constitutional requirement that public funds be expended for a public purpose. All County activities related to this policy are to be conducted in accordance with the [Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees, Part III, Chapter, 112, Florida Statutes](#), and applicable County policies and procedures.

A. Hillsborough County Government's Ceremonies and Special Events

The County may expend funds for goods and services used in various ceremonies, special events and public programming created and executed by Hillsborough County government. For example, expenditures are appropriate for building dedications, ribbon-cuttings, employee awards ceremonies, and other public programs and activities. Proper expenditures include but are not limited to the printing and distribution of invitations, programs, flyers and signage; logistical and decorative items and services; the services of professional performers and guest speakers; and food and non-alcoholic beverages. The County may also pay for meals, non-alcoholic beverages and lodging for visiting officials or dignitaries to support intergovernmental and public/private sector partnerships. CDMS shall coordinate ceremonies and special events for the Board and all business units under the County Administrator, unless an exception is authorized by the Chief Communications Administrator.

B. Promotional Items and Projects

The County may expend funds for items and projects to explain, promote and/or enhance Hillsborough County Government, its services and programs. CDMS shall coordinate promotional items and projects for the Board and all business units under the County Administrator, unless an exception is authorized by the Chief Communications Administrator.

C. Awards

The County may expend funds for proclamations, commendations, certificates, awards, and tokens of appreciation to employees, the public, officials of other governments and visiting dignitaries. All such items shall be clearly marked as being from Hillsborough County, Florida government in accordance with the County's branding and style guidelines, and shall state the purpose of the award. Expenditures for awards that cost \$300 or less should be approved by the affiliated department's Chief Administrator or Assistant County Administrator. Awards valued at more than \$300 shall require County Administrator or Board approval. CDMS shall pre-approve the concept and appearance of any Hillsborough County award intended for external parties or organizations, unless an exception is authorized by the Chief Communications Administrator.

D. Community Events and Parades

The County may pay for its officials and employees to represent Hillsborough County government at community events (including events providing meals) when the events deal with services provided to County residents, or if the County is scheduled to receive an award based upon County government activities. Such expenditures shall not be used for alcoholic beverages.

CDMS is authorized to rent vehicles for County Commissioners, the County Administrator and other County representatives to participate in community events such as parades.

E. Training and Recruitment

The County may pay for employee training, as well as food and non-alcoholic beverages served at employee training programs, and for high level management recruitment activities. These activities shall be paid for with funds appropriated for the purpose.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The County Administrator, or designee, is responsible for overseeing the administration of this policy. CDMS oversees other County business units' activities related to this policy, as provided for in the County's [Public Awareness Request](#) form and/or other applicable forms and procedures. CDMS shall maintain records of all Public Awareness Requests and will report these activities quarterly to the Chief Communications Administrator, and when desired by the Board or the County Administrator.

Approved By: **Board of County Commissioners**

Approval Date: **August 6, 2014**